

Högskolan Dalarna  
English Degree Thesis  
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## **Stereotypical Chinese Accent of English in American TV Series**

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## 1. Introduction

Since English has obtained an increasingly important status as the first choice medium for international communication nowadays, it is no longer only the language of Anglo-American native speakers. Because of globalization, English is acquired by people from all over the world as their second language 'ESL' or foreign language 'EFL'. Alongside RP and General American as the reference accents, there are many local varieties of English in ESL and EFL countries. Every variety of English has its unique features of pronunciation which differ from the standard. Those features are accepted by a certain population of speakers and form their local standard accent. Since there is a huge population of English speakers in China, people have become aware of the emergence of Chinese English as a new variety of English. Many studies have been done to describe and analyze the distinct features of the Chinese accent of English. He and Li (2009, 70) explained the reason for studying Chinese English:

Mainland China has the largest English speaking population in the world. It seems inevitable that the tremendous number of people learning and speaking English will naturally lead to a distinctive Chinese variety of English, 'China English'.

As outlined by Deterding (2006), the most salient features of Chinese pronunciation of English are for instance the extra vowel after word final stops as /ændə/ for *and*, and the substitution of /s/ for /θ/ as /sɪŋk/ for *think*, etc.

Because Chinese English has become a unique variety of English, it signifies the identity of Chinese people in the English-speaking world. In other words, the distinctive features of the Chinese accent of English can reveal the identity of a Chinese person. These distinctive features are generally standardized into stereotypes of Chinese English. Since there are an increasing number of Chinese characters in

American TV series, stereotypes of the Chinese accent are applied to portray the characters as their language identity. Many actors with other accents of English imitate the Chinese accent by following those stereotypes in order to play a Chinese role. However, little previous study has been done to analyze the stereotypical Chinese accent of English. The stereotypical Chinese accent is different from the natural speech of Chinese speakers. It is important to study the stereotypes of the Chinese accent, to be able to distinguish between the stereotypical accent and the authentic accent of Chinese English speakers. The stereotypical accent of Chinese English in American TV series is an extreme, over-standardized version of the Chinese accent which is different from real Chinese pronunciation.

In this thesis, there will be a description of features in stereotype of Chinese accent firstly. Secondly, a comparative study between the stereotyped accent and the real accent of Chinese English will be done to show the differences. The term Chinese English in the paper refers to accents of both Mandarin speakers and Cantonese speakers.

The speeches of two characters from two different American TV series *24* and *Eli Stone* are analyzed. The analysis will go through several sections concerning the real language identity of the actor, the American stereotype of Chinese English, and the differences from authentic Chinese English. My pronunciation is recorded as an example of real Chinese English. It is used to compare the stereotypical pronunciation.

An authentic accent or real accent refers to the natural pronunciation of a speaker in this essay.

## 1.1 Aim

The aim of this paper is to analyze features of stereotypical Chinese English and distinguish between the stereotypical accent and the real Chinese accent.

## 2. Theoretical Background

To analyze the stereotypical Chinese accent in American TV series, both General American and Chinese pronunciation are important. There are many previous studies have been done to describe American and Chinese accents.

### 2.1 General American

As defined by Wells (1982), General American refers to the majority of American accents without regional characteristics. The term has been applied to two thirds of the American population. General American has vowels /ɪ, ε, ʌ, ʊ, æ, i, u, ɔ, ɑ, ɔ, ɜ/ and diphthongs /eɪ, ɔɪ, aɪ, aʊ/. There is also an unstressed schwa /ə/.

If we compare with another reference accent RP, General American has an important difference which is that the distinctive length of vowel is lost, discussed by Wells (1982). Vowels in General American are differentiated by quality rather than length. For instance, /i/ in General American corresponds to /i:/ in RP as *sheet*, /ɑ/ corresponds to /ɑ:/ for *large*; /æ/ corresponds to /ɑ:/ as well for *bath*; /ɔ/ replaces /ɔ:/ as in *thought*, /ʊ/ is used instead of /u:/ for *shoe*. In the environment following /r/, RP long vowels as /ɔ:/ and /ɜ:/ for *core* and *nurse* are lowered and centralised into /ɔ/ and /ɜ/. Accordingly, the length of vowel is not important. Further considering the use of /æ/ instead of RP /ɑ:/ for *bath*, Wells (1982) said this is a very striking characteristic of American pronunciation.

Moreover, there is another important characteristic of General American in vowels which is referred to as LOT Unrounding, explained by Wells (1982). The speakers of GA have an unrounded vowel /ɑ/ instead of /ɒ/ in words like *lot* and *bother*.

In addition, according to Wells (1982), most Americans do not have any centring-diphthong as /ɪə/, /ʊə/ and /eə/ in their vowel system for *here*, *pure* and *hair*. In the environment of following /r/, there is an absence of /ə/ and a presence of /r/. Therefore, centring-diphthongs as /ɪə/, /ʊə/ and /eə/ in RP become monophthongs preceding /r/, respectively as /ɪr/, /ʊr/ and /er/.

Finally, there are some other typical features of American pronunciation within the vowel system. For example, the use of /eɪ/ instead of /ɑ:/ for *tomato*; For *coat*, diphthong /əʊ/ is replaced by /o/; General American /ɛ/ is opener than the corresponding RP /e/ for *let*, /ʌ/ in General American is a centralized back vowel whereas in RP it is open central.

Besides vowels, there are also many typical features of General American within consonants. First of all, there is a notable difference in the realization of /t/ from other accents. According to Wells (1982), General American has a voiced tap /ɾ/ rather than voiceless plosive /t/ in words as *better*, *waiting* and *at all*. This is said in Wells (1982) to be the one of the most striking characteristics of the American accent. It sounds like /d/ rather than /t/, seems to be a result of the neutralization of the opposition between /t,d/. In fact, Wells (1982) explained that /t/ is realized as a voiced tap /ɾ/ while /d/ is still /d/. The difference between them is the rate of articulation

which is the duration of the alveolar contact. The duration is shorter for /ɾ/ than for /d/. The /ɾ/ is a rapid tap rather than a more deliberate plosive and it is voiced. It occurs when /t/ is in the intervocalic environment, either word internally or across word boundaries. Wells (1982) also noted that the preceding segment must be a sonorant such as a vowel, liquid or nasal, and the following element must not be a consonant other than the dark /l/. Thus, T-tapping is a distinctive feature in General American pronunciation.

Secondly, the syllable-final /ɾ/ sound remains in General American whereas /r/ disappeared in many accents such as RP. As mentioned above, in the environment of following /ɾ/, long vowels as /ɔ:/, /ɜ:/ and /ɑ:/ for *core*, *nurse* and *large* are lowered and shortened into /ɔ/, /ɜ/ and /ɑ/. As mentioned above, in the same environment, there is an absence of /ə/ and a presence of /ɪ/ in centring-diphthongs as /Iə/, /ʊə/ and /eə/. They become respectively /ɪr/, /ʊr/ and /ɛr/. The presence of /ɾ/ is another important feature of American English.

Third, General American does not have clusters as /tj, dj, sj, nj/ neither in words nor at words boundaries. In General American, between alveolar /t/, /d/, /s/ or /n/ and following /u/ or /ʊ/, there is not a /j/. Instead, in certain environment, American speakers tend to produce for instance an affricate /tʃ/ corresponding to the /tj/ in words like *situate* /sitʃueit/; for *graduate* /grædʒʊɪt/, there is a voiced affricate /dʒ/ rather than /dj/; for *issue*, it is pronounced as /ɪʃʊ/ instead of /ɪʃju/. According to Wells (1982), it is called a Yod Coalescence. In each of these cases an alveolar consonant has coalesced with the following palatal semivowel /j/ to produce a

palatao-alveolar as in /tʃ/, /dʒ/ and /ʃ/. Considering the use of the palatal semivowel /j/, it remains after labials and velars as in *beauty* and *cute*.

Furthermore, Hu and Lindermann (2008) discussed the fact that word final stops are often unreleased by native speakers. The distinction between voiced and voiceless stops is maintained by the tenseness of the preceding vowel, which is more tensed if the stop is voiced. For example, in colloquial language, /ɪ/ in *kid* tends to be realized longer than in *kit*.

Moreover, there are many assimilations, elisions and simplifications in American pronunciation. Word-final alveolars such as /t,d,n,s,z/ often assimilate to the place of following word-initial consonant in casual speech. Cruttenden (2008) called this de-alveolarization. De-alveolarization is the process of a change in place of articulation from alveolar to other places. It is most common at word boundaries. The examples of de-alveolarization are most likely with /t/. Word-final /t/ can become dental since it is influenced by following /ð/ for *meet them* /mið ðəm/. /t/ can also be replaced by bilabial /p/ before /b/ for *that ball* /ðæp bəl/.

Except for assimilation, there is also elision. For example when three consonants are adjacent to each other at word boundaries, the consonant in the middle may be elided. It is common with word-final clusters in the enviroment of a following word-initial consonant. Cruttenden (2008) said the alveolar stops /t,d/ are the most common consonants to appear in the second position of the word-final cluster. They are often elided in the sequence that voiceless +t or voiced+d, e.g. *the best day* /ðə bɛs deɪ/ and *demand better pay* /dɪmæn bɛtər peɪ/. There is also an elision of /t/ in

negative expression /nt/ for *don't be late* /don br leɪt/. Another important feature in native accent within connected speech is that there is a very simplified form across word boundaries such as *wanna* /wʌnə/ for *want to* and *kinda* /kɑɪndə/ for *kind of*.

## **2.2 Chinese Accent**

There is another very important accent we need to discuss which is the Chinese accent.

There are two main accents in China. One is the accent of Mandarin speakers on the China mainland. Another one is the accent of Cantonese speakers in Hong Kong. The two accents have different features due to the difference between Mandarin and Cantonese. The accent of Mandarin speakers is analyzed by Deterding (2006), while the Hong Kong accent is analyzed by Bolton (2003).

In Hong Kong, as a former territory of Great Britain, Received Pronunciation is used as the standard pronunciation in language education. Even though the target language in Hong Kong is RP, as noted by Bolton (2003), there is only a small minority of local children close to the norm. Meanwhile, there is a local variety of English which is called Hong Kong English. Bolton (2003) said Hong Kong English differs from RP and has been accepted by the Hong Kong majority as their local standard of English. Melchers (2003) also mentioned that:

English is used widely as a medium in the education and legal systems and to deal with international business, and is becoming localized. Thirty eight percent of people in Hong Kong know and use English. However, it is closer to a foreign language variety.

According to Bolton (2003), within the vowel system, there is lack of contrast between /ɪ/ and /i/ and the tendency to use a longer /i/ for both, especially when there is a word final /ɪ/ for example /hæpi/ for *happy*. Jenkins (2003) discussed that Chinese tend to lengthen final vowels. Secondly, /æ/ is frequently replaced by a more closed

/ɛ/. Next, there is a substitution of shorter /ʊ/ for /u/. Another feature of Hong Kong English is that unstressed schwa /ə/ is stressed and given a fuller value as /ɜ/ in /fɜːmiliə/, or as /ɑ/ in /græmə/. It is one of the most typical features of all Chinese accents.

Among consonants, there are more features than vowels. The first one is the replacement of /θ/ by /f/ as in /fɪŋks/. Secondly, /ð/ is replaced by /d/ in initial position as in /deɪ/ for *they* or by /v/ in final position as in /wɪv/ for *with*. Thirdly, /v/ is often replaced by /w/. e.g. /dɪwaɪ/ for *divide*, or by /f/ in for example *wave*. Fourth, /ʃ/ sometimes is realized as /s/ for /ɪŋɡlɪs/. Fifth, there is lack of distinction between /l/ and /r/ or /n/ in syllable initial position. Sixth, dark /l/ is vocalized into /o/ as in /wɪo/ for *will*. Next, there is a glottalisation of final /t/ and /d/ as in /nɒʔ ɡʊʔ/ for *not good*. Furthermore, word final voiceless stops /p/, /t/, and /k/ are often unreleased. Other word final consonants can also be omitted as in /dɪwaɪ/ and /sku/ for *school*. As noted in Hu and Lindermann(2008), the deleted word final sounds are stereotypical features of Cantonese English. Cantonese stops in word final position are unreleased, even when the word is spoken in citation form. Melchers (2003) explained that Cantonese typically has few consonants clusters and few possible final consonants.

Chinese Mandarin speakers also have very distinctive accent. Chinese people speak English as a foreign language, EFL. Chinese English speakers normally take either Received Pronunciation or General American as a target pronunciation. Wells (1982) discussed that RP is generally accepted as the standard accent of English people and General American is the type of American English pronunciation taught to

learners of English as a foreign language. According to He and Li (2009), both teachers and learners of English in China are in favor of adopting standard English. However, Chinese pronunciation of English differs from reference norms affected by the mother language. Chinese English, as mentioned in He and Li (2009), is defined as the English used by the Chinese people in China based on Standard English and having Chinese characteristics.

Deterding (2006) has outlined many unique features of Chinese English. The most distinctive feature of Chinese English is the extra final vowel after word final plosives, especially before another word beginning with a consonant. It distinguishes Chinese English from most other varieties of English. It is a significant stereotype of Chinese English. The extra vowel is usually a schwa /ə/. For example, *but* with final plosive /t/ may be pronounced as /bʌtə/ by Chinese speakers. Deterding (2006) explained that Standard Chinese, which is Mandarin, does not allow final plosives. Therefore, Chinese speakers tend to add an audible extra vowel to final plosives. However, it does not often occur in sentence final position. The sentence final word is like the isolated word. Chinese English learners remember words in isolation. Therefore, Chinese speakers are more careful with sentence final words.

Another unique feature is the realization of reduced vowels especially in function words. In American English, reduced vowels occur in two environments. One is the unstressed syllables of multisyllabic words as *convergence* /kənˈvɜːrdʒəns/; Another is the weak form of monosyllabic function words such as *to*, *of* and *and*. Chinese English speakers often realize the reduced vowel by a full vowel in weak

forms of function words. Deterding (2006) gave the explanation that schwa never occurs in the citation form of function words. Because Chinese learners commonly pronounce a word based on its citation form, the full vowel in the strong form of function words is more likely to be realized than the reduced vowel in unstressed function words. There is another explanation from He and Li (2009). It is mentioned that Chinese is a syllable-timing language. As influenced by the mother tongue, Chinese speakers tend to pronounce English words with syllable-timing. As a result, every syllable in a speech is stressed evenly. There are no unstressed function words, so there are no reduced vowels.

The next typical Chinese pronunciation is the substitution for dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/. The voiceless dental fricative /θ/ is often replaced by the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ as *with* /wis/. In words like *that*, a voiced alveolar fricative /z/ is realized instead of dental /ð/ as /zæt/.

There is also the substitution for voiced fricative /v/. The syllable initial /v/ is replaced by /w/ like *gravitate* /græwətet/, and /f/ is produced instead of /v/ in syllable final position for *wave* /weif/.

L-vocalization is a common feature of Chinese English. The dark /l/ is realized as a close back vowel /o/ for *while* /wario/. However, it is not likely to distinguish Chinese English from other accents since it is a common development of English nowadays. According to Wells (1982), L-vocalization seems likely that it will become entirely standard in English. Dark /l/ is only vocalized as /o/ when it is followed by a word beginning with a consonant, not at word boundaries with beginning vowels.

In Standard Chinese, the close vowel /ɪ/ can not occur at the start of a syllable. Therefore, for English words like *English*, the word initial /ɪ/ must be preceded by a glide /j/. The glide before initial /ɪ/ is a very typical feature of Chinese English. Even proficient speakers often insert /j/ before word initial /ɪ/ as /jɪŋɡlɪʃ/

Furthermore, Jenkins (2003) also mentioned some more characteristics of Chinese English, for example a lack of distinction between /ɪ/ and /i/.

### **3. Methodology and Data**

American TV series *24* and *Eli Stone* are selected because there are Chinese characters whose accents are not the real accents of their actors. In *24*, the Chinese character is Cheng Zhi, a Chinese official. His discourse in the program is recorded as a sample of Chinese English. The actor in this role is Tzi Ma. He speaks fluent English and Cantonese. His real pronunciation is recorded from an interview. Another actor is James Saito, a native speaker of English. His role in *Eli Stone* is Dr. Chen, a native American who pretend to be a Chinese doctor. His American accent and fake Chinese accent are both recorded from the programme. The two actors are American speakers. To analyze their language identity, American pronunciation is used as the reference variety. The analysis of both the stereotypical and the authentic Chinese accent of English will be based on the description of Chinese English and Hong Kong English. The discourses in which stereotypical Chinese English is found are re-read by me and recorded. My pronunciation is selected as a typical Chinese accent of English. All language data are analyzed in the form of phonetic transcription. The stereotypical Chinese accent of each actor is compared firstly with his real accent,

later with my pronunciation of the same discourse. Language features of different accents are listed and compared in tables.

#### **4. Data Analysis and Results**

##### **4.1 Language Identities of Actors**

To perform Chinese characters in the programme, American actors use fake accents of English based on their stereotypes of Chinese English pronunciation. In order to distinguish the fake accents from the real, it is important to identify the actors' authentic accents. There are two actors whose language identities are going to be analyzed first. They are both American speakers. General American pronunciation is applied as the reference accent for the analysis of their American accents, since Wells (1982) said it is the most acceptable variety on the TV networks covering the whole United States.

Many distinctive features of General American vowels are described by Wells (1982) and discussed earlier. There are the loss of vowel length; the use of /æ/ instead of RP /ɑ:/ for *bath*; the LOT Unrounding development; the monophthongization of diphthongs; the use of /eɪ/ instead of /ɑ:/ for *banana*; the substitution of opener /ɛ/ for /e/; and the centralized back /ʌ/. Those distinctive features concerning vowels are found in both American actors' speech. The first actor to be analyzed is James Saito. He is an American native speaker born in California. The data of his real accent is collected from American TV series *Eli Stone*. Another actor is Tzi Ma. He is also an American speaker. However, he is not native. He was born in Hong Kong. His

American accent is analyzed based on a film interview with him. Their pronunciation of vowels are shown with examples in *Table 1* below:

| vowels | James Saito   | Tzi Ma   |
|--------|---|--|
| ɪ      | <i>totally</i> /totlɪ/ and <i>beer</i> /bɪr/                  | <i>remember</i> /rɪmɛmbə/ and <i>weird</i> /wɪrd/                    |
| i      | <i>mystique</i> /mɪstɪk/ and <i>we</i> /wi/                   | the strong form of <i>the</i> /ði/ and <i>read</i> /rɪd/             |
| ɛ      | <i>well</i> /wɛl/ and <i>fairness</i> /fɛrnɪz/                | <i>egg</i> /ɛɡ/, <i>there</i> /ðɛr/ and <i>red</i> /rɛd/             |
| ʌ      | <i>up</i> /ʌp/ and <i>acupuncture</i> /ækjʊpʌŋktʃər/          | <i>one</i> /wʌn/ and <i>just</i> /dʒʌst/                             |
| ɑ      | <i>enlarged</i> /ɪnlɑrdʒd/ and <i>philosophy</i> /fələsəfi/   | <i>father</i> /fɑðə/ and <i>gotta</i> /gɑrə/                         |
| ʊ      | <i>your</i> /jʊr/ and <i>acupuncture</i> /ækjʊpʌŋktʃər/       | <i>look</i> /lʊk/ and <i>situation</i> /sɪtʃʊeɪʃən/                  |
| u      | <i>future</i> /fjʊtʃər/ and <i>choose</i> /tʃuz/              | <i>two</i> /tu/, <i>cool</i> /ku/ and <i>you</i> /ju/                |
| æ      | <i>accent</i> /æksɛnt/ and <i>happen</i> /hæpən/              | <i>man</i> /mæn/, <i>task</i> /tæsk/ and <i>gravitate</i> /grævətet/ |
| o      | <i>holistic</i> /holɪstɪk/ and <i>blows</i> /blɒs/            | <i>so</i> /so/ and <i>know</i> /no/                                  |
| ɔ      | <i>story</i> /stɔri/ and <i>unfortunately</i> /ʌnfɔrtʃənɪtli/ | <i>normally</i> /nɔrmlɪ/ and <i>because</i> /bɪkɔz/                  |

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| ɜ  | <i>firm</i> /fɜrm/ and <i>attorney</i><br>/ətɜrni/                      | <i>convergence</i> /kɔnvɜrdʒəns/ and<br><i>work</i> /wɜrk/                |
| eɪ | <i>case</i> /keɪs/ and <i>explain</i><br>/ɪkspleɪn/                     | <i>play</i> /pleɪ/ and <i>great</i> /gret/                                |
| ɔɪ | <i>joy</i> /dʒɔɪ/   | <i>enjoy</i> /ɪndʒɔɪ/   |
| aɪ | <i>buy</i> /baɪ/ and <i>divine</i> /dəvaɪn/                             | <i>while</i> /waɪl/ and <i>right</i> /raɪt/                               |
| aʊ | <i>now</i> /naʊ/ and <i>about</i> /əbaʊt/                               | <i>about</i> /əbaʊt/ and <i>how</i> /haʊ/                                 |
| ə  | <i>vision</i> /vɪʒən/, <i>divine</i> /dəvaɪn/<br>and <i>into</i> /ɪntə/ | <i>and</i> /ən/, <i>should</i> /ʃəd/ and <i>particular</i><br>/pətɪkjələ/ |

Table 1

From the table, some examples are shown missing, since some features are not included in the selected speech. For instance, within Tzi Ma's speech, the paired sounds in the environment following /r/ as in /ɑr/ and /ʊr/ cannot be found. The example of the substitution of /æ/ for /ɑ:/ is not in Saito's speech. Then the use of /eɪ/ instead of /ɑ:/ as in *banana* cannot be found in both.

However, several typical characteristics of General American are found in both their transcriptions. First of all, there is the loss of vowel length. For example, /i/ is applied rather than /i:/ in *mystique* /mɪstɪk/ by Saito and *read* /rɪd/ by Ma; /ɑ:/ loses its length mark as in *enlarged* /ɪnlɑrdʒd/ and *father* /fɑðə/; /u:/ is replaced by /u/ for *choose* /tʃuz/ and *cool* /kul/; and /ɔ/ is found instead of /ɔ:/ in *story* /stɔri/ and *because* /bɪkɔz/. The second important feature of General American is the use of /æ/ instead of /ɑ:/. It is found in Ma's pronunciation as *task* /tæsk/. Third, the development of LOT

Unrounding is heard in *philosophy* /fələsəfi/ and *gotta* /gɑrə/. Fourth, the centring diphthongs as in /ɪə/, /ʊə/ and /eə/ are monophthongized into /ɪr/, /ʊr/ and /er/ with following /r/. It is found in such words as *beer* /bɪr/, *weird* /wɪrd/, *fairness* /fɛrnɪz/, *there* /ðer/ and *your* /jʊr/. Fifth, there is the substitution of opener /ɛ/ for /e/ as found in words like *well* /wɛl/ and *red* /rɛd/. Finally, the centralized back /ʌ/ can be heard in *up* /ʌp/ and *just* /dʒʌst/. Furthermore, the schwa /ə/ is found in unstressed function words as in *into* /ɪntə/ and *and* /ən/. These features of American accent are identified in their speech.

Except vowels, the consonant system of American English also has many distinctive features. Accordingly, the T-tapping, the presence of syllable-ending /r/, Yod Coalescence, the unreleased word final stops, certain assimilations, elisions and simplifications are important characteristics of American pronunciation. They are shown with examples from the transcription of two actors' pronunciation in *Table 2* below:

|                     | James Saito  | Tzi Ma   |
|---------------------|--|--|
| The T-tapping /r/   | <i>matter</i> /mætər/  | <i>gotta</i> /gɑrə/<br><i>meeting</i> /mi:ɪŋ/  |
| The presence of /r/ | <i>beer</i> /bɪr/<br><i>fairness</i> /fɛrnɪz/<br><i>enlarged</i> /ɪnlɑrdʒd/,<br><i>acupuncture</i> /ækjʊpʌŋktʃər/<br><i>your</i> /jʊr/ | <i>weird</i> /wɪrd/<br><i>there</i> /ðer/<br><i>normally</i> /nɔ:rnli/<br><i>convergence</i> /kɔnvɜrdʒəns/ |

|                                    |   |   |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
|                                    | <i>unfortunately</i> /ʌnfɔrtʃənɪtɪ/<br><i>firm</i> /fɜrm/           |   |
| Yod Coalescence                    | <i>remind you that you</i><br>/rɪmaɪndʒu ðætʃu/                     | <i>situation</i> /sɪtʃueɪʃən/<br><i>said you</i> /sedʒu/              |
| The unreleased word<br>final stops | <i>that</i> /ðæt/<br><i>eight</i> /eɪt/                             | <i>what</i> /wɒt/<br><i>met</i> /mɛt/                                 |
| The assimilation                   | <i>want beer</i> /wɒnp bɪr/   | <i>felt that</i> /fɛld ðæt/   |
| The elision                        | <i>named Frank</i> /neɪm fræŋk/<br><i>I don't know</i> /aɪ dən noʊ/ | <i>can't</i> /kæn/<br><i>just mentioned this</i> /dʒʌs<br>menʃən ðɪs/ |
| The simplification                 | <i>gonna</i> /gənə/   | <i>kinda</i> /kɑɪndə/   |

Table 2

It is shown in *Table 2* that both two actors have many typical features of General American concerning consonants in their pronunciation. They use the voiced tap /ɾ/ rather than voiceless plosive /t/ in words as *matter* /mætər/ and *meeting* /miːɪŋ/. The syllable-ending /ɾ/ remains in many words as in *beer* /bɪr/ and *normally* /nɔːrmlɪ/. Yod Coalescence is found in their speech for /dʒ/ and /tʃ/. There are examples like *remind you that you* /rɪmaɪndʒu ðætʃu/ and *situation* /sɪtʃueɪʃən/. Moreover, word final /t/ is sometimes unreleased as in *eight* /eɪt/ and *what* /wɒt/. /t/ is assimilated to the following dental /ð/ for *felt that* /fɛld ðæt/ and to bilabial /p/ for *want beer* /wɒnp bɪr/. /t/ in the middle of three adjacent consonants is often elided as in *just mentioned this* /dʒʌs menʃən ðɪs/. /t/ is also elided in negative expression /nt/ in *I don't know* /aɪ dən noʊ/.

Finally, there are simplifications in their pronunciation like *gonna* /gʌnə/ and *kinda* /kaɪndə/. Examples above are all important characteristics concerning consonants in the American accent which the two actors have.

Many distinctive features of General American are found in both Saito and Ma's pronunciation. Therefore, they can be identified as American speakers. However, there are some differences between the two American speakers. Tzi Ma is a China born American. He was born in Hong Kong. Therefore, a few features of Hong Kong English remain in his pronunciation, although he speaks American English.

The term Hong Kong English refers to the pronunciation of Cantonese speakers in Hong Kong. Some distinctive features in Hong Kong English are identified in Ma's pronunciation. Since RP is the target pronunciation in Hong Kong, some RP features can be found in his speech, for instance the r-dropping. Even though it was just discussed that Ma as an American speaker keeps the /r/ sound in his pronunciation, sometimes /r/ cannot be heard, especially in word final position preceded by /ə/. There are examples such as *remember* /rɪmɛmbə/ and *father* /fɑðə/. Another evidence of his Hong Kong accent is the lack of contrast between /ɪ/ and /i/. Bolton (2003) said that Hong Kong speakers tend to use /i/ for both. There is a clear /i/ instead of /ɪ/ in his pronunciation of *really* /rili/ where /ɪ/ should be realized in the second syllable. There is a comparison between Saito and Ma's pronunciation of certain sounds in *Table 3*:

|             | James Saito             | Tzi Ma               |
|-------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| /r/         | <i>matter</i> /mætərər/ | <i>father</i> /fɑðə/ |
| /ɪ/ and /i/ | <i>totally</i> /totlɪ/  | <i>really</i> /rili/ |

### *Table 3*

Overall, James Saito and Tzi Ma are both identified as having General American accents, since there are many examples of distinctive features of General American that are found in their pronunciation. Being different from James Saito, Tzi Ma not only has an American accent, but also has a little Hong Kong accent. Because his speech in the interview is natural, features of Hong Kong accent can be considered as part of his real accent rather than stereotypical accent. Knowing their language identities is very important for analyzing their fake Chinese accent and stereotypes of Chinese accent. The stereotypical accent cannot be recognized from their speech until their real accents are identified.

#### **4.2 Stereotypes of Chinese English**

This study is inspired by a conversation in American TV series *Eli Stone*. There is an American character who pretends to be a Chinese doctor. He speaks a strange, fake Chinese accent to his patients. Once he reveals his real very American accent to a patient. The listener gets surprised and asks ‘What happened to your accent?’. It is shown that his Chinese accent is identified with his Chinese doctor identity. Then such a Chinese doctor suddenly speaking American English seems very surprising. The important thing is that the character reveals his reason for pretending to have a Chinese accent in the program. The reason is that when people go to a Chinese doctor, they expect ‘a foreign accent’ as he said. The expectation reflects the listeners’ stereotypes of Chinese English speakers.

American actors such as James Saito and Tzi Ma imitate a Chinese accent when they perform Chinese characters. It is shown that the American pronunciation is their real accent whereas the Chinese accent is not, even though Tzi Ma's pronunciation includes a few features of Hong Kong English. Their Chinese accents in the TV series are based on stereotypes of Chinese English. Stereotypes of Chinese English are the extreme version and standardization of distinctive features of Chinese accents. Accordingly, Chinese accents, including Hong Kong English and Chinese English on the mainland, have many distinctive features. Those features include for example L-vocalization, the absence of word-final consonants, extra final vowels and the substitution of /s/ for /θ/, etc. Some typical features are found with examples in each actor's stereotypical Chinese accent. Those features they applied in the fake accent which they do not have in real speech might be possible stereotypes of Chinese accents. Certain features of stereotypical Chinese accent are compared to corresponding features of the American accent in tables below, one for each actor.

The first actor to be analyzed is James Saito. His language features of both the General American and Chinese stereotypical accent are compared in *Table 4*:

| Chinese English                 | Examples                                     | Examples               | General American |
|---------------------------------|--|------------------------|------------------|
| The substitution of /f/ for /v/ | <i>have</i> /hæf/                            | <i>believe</i> /bɪliv/ | /v/              |
| The L-vocalization              | <i>people</i> /pipo/<br><i>needle</i> /nido/ | <i>well</i> /wɛl/      | /l/              |
| The lack of distinct            | <i>sorry</i> /sɔri/                          | <i>story</i> /stɔri/   | /i/              |

|   |  |   |                                      |
|---|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| ion between /i/ and /ɪ/                             | <i>very</i> /veri/   |   |                                      |
| The absence of word-final consonants                | <i>need</i> /ni/<br><i>relax</i> /rilæ/<br><i>close</i> /klo/<br><i>must</i> /mʌs/<br><i>make</i> /meɪ/<br><i>back</i> /bæk/ | <i>eight</i> /eɪ/<br><i>don't</i> /dɒn/ | The absence of word-final consonants |
| The glottalisation of final /t/ and /d/             | <i>good</i> /gʊʔ/<br><i>not</i> /nɒʔ/  | <i>got</i> /gət/<br><i>read</i> /rið/   | The final /t/ and /d/                |
| The substitution of /ɑ/ for /ə/                     | <i>lawyer</i> /lɔjɑ/   | <i>lawyer</i> /lɔjər/                   | /ə/                                  |
| The realization of reduced vowels in function words | <i>to</i> /tu/<br><i>for</i> /fɔr/   | <i>into</i> /ɪntə/                      | Reduced vowels in function words     |
| /æ/ being replaced by /ɛ/.                          | <i>back</i> /bæk/  | <i>happen</i> /hæpən/                   | /æ/                                  |
| The glide before /ɪ/                                | <i>impatient</i> /ɪmpetʃən/  | <i>incense</i> /ɪnsens/                 | /ɪ/                                  |
| The substitution of /l/ for /r/                     | <i>very</i> /veli/   | <i>story</i> /stɔri/                    | /r/                                  |

Table 4

Features in the left column are typical characteristics of Chinese accents. Some features come from Hong Kong English which are the lack of distinction between /i/ and /ɪ/; the replacement of /æ/ by /ɛ/; the realization of /ə/ as /ɑ/; the glottalisation of final /t/ and /d/; and the deletion of word final consonants. The glide before initial /ɪ/ is typical of the China mainland accent. Besides, the substitution of /f/ for /v/, the L-vocalization, the realization of reduced vowels in function words and the lack of distinction between /r/ and /l/ are all found in both Chinese accents. Those features except the deletion of word final consonants do not have corresponding examples in the right column. Although there are also some unreleased final stops in General American, it is not the same situation. The deletion of final consonants in Hong Kong English is entirely unconditional. There is an extreme version of elision of final consonants in the TV show. It is a strong stereotype of Saito's. Further, even though L-vocalization is discussed as a common development of English, there is no example found in Saito's speech. It means that the speaker deliberately used L-vocalization based on his stereotype. Therefore, those features in the table are identified as stereotypes of a Chinese accent. The elision of final consonants is the strongest one.

Secondly, there is an analysis of Tzi Ma's stereotypical Chinese accent. The comparison between his stereotypical accent of Chinese English and his own accent is shown in *Table 5*:

| China accent                     | examples           | examples                                     | Ma's accent |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|--|-------------|
| The substitution of /i/ for /ɪ/. | <i>very</i> /veri/ | <i>funny</i> /fʌni/<br><i>really</i> /ri:li/ | /ɪ/         |

|                                   |   |  |                             |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|-----------------------------|
| The substitution of /ɜ/ for /ə/   | <i>her</i> /hɜ/<br><i>Bauer</i> /bauɜ/                        | <i>particular</i> /pətɪkjələ/          | /ə/                         |
| L-vocalization                    | <i>well</i> /wɛɔ/<br><i>able</i> /eɪbo/                       | <i>cool</i> /kuɪ/                      | /ɪ/                         |
| Stress of the unstressed syllable | <i>component</i><br>/kəmponənt/<br><i>diplomat</i> /dɪplɒmət/ | <i>convergence</i> /kɒnvɜrdʒəns/       | The unstressed syllable     |
| Strong form of function words     | <i>to</i> /tu/<br><i>would</i> /wʊd/<br><i>but</i> /bʌt/      | <i>and</i> /ən/<br><i>should</i> /ʃəd/ | Weak form of function words |
| The extra final vowel             | <i>captured</i> /kæptʃədə/                                    | <i>weird</i> /wɪrd/                    | Final stops                 |

Table 5

From Table 5, six features of the Chinese accent are found with examples. The substitution of /i/ for /ɪ/ as in *very* /veri/ is a typical characteristic of Hong Kong English. However, if we compare to Table 3, it also occurs in Ma's real accent. Therefore, it is not his stereotype of Chinese English. The remaining five features are his stereotypes. Particularly, there is an extreme version of using stressed /ɜ/ instead of /ə/ in the unstressed syllable. Meanwhile a lot of weak function words are realized in the strong form. These two features are seen to be his strong stereotypes.

In comparison between Table 4 and 5, there are some stereotypes in common. Tzi Ma and James Saito both have stereotypes as L-vocalization and the strong form

of function words. They can be considered as more significant stereotypes of the Chinese accent.

There are several arguments considering stereotypes of Chinese English. According to Hu and Lindermann (2008), unreleased final stops is the most significant stereotype of Cantonese-accented English. It is said that Cantonese English is subject to stigmatisation. Unreleased word final stops are often used to depict a caricatured version of Cantonese English speakers in the media. There is also a stereotype of Chinese English among Chinese listeners discussed in He and Li (2009). That is Chinese English is unwelcome in China as bad English, an interlanguage which needs to be improved. He and Li (2009) found that Chinese students are not satisfied with their non-native accent. However, they are becoming increasingly aware of and tolerant toward Chinese English.

#### **4.3 Differences between Stereotypical Accent and Authentic Accent**

The transcription of my pronunciation is going to be compared to the stereotypical accents based on the same text. I am from the China mainland. I speak Mandarin and English, but do not know Cantonese at all. My accent of English can only be analyzed using Deterding (2006)'s description of Mandarin English. Certain features of Cantonese English are not in my pronunciation. There are many language features of Mandarin English identified as stereotypes. My accent does not have all these features, but only some of them. Meanwhile, I have some typical features of Chinese English which are not found in the stereotypical accent. *Table 6* for comparison is below:

|  | Authentic Chinese accent of mine | Stereotypical Chinese accent |
|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------|

|   |                                |   |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| L-vocalization                          | <i>people</i> /pi:pə/          | <i>well</i> /we:l/                        |
| extra final vowel                       | <i>plug</i> /plʌgə/            | <i>captured</i> /kæptʃədə/                |
| the realization of reduced vowels       | <i>particular</i> /pɑ:tɪkjələ/ | <i>diplomat</i> /dɪpləmət/                |
| the replacement of /ɪ/                  | <i>very sorry</i> /veri səri/  | <i>very</i> /veri/                        |
| the glide of initial /ɪ/                | <i>impatient</i> /jɪmpeɪʃənt/  | <i>impatient</i> /jɪmpeɪʃən/              |
| the substitution of /s/ for /θ/         | <i>with</i> /wɪθ/              | none                                      |
| the strong form of function words       | <i>to</i> /tu/                 | <i>would</i> /wʊd/                        |
| The substitution of /ɜ/ for /ə/         | none                           | <i>her</i> /hɜ/                           |
| /æ/ being replaced by /ɛ/.              | none                           | <i>back</i> /bæk/                         |
| the substitution of /l/ for /r/         | none                           | <i>very</i> /veli/                        |
| the substitution of /ɑ/ for /ə/         | none                           | <i>lawyer</i> /ləjə/                      |
| the glottalisation of final /t/ and /d/ | none                           | <i>good</i> /gʊd̚/<br><i>not</i> /nɒt̚/   |
| the absence of word final consonants    | none                           | <i>relax</i> /rɪlə/<br><i>close</i> /klo/ |
| the substitution of /f/ for /v/         | none                           | <i>have</i> /hæf/                         |

### Table 6

It is clearly shown that my pronunciation has seven major features of Chinese English.

Except for the substitution of /s/ for /θ/, they are all stereotypes of the Chinese accent.

First of all, it is L-vocalization found in *people*. The correct pronunciation should be /pipl/ whereas I pronounce it as /pipo/. The dark /l/ is vocalized into back vowel /o/.

Secondly, an extra /ə/ is added to the word final plosive /g/ in *plug* /plʌgə/. Third is the realization of reduced vowel in *particular* /pətɪkjələ/ instead of /pətɪkjələ/.

Cruttenden (2008) mentioned that /ə/ has a very high frequency of occurrence in unaccented syllables. /ə/ is also realized as stressed /u/ in function word *to*. Next is the fact that the short /ɪ/ is pronounced as /i/ in many words as *very* /veri/. This feature is quite common in my pronunciation especially in the environment of the word final /ɪ/.

Furthermore, I add /j/ before initial /ɪ/ in *impatient* /jɪmpetɪʃənt/. Accordingly, L-vocalization and the strong form of function words seem to be more significant stereotypes than others. They are also more significant features in my speech. Finally, the one which is not included in the stereotype of Chinese English is the substitution of /s/ for /θ/ in *with*. However, it is stated by Deterding (2006) as one of the most salient feature of Chinese accent. Other features reflecting stereotypical Chinese accent in American TV series are not found in my authentic accent.

### 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, Chinese English is becoming a new variety of English. It has its unique features of pronunciation. The stereotypes of Chinese English are standardized from distinctive features of the Chinese accent of English. In American TV series, the

stereotypical Chinese accent is used by American speakers who act as Chinese characters.

The study is done to analyze features of stereotypical Chinese English and distinguish between the stereotypical accent and the real Chinese accent. The stereotypical accents within two American TV series *24* and *Eli Stone* have been analyzed. Language features of the different accents are compared in the form of phonetic transcription. The stereotypical Chinese accent of each actor is compared firstly with his real accent, and later with my pronunciation of the same discourse. However, there is a weakness in the process of data collection. The discourses in which stereotypical Chinese English is found are re-read and recorded only by myself. My pronunciation does not reflect features of the Hong Kong accent. At the time the data was collected, the pronunciation of English from other Chinese speakers especially Hong Kong speakers could not be recorded. Since my pronunciation was recorded during the study, I might be conscious of the correct pronunciation of English. My own data may not be absolutely natural and casual. Further research on Chinese English pronunciation needs to be done.

Despite the weakness, many stereotypes of Chinese English are uncovered within the study. The stereotypes are the L-vocalization, the extra final vowel, the realization of reduced vowel both in unstressed syllables and unstressed function words, the substitution of /i/ for /ɪ/ and the glide for initial /ɪ/. The realization of reduced vowel in weak function words is Ma's strong stereotype. They are features that can be found in my real Chinese pronunciation. The L-vocalization and the

realization of reduced vowels in unstressed function words might be more significant stereotypes than others, since they are found in all transcriptions of Chinese accents. There are more stereotypes that are not found in real speech. They are the substitutions of /ɜ/ for /ə/, /ɛ/ for /æ/, /l/ for /r/, /ɑ/ for /ə/, /f/ for /v/; the glottalisation of final /t/ and /d/; and the absence of word final consonants, especially the unreleased plosives. The substitution of /ɜ/ for /ə/ is Ma's strong stereotype, while the absence of word final consonants is Saito's strong stereotype. One important feature of the real Chinese accent, which is the substitution of /s/ for /θ/, is excluded from stereotypes. The analysis has shown that the stereotypical Chinese accent in American series is different from the real accent. It is the extreme expression of features from Chinese English. Therefore, certain stereotypes are not representative of real life Chinese accent.

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## Appendices

### *Interview with Tzi Ma*

Tzi Ma, and I play Ed, the father.

/tai ma, ən ai plɛɪ ɛd, ðə fɑðər./

It was so weird, I mean, it's been a while right? I think it was like chicken and the egg thing I can't really remember.

/ɪt wəz so wɪrd, ai mɪn, ɪts bɪnə waɪl raɪt? ai θɪŋk ɪt wəz laɪ tʃɪkɪn ən ði ɛg θɪŋ ai kæn rɪli rɪmɛmbər./

I think there was only two ways to get to *Red Doors*. One was I think Freda called me and said you gotta read the script.

/ai θɪŋk ðɛr wəz ɒnli tu weɪz tə ɡetə red dɔːrs. wʌn wəz ai θɪŋk frɪdə kɔld mi ən sɛdʒu ɡətə rɪd ðə skɪpt./

I met Mya about 4 or 3 years ago. she said you should really read this script.

/ai mɛ miə əbaʊt fɔː ɔː θri jɪəz əɡo. ʃi sɛdʒu ʃəd rɪli rɪd ðɪs skɪpt./

Someone just mentioned this to me like really recent, like yesterday, you know?

/sʌmwʌn dʒʌs mɛnʃən ðɪs tə mi laɪ rɪli rɪsnt, laɪ jɛstədi, ju no?/

So I said then I better read this thing man. So I read it and I said it is really cool! You know. And then of course meeting you. That is how we get to Red Doors.

/so ai sɛd ðɛn ai bɛɾər rɪd ðɪs θɪŋ mæn. so ai rɛd ɪt ən sɛd ɪts rɪli kul, ju no. ən ðɛn əv kɔrs miːtɪŋ ju. ðæts haʊ wi ɡetə red dɔːrs./

That was fun. I mean that was kinda... It is funny you know... everything kinda gravitates towards a particular end. I think that's what happen to *Red Doors*.

/ðæt wəs fʌn. ai mɪn ðæt wəs kaɪndə... ɪts fʌni ju no... ɛvrɪθɪŋ kaɪdə ɡrævətɛts tərdz ə pətɪkjələ ɛnd. ai θɪŋk ðæts wə hæpən tə red dɔːrs./

To put in that much time, and knowing that the situation is gonna be difficult, to commit to something like this.

/tə pʊt ɪn ðæt maʊtʃ taɪm, ən noʊɪŋ ðə sɪtʃuɛɪʃən ɪz ɡʌnə bɪ dɪfɪkəlt, tə kəmɪtə sʌmθɪŋ laɪ ðɪz./

And then you really have to look out something, you know what, I love it, I wanna do it, or don't do it. Because if you doubt, everything gets like doubly hard.

/ən ðən ju rilɪ hæv tə lʊk aʊt sʌmθɪŋ, ju nɒ wə, aɪ lʌv ɪt, aɪ wʌnə du ɪt, ɔr dənt du ɪt.

bɪkɔz ɪv ju daʊt, ɛvrɪθɪŋ geɪts laɪk dʌblɪ hɑrd./

Everybody's so great, doing all different tasks they normally don't do.

/ɛvrɪbɒdɪz so greɪt, duɪŋ ɔl dɪfərənt tæsks ðeɪ nɔːmlɪ dən du./

You pull the plug and everything kinda goes to the same spot. And everybody just kinda...it was like a convergence of... you know...you should check this out.

/ju pʊl ðə plʌg ən ɛvrɪθɪŋ kaɪndə goz tə ðə seɪm spɒt. ən ɛvrɪbɒdɪ dʒʌst kaɪndə...ɪt

wəz laɪk ə kənʌvɜːdʒəns əv...ju nɒ...ju ʃəd tʃek ðɪz aʊt./

I don't always work that way. I always need this kinda focus.

/aɪ dən ɔlweɪz wɜːk ðæt weɪ. aɪ ɔlweɪz nid ðɪz kaɪndə fəʊkəs./

I really wanna do this. It is not gonna happen. Red Doors is a funny pleasure. I'm telling you. A lot of time you always differentiate what is difficult and what is the easier.

/aɪ rilɪ wʌnə du ðɪz. ɪts nɒt gənə hæpən. red dɔːrs ɪz ə fʌnɪ plezə. aɪm tɛlɪŋ ju. ə lɒt əv

tʌɪm ju ɔlweɪz dɪfərənʃɪeɪt wɒt ɪz dɪfəkəlt ən wɒt ɪz ðɪ ɪzɪə./

What you will enjoy and what you don't enjoy.

/wɒtʃu wɪl ɪndʒɔɪ ən wɒtʃu dən ɪndʒɔɪ./

I felt that of course the project needs to be good.

/aɪ fɛld ðæt əv kɔːrs ðə prɒdʒekt nidz tə bi ɡʊd/

## **24**

Her well-being is entirely up to you, Mr. Bauer.

/hɜː wɛl-bɪŋ ɪz ɪntaɪəli ʌp tu ju, mɪstə baʊə./

We felt she would be an asset we might be able to exploit one day.

/wi fɛl ʃi wʊd bi ən æsɛt wi maɪt bi eɪbəl tu ɪksplɔɪt wʌn deɪ./

But the russian suitcase nukes you captured...

/bʌt ðə rʌʃən suɪtkeɪs nuks ju kæptʃədə.../

What we want is a component from the triggering mechanism.

/wɒt wi wʌnt ɪz ə kəmponənt frəm ðə trɪgəɪŋ mɛkənɪzəm./

I suggest we leave that to the diplomats to sort out.

/aɪ sədʒes wi liv ðæ tu ðə dɪpləmət tu sɔːt aʊt./

Very well.

/veri wɛo/

***Eli Stone***

**Chinese English:**

People who need to find Dr. Chen. Now relax, close eyes.

/pipo hu ni tu fain daktə tʃɛn. nau rilæ, klo ai./

It is smart, must be good lawyer.

/jɪs smɑ, mʌs bi gu? lɔjɑ./

You say George Michael have great meaning to you.

/ju sei dʒɔrdʒ maɪko hæf greɪ miɪnɪŋ tu ju./

Yes. You no remember.

/jɛs. ju no rɪmɛmbə./

You must make peace George Micheal.

/ju mʌs meɪ pi:s dʒɔrdʒ maɪko./

Dr. Chen help you remember.

/daktə tʃɛn hɛlp ju rɪmɛmbə./

Dead parent, different needle.

/de? pɛrən, dɪfrən nɪdo./

No good hate dead people. Relax. Think good memory, father. Dr. Chen help ungrateful son.

/no gu? heɪ de? pipo. rilæ. θɪŋ gu? mɛməri, fɑðə. daktə tʃɛn hɛlp ʌngreitfəl sʌn/

You always show up no appointment. Dr. Chen not Jiffy Lube. Come back Friday.

/ju ɔlweɪs ʃo ʌ no əpɔɪnmənt. daktə tʃɛn nɔ? dʒɪfi lub. cʌm bɛ fraɪdɪ./

Dr. Chen with patient now. You get manners. Come back later.

/daktə tʃɛn wɪθ peɪʃn nau. ju ge mənəs. cʌm bɛ leɪtə/

Sign outside say 'in session', not Eli bother Dr. Chen all time.

/sʌm autsaɪd sei jɪn səʃən, nɔ jɪlaɪ bəðə daktə tʃɛn ɔl taɪm/

Very Sorry. This patient impatient You sleep five minutes

/veri sɔri. ðɪs peɪʃn ɪmpɛɪʃən. ju sli faɪv mɪnɪtɪz/

Goji berry chai, Ginseng powder, drink very slowly. Brain freeze, bad for Qi.

/godʒi beɪri tʃaɪ, dʒɪnsɛŋ paʊdə, drɪŋ vɛli slɔli. brem frɪz, be? fɔr tʃi./

**General American:**

Well that totally blows, bro.

/wɛl ðæ toʊli blɔs, bro./

Long story.

/lɔŋ stɔri./

Want beer?

/wɔnp bɪr?/

I grew up on a commune. From there, UC Berkeley, philosophy major.

/aɪ grʊ ʌp ɔn ə kəmjun. frəm ðer, UC bɜːklɪ, fəˈlɒsəfi məɪdʒər./

There is no future in existentialist ethics, so I got into acupuncture.

/ðerɪz no ˈfjuːtʃər ɪn ɛgzɪstənʃəlɪst ɛθɪks, so aɪ gɒt ɪntə ækjʊpʌŋktʃər./

Unfortunately, no body wants an acupuncturist named Frank Lebakowski.

/ʌnfɔːrtʃənɪtli, no bɒdɪ wɔntz ən ækjʊpʌŋktʃərɪst neɪm fræŋk leˈbəkəʊski./

They want incense, mystique, a foreign accent. They want the Dr. Chen.

/ðeɪ wɔnt ɪnsens, mɪstɪk, ə fɔrɪn æksent. ðeɪ wɔnd ðə dɒktə tʃen./

8 years of courses work in holistic medicine, two years in Beijing. Give me some props.

/eɪ jɪrs əv kɔrsəs wɜk ɪn hɒlɪstɪk mɛdɪsn, tu jɪrs ɪn beiˈdʒɪŋ. gɪv mi səm prɒps/

Now, tell me about the latest vision.

/naʊ tel mi əbaʊt ðə leɪtɪst vɪʒən./

Everything has two explanations, scientific and divine. It's up to us to choose which one we buy into.

/evriθɪŋ hæz tu ɪkspləneɪʃəns, saɪəntɪfɪk ən dəvaɪn. ɪts ʌp tə ʌs tə tʃuz wɪtʃ wʌn wi baɪ  
ɪntə./

Now science explains the enlarged vessel in your head.

/naʊ saɪəns ɪkspləɪns ðɪ ɪnlɑːdʒd vesl ɪn jʊr hed/

But does it explain how the girl you lost your virginity to happened to be suing your law firm? How her son happen to spell out a message to you with his blocks?

/bət dɔz ɪt ɪkspləɪn haʊ ðə gɜːl ju lɔst jʊr vɜːdʒɪnətɪ tə hæpən tə bi suɪŋ jʊr lɔ fɜːm? haʊ

hɜː sʌn hæpən tə spel aʊt ə mesɪ dʒ tə ju wɪθ hɪz blɒks./

Why not a lawyer.. a high profile attorney handling cases that got a lot of notoriety,  
that the world would read about.

/waɪ nɒt ə lɔːjər...ə haɪ prɒfaɪl ətɜːnɪ hændlɪŋ keɪsəs ðæt gət ə lat əv nɒtərəɪəti, ðæt ðə  
wɜːld wəd rɪd əbaʊt./

I don't know. I never had a patient who could be a prophet before.

/aɪ dɒn no. aɪ nəvər hædə peɪʃənt hu kəd bi ə prɒfɪt bɪfɔː./

Maybe for once, your visions mean to bring you some joy.

/meɪbi fɔː wʌns, jʊr vɪʒəns mɪn tə brɪŋ ju sʌm dʒɔɪ./

Maybe is more like remind you that you are not alone.

/meɪbi ɪz mɔːr laɪk rɪmaɪndʒu ðætʃu ɑː nɒt əlon/

With every step, You're gonna change the world.

/wɪθ evri stɛp, ju ɑː gənə tʃeɪndʒ ðə wɜːld./

Doesn't matter. That's what I believe.

/dəsn mətər. ðætʒ wɒt aɪ bɪlɪv/

### **Transcription of mine.**

#### **For James Saito's speech.**

People who need to find Dr. Chen. Now relax, close eyes.

/piːpəl hu niːd tə faɪnd dɒktə tʃɛn. naʊ rɪlæks, kloz aɪz./

It is smart, must be good lawyer.

/ɪts smɑːt, mʌs bi gʊd ə lɔːjər./

You say George Michael have great meaning to you.

/ju seɪ dʒɔːrdʒ maɪko hæv greɪt mɪnɪŋ tə ju./

Yes. You no remember.

/jɛs. ju no rɪmɛmbə./

You must make peace George Micheal.

/ju mʌs meɪk piːs dʒɔːrdʒ maɪko./

Dr. Chen help you remember.

/dɒktə tʃɛn heɪp ju rɪmɛmbə./

Dead parent, different needle.

/dɛd pɛərənt, dɪfrənt niːdlə./

No good hate dead people. Relax. Think good memory, father. Dr. Chen help ungrateful son.

/no gud heit dæd pi:pə. rilæks. θɪŋk gud mɛməri, fɑðə. dæktə tʃɛn hɛlp ʌŋgrɛɪtful sʌn/

You always show up no appointment. Dr. Chen not Jiffy Lube. Come back Friday.

/ju oʊweɪs ʃoʊ ʌp no əpɔɪntmɛnt. dæktə tʃɛn nɒt dʒɪfi lub. ɔlɪm bæk fraɪdɪ./

Dr. Chen with patient now. You get manners. Come back later.

/dæktə tʃɛn wɪθ peɪʃnt naʊ. ju get mænərs. ɔlɪm bæk leɪtə/

Sign outside say 'in session', not Eli bother Dr. Chen all time.

/saɪn aʊtsaɪd seɪ ɪm sɛʃən, nɒt ɪlaɪ bəðə dæktə tʃɛn ɔ taim/

Very Sorry. This patient impatient You sleep five minutes

/veri sɔri. ðɪs peɪʃnt ɪmpɛɪʃənt. ju slɪp faɪv mɪnɪtɪz./

Goji berry chai, Ginseng powder, drink very slowly. Brain freeze, bad for Qi.

/gɒdʒi bɛri tʃaɪ, dʒɪnsɛŋ paʊdə, drɪŋk veri sləʊli. breɪn frɪz, bəd fɔr tʃi./

### **For Tzi Ma's speech.**

It was so weird, I mean, it's been a while right? I think it was like chicken and the egg thing I can't really remember.

/ɪt wəz so wɪrd, aɪ mɪn, ɪts bi:nə waɪə raɪt? aɪ θɪŋk ɪt wəz laɪ tʃɪkɪn ən ði ɛg θɪŋ aɪ

kæn rɪli rɪmɛmbə./

I think there was only two ways to get to *Red Doors*. One was I think Freda called me and said you gotta read the script.

/aɪ θɪŋk ðɛr wəz ɒnli tu weɪz tə getə rɛd dɔ:rs. wʌn wəz aɪ θɪŋk frɪdə kɒd mi ən sɛdʒu

gətə rɪd ðə skrɪpt./

I met Mya about 4 or 3 years ago. she said you should really read this script.

/aɪ mɛt maɪə əbaʊt fɔr ɔr θri jɪəz əgə. ʃi sɛdʒu ʃəd rɪli rɪd ðɪs skrɪpt./

Someone just mentioned this to me like really recent, like yesterday, you know?

/sʌmwʌn dʒʌs mɛnʃən ðɪs tə mi laɪk rɪli rɪsnt, laɪ jɛstədeɪ, ju no?/

So I said then I better read this thing man. So I read it and I said it is really cool! You know. And then of course meeting you. That is how we get to Red Doors.

/so aɪ sɛd ðɛn aɪ bɛtə rɪd ðɪs θɪŋ mæn. so aɪ rɛd ɪt ən sɛd ɪts rɪli ku, ju no. ən ðɛn ɔv

kɔrs mɪrɪŋ ju. ðæts haʊ wi getə rɛd dɔ:rs./

That was fun. I mean that was kinda... It is funny you know... everything kinda gravitates towards a particular end. I think that's what happen to *Red Doors*.

/ðæt wəs fʌn. aɪ mɪn ðæt wəs kaɪndə... its fʌni ju no... evrɪθɪŋ kaɪdə grævətɪts tərdz

ə pətɪkjʊlə end. aɪ θɪŋk ðæts wət hæpən tə rɛd dɔːrs./

To put in that much time, and knowing that the situation is gonna be difficult, to commit to something like this.

/tu pʊt ɪn ðæt maʊtʃ taɪm, ən noʊɪŋ ðə sɪtʃuːɪʃən ɪz ɡənə bɪ dɪfɪkəʊt, tə kəmɪtə smθɪŋ

laɪ ðɪz./

And then you really have to look out something, you know what, I love it, I wanna do it, or don't do it. Because if you doubt, everything gets like doubly hard.

/ən ðən ju rɪlɪ həv tə lʊk aʊt smθɪŋ, ju no wə, aɪ lʌv ɪt, aɪ wənə du ɪt, ɔː dənt du ɪt.

bɪkəʊz ɪv ju daʊt, evrɪθɪŋ ɡets laɪk dʌbli hɑːd./

Everybody's so great, doing all different tasks they normally don't do.

/evrɪbədɪz so greɪt, duɪŋ əl dɪfrənt tæskz ðeɪ nɔːmli dən du./

You pull the plug and everything kinda goes to the same spot. And everybody just kinda...it was like a convergence of... you know...you should check this out.

/ju pʊl ðə plʌɡ ən evrɪθɪŋ kaɪndə ɡoʊz tə ðə seɪm spɒt. ən evrɪbədɪ dʒʌst kaɪndə...ɪt

wəz laɪk ə kənʌvdʒəns əv...ju no...ju ʃəd tʃek ðɪz aʊt./

I don't always work that way. I always need this kinda focus.

/aɪ dən əlweɪz wɜːk ðæt weɪ. aɪ əlweɪz niːd ðɪz kaɪndə fəʊkəs./

I really wanna do this. It is not gonna happen. Red Doors is a funny pleasure. I'm telling you. A lot of time you always differentiate what is difficult and what is the easier.

/aɪ rɪlɪ wənə du ðɪz. ɪts nɒt ɡənə hæpən. rɛd dɔːrs ɪz ə fʌni pleʒə. aɪm təlɪŋ ju. ə lɒt əv

taɪm ju əlweɪz dɪfərənʃɪeɪt wət ɪz dɪfɪkəʊt ən wət ɪz ðɪ ɪziə./

What you will enjoy and what you don't enjoy.

/wɒtʃu wɪl ɪnʒɔɪ ən wɒtʃu dən ɪnʒɔɪ./

I felt that of course the project needs to be good.

/aɪ feʊ ðæt əv kɔːrs ðə prədʒekt niːdz tu bi ɡʊd/