

# Comparative Analysis of Chinese Proficiency Grading Vocabulary Between HSK2.0 and HSK3.0

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## Abstract

As the top-level design of international Chinese education at the HSK3.0 stage, Chinese Proficiency Grading Standards for International Chinese Language Education are improved in many aspects compared with International Curriculum for Chinese Language Education (Revised Edition) at the HSK2.0 stage. The requirements for vocabulary part of these two files are quite different in terms of total vocabulary quantity, difficulty, marking method and content. After comparative analysis, it is found that the new standard is more inclusive, practical and innovative in vocabulary part.

**Keywords:** international Chinese education, Chinese proficiency grading standard, vocabulary, comparison

## 1. Introduction

At the end of March 2021, *Chinese Proficiency Grading Standards for International Chinese Language Education* (GF0025-2021) (hereinafter referred to as *Standards*) was issued by the Ministry of Education and the State Language Commission as the language specification of global Chinese language education. It came into effect on the 1st of July, 2021. The *Standards* divides learners' Chinese proficiency into three grades and nine levels, and uses four basic elements, namely syllables, Chinese characters, vocabulary, and grammar to form a four-dimensional benchmark, and takes verbal communication ability, topic-based tasks and language quantitative indicators as three evaluation dimensions and takes Chinese listening, speaking, reading, writing and

translation as the five language skills, so as to accurately calibrate the Chinese language level of learners. This Standards directly guide and connect the HSK test.

HSK is the abbreviation of Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi, which is literally translated as the Chinese Language Proficiency Test, and is China's national standardized test designed to assess the Chinese language proficiency of non-native speakers such as foreign students and overseas Chinese. (Yanjiang Teng, 2017). It is a multi-level, multi-purpose proficiency test for Chinese language. The current version of HSK was first introduced in November 2009. Before that, the old version was in place for more than two decades, starting from 1984. In the context of the Chinese government's policy of promoting Chinese language internationally,

two major reforms were reflected in the current version of HSK. First, the difficulty of the test was lowered, with the aim of serving as a springboard rather than as a stumbling block for learners to learn Chinese. Second, instead of assessing linguistic knowledge in the old HSK, the current HSK version aims at assessing test takers' language skills for communication. (Y Peng, W Yan & L Cheng, 2021)

Liu Yinglin (2021) divided the development of HSK into three stages. The first stage is the pioneering stage, namely the HSK1.0 stage, from 1984 to 2008. At this stage, the HSK test was created, and it was divided into three grades: basic, junior high, and advanced, with a total of eleven levels. The second stage is the transition period, namely the HSK2.0 stage, from 2009 to 2020. In this stage, in order to meet the needs of learners around the world, HSK has been reformed and divided into six levels, which lowered the learning threshold, greatly increased the number of test centers and examinees around the world, and achieved the popularization of HSK to a certain extent. The third phase is the systematization period, starting in 2021. The *Standard*, as the top-level design of international Chinese education, pioneered a new path of 3+5 Chinese proficiency evaluation, making that HSK moves towards the 3.0 stage. Yanjiang Teng (2017) also divided the development of HSK into three stages: Old HSK, HSK (Revised) and New HSK. The old HSK is just the HSK1.0 in Liu's division, and HSK (Revised) and New HSK both belong to HSK2.0, but just explained in a more detailed way. So, we can see that the emergence of the new *Standards* will lead to brand new changes and reforms of HSK.

Vocabulary, as one of the elements of language, has always been an inevitable part of all kinds of language proficiency levels and programmatic documents, and is an important part of international Chinese education. In the HSK2.0 stage, the programmatic documents mainly related to the vocabulary of Chinese proficiency levels include *The Graded Chinese Syllables, Characters and Words for the Application of teaching Chinese to the speakers of other languages* (hereinafter referred to as *Graded CSCW*) released in 2010 and the *International Curriculum for Chinese Language Education (Revised Edition)* released in 2014 (hereinafter referred to as *Curriculum*). *Graded CSCW* introduced syllables for the first time which is a breakthrough, with

Chinese characters as the core, and became the first three-dimensional benchmark national standard for syllables, Chinese characters and words in international Chinese teaching. But it only divided each of the dimension into three levels. It includes appendices for advanced learners, but it does not directly match the requirements of the HSK test. From the perspective of guiding the practice of teaching Chinese as a foreign language, the *Curriculum* describes the course objectives, the language skills, language knowledge, strategies, culture and other aspects that learners should involve. The vocabulary is reflected in the *Most Frequently Used Chinese Vocabulary List (Level 1 to 6)*, which directly matches the level 1-6 of HSK2.0. At the same time, the 2012 version of the Chinese proficiency level vocabulary can also be downloaded from the resource center of the Chinese Testing Service Website ([www.chinesetest.cn](http://www.chinesetest.cn)). This glossary has the same content as the *Most Frequently Used Chinese Vocabulary List (Level 1 to 6)* in the Outline, but the compilation method is slightly different. In the HSK3.0 stage, the *Standards* is the main propositional basis of HSK, and vocabulary, as one of its four language quantitative indicators, is bound to have an impact on HSK3.0. In order to understand the similarities and differences in the vocabulary requirements of the two different stages of HSK, we have conducted a comparative study on the vocabulary content of the *Standards* and the *Curriculum*.

## 2. Comparison of Total Vocabulary Requirements

There are six levels in the *Curriculum*. The vocabulary requirements for Level 1 to 6 are 150, 300, 600, 1200, 2500 and 5000 and above, which respectively corresponds to A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2 level of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEF). The *Standards* divides Chinese language proficiency into three grades and nine levels. Elementary and Intermediate grades have specific indicators, but no subdivision is made for senior grade (level 7 to 9). Vocabulary is one of the four indicators of language quantification. The cumulative total for level 1 to 6 are 500, 1272, 2245, 3245, 4316, and 5456, respectively, and the cumulative total for level 7 to 9 is 11,092. From a total point of view, the vocabulary of the *Standards* is twice more than that of the *Curriculum*, which shows that the overall requirements have doubled.

According to the *Curriculum*, level 1 and level 2

correspond to elementary grade, level 3 and level 4 correspond to the intermediate grade, and level 5 and level 6 correspond to the advanced grade. Vocabulary quantity of the three grades of the *Curriculum* generally correspond to 2245, 3211 and 5636. Through the longitudinal comparison of the two syllabuses and the three grades, the *Standards* has an increase of 648% in elementary vocabulary, 257% in intermediate, and 48% in advanced vocabulary on the basis of the *Curriculum*. It can be seen from this data that the requirements for elementary and intermediate grades have increased sharply, and the advanced grade has only increased by about 0.5 times, which is relatively moderate. Horizontally, the levels of *Standards* are more detailed, and the span between levels is relatively flat.

### 3. Changes in Vocabulary Difficulty

We call level 1-6 of the *Curriculum* the original level 1-6, and the level 1-9 of *Standards* as the new level 1-9, and match the vocabulary lists of the two standards (see Table 1 for comparison results). It was found that 87% of the original level 1 vocabulary entered the new level 1; 55% of the original level 2 vocabulary also entered the new level 1, 26% remained at the new level 2, and 12% did not match, which means there was

an adjustment; 63% of the original level 3 vocabulary appeared in the new standard level 1-2, 15% appeared in the new level 3, 10% did not match which means these words are adjusted; 57% of the original level 4 words appeared in the new level 1-3, 23% appeared in the new level 4, 17% appeared in the new level 5-9; 55% of the vocabulary of the original level 5 appeared in the new level 3-4, only 16% remained in the new level 5, and 16% rose to the new level 7-9; 53% of the original level 6 appeared in the new level 7-9, which remained at the advanced level, 14% appeared in the new level 5, 10% appeared in the new level 6, and 17% did not match.

It can be seen that the original level 1 is basically kept at the new level 1, and more than half of the vocabulary of the original level 2 and 3 is downgraded to the new level 1-2 vocabulary, and more than half of the vocabulary of the original level 4 has been reduced to the new level 2-3, and more than half of the new words of the original level 5 are reduced to the new level 3-4. More than half of the new words of the original level 6 are retained in the new level 7-9, 14% are reduced to the new level 5, 10% remain in the new level 6, and the rest which are adjusted through deletion, replacement or other ways, accounted for 17%.

**Table 1.** The *Curriculum's* vocabulary distribution in the *Standards*

Original level (Vocabulary requirements)	N L1	N L2	N L3	N L4	N L5	N L6	N L7-9
O L1 (150)	130	8	3	1	0	0	0
O L2 (150)	82	39	6	3	1	1	0
O L3 (300)	54	134	45	28	8	0	1
O L4 (600)	10	152	180	138	70	13	18
O L5 (1300)	2	54	345	370	203	58	210
O L6 (2500)	0	1	59	93	347	242	1325

Description: In this table, O L1 indicates original level 1, other O Ls share the same meaning, N L1 indicates new level 1, other N Ls share the same meaning.

From another perspective (see Table 2), 26% of the vocabulary of the new level 1 are from the original level 1, 16% are from the original level 2, 11% are from the original level 3, and the proportion of newly added words is 44%; in the new level 2, the newly added words in the vocabulary account for 49%, the original 1-2

level words only accounts for 6%, and the original 3-4 words account for 37%. It can be seen that the approximate difficulty of the new level 2 vocabulary is equivalent to the original level 3-4. Among the new level 3 vocabulary, the original level 4 vocabulary accounts for 19%, the original level 5 vocabulary accounts for 35%, the

original level 4-5 vocabulary accounts for 54%, and the newly added vocabulary accounts for 34%. It can be seen that the approximate difficulty of the new level 3 vocabulary is similar to the original level 4-5. Among the new level 4 vocabulary, the original level 4 vocabulary only accounts for 14%, the original level 5 vocabulary accounts for 37%, and the original level 6 vocabulary accounts for 9%. It can be seen that the new level 4 vocabulary mainly comes from the original level 5 vocabulary and newly added vocabulary. The new level 5 vocabulary mainly comes from the original level 5 (19%) and the original level 6 (32%), and 41% of the newly added vocabulary. In both the new level 6 and

new level 7-9, newly added vocabulary accounts for 72% of the total, and the rest are almost all from the original level 6 vocabulary. Overall, the vocabulary requirements have been upgraded. The intermediate-level words in the original syllabus have basically become elementary-level words in the new standards, the advanced-level words in the original syllabus are downgraded to the intermediate-level words in the new standards, and many difficult words have been added to the advanced-level words in the new standards. The change in difficulty reflects that the requirements for vocabulary in Chinese learning is getting higher and higher.

**Table 2.** The proportion of word sources at all levels in the *Standards*

New Standards	Total Amount	Newly added		O L1		O L2		O L3		O L4		O L5		O L6	
		Vocabulary	Ratio	Vocabulary	Ratio	Vocabulary	Ratio	Vocabulary	Ratio	Vocabulary	Ratio	Vocabulary	Ratio	Vocabulary	Ratio
L1	500	221	44%	130	26%	82	16%	54	11%	11	2%	2	0%	0	0%
L2	772	381	49%	8	1%	39	5%	135	17%	154	20%	54	7%	1	0%
L3	973	332	34%	3	0%	7	1%	45	5%	182	19%	345	35%	59	6%
L4	1000	358	36%	2	0%	3	0%	30	3%	139	14%	373	37%	94	9%
L5	1071	441	41%	0	0%	1	0%	8	1%	71	7%	203	19%	347	32%
L6	1140	822	72%	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%	15	1%	60	5%	242	21%
L7-9	5636	4072	72%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%	19	0%	213	4%	1331	24%

Description: The meaning for O L and N L in table 2 is the same as those in table 1.

#### 4. Comparison of Labeling Methods of Vocabulary Outlines

Both *Curriculum* and *Standards* are marked with words combined with pinyin. There is no pinyin in the vocabulary list downloaded from Resource Center of the Chinese Examination International Website. The *Standards* adds affixes in the word list. For affixes, it is marked by typical words added in a bracket, together with pinyin, for example 家 (科学家 scientist), jiā. Another change worth paying attention to is the concurrent word. In the *Standards*, if the pinyin of some concurrent word are different for each part of speech, it directly shows the different pinyin. If their pinyin are the same, it is marked by directly remarking the part of speech besides the new word. However, there is only one way

to remark parts of speech in a bracket in the vocabulary list downloaded from the Resource Center of Chinese Testing Service Website. We compared the quantity of concurrent words in the two standards and found that there are a total of 178 concurrent words in the *Standards*, while the *Curriculum* has only 20. It can be seen that the *Curriculum* has less coverage of concurrent words. The quantity of concurrent words of *Standards* has been greatly increased, and most of them have been marked.

#### 5. Comparison of Vocabulary Content in Vocabulary Outline

##### 5.1 Deletion of Part of Content of Curriculum

The *Standards* deletes and eliminates the vocabulary list of the *Curriculum* in four aspects:



first, the conjunctive pairs of complex sentence, such as 虽然 (although)...但是 (but)..., which is obviously not in the category of new words, are deleted; the second is to delete some Verb-object phrases, such as 打篮球 (play basketball), 弹钢琴 (play the piano), etc.; third, delete some infrequent or outdated words, such as 名胜古迹 (places of interest), 墨水儿 (ink), 殖民地 (colonies), 占线 (busy lines), 应聘 (to apply for a job), etc., as well as some proper nouns, such as 长江 (Yangtze River), 黄河 (Yellow River) etc., as well as some animal names and subject names; fourth, delete some dialect words, colloquial words, modal particles, ancient words, etc., ancient words such as 犬 (dog), 沐浴 (bath), 舟 (boat), 雌雄 (male and female), dialect words such as 咋 (how), 啥 (what), 甬 (do not), etc., modal particles, such as 呵 (ah), 嗯 (um), 哈 (ha), etc., the English translation word, such as 嗨 (hi).

## 5.2 Expansion of Standards Vocabulary

The *Standards* expands the vocabulary from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives. In terms of quality, which is reflected in the definition of vocabulary, that is, vocabulary is more loosely defined from a broader sense, including an increased coverage of language units, from affixes to vocabulary, from phrases to grammatical points. In the new *standards*, all can be lexicalized and reflected in the glossary. In terms of quantity, some new words have been added on the basis of the *Curriculum*.

### 5.2.1 Expansion up and down the Lexical Level

#### (1) Affixes

Affixes are added to the vocabulary list, including prefixes and suffixes, such as 第 (prefix, for ordinals), 子 (suffix, for person or stuff), etc.

#### (2) Phrase lexicalization

The new *standards'* vocabulary list includes many phrases in the traditional sense, including resultant and directional complements of verb-complement structure, noun phrases, verb-object phrases, and other fixed phrases or formats.

The lexicalization of the verb-complement structure is reflected in the addition of the words with a verb-resultant complement inner structure, such as 记住 (remember), 听见 (hear), 来到 (come), 听到 (hear), 见到 (see), 找到 (find), 交给 (give), 想到 (think), 做到 (do), 打破 (break), 赶到 (arrive), 打败 (defeat),

隔开 (separate), 走开 (go away), 递给 (hand over), 看成 (see as), 看出 (see), 拿到 (take), 碰到 (come across), 碰见 (come across), 收到 (receive), 等到 (wait for), 送到 (deliver), 送给 (give), 穿上 (put on), 解开 (untie), 推开 (push away), 分开 (separate), 抓住 (grasp), 离不开 (can not leave) and so on. It is also reflected in the addition of new words with a verb-directional complement inner structure and its extension usages: 回到 (return), 回来 (come back), 回去 (go back), 进来 (come in), 进入 (enter), 留下 (stay), 拿出 (take out), 提出 (put forward), 提到 (mention), 走过 (go through), 走进 (enter), 做到 (do), 发出 (send out), 想起 (think of), 找出 (find out), 走过 (walk by), 走进 (walk in), 传来 (come in), 发出 (send out), 认出 (recognize), 上来 (come up), 上去 (go up), 列入 (enter), 收回 (take back), 停下 (stop), 下来 (come down), 下去 (go down), 过来 (come over), 放下 (put down), 坐下 (sit down) and so on.

Some noun phrases are also lexicalized, and are reflected in place nouns in vocabulary list, such as 地上 (on the ground), 家里 (at home), 路上 (on the road), 楼上 (upstairs), 楼下 (downstairs), 身上 (on the body), 车上 (in the car), etc.; some time nouns are newly added in *standards*, such as 下个月 (next month), 好久 (long time), 上个月 (last month), etc.; some other noun phrases are also included in the new vocabulary list, such as 全家 (whole family), 全身 (whole body), etc.

Some Verb-object phrases are lexicalized, which are reflected in verb-object words, such as 看病 (see a doctor), 上车 (get into the car), 上课 (go to class), 下车 (get off the car), 下课 (class over), 开机 (turn on the machine), 在家 (at home), 出门 (go out), 出院 (leave the hospital), 关机 (shut down the machine), 住院 (be in hospital), 做饭 (cook), 过日子 (live a life), 搬家 (move house), 分组 (divide into groups), 下楼 (go downstairs), 上楼 (go upstairs), etc., are all new words included in the new *standards*.

Some fixed phrases, collocations, or fixed expressions are included as new words in the *Standards*, such as 干什么 (what to do), 没什么 (nothing), 没事 (nothing), 请问 (can I ask), 请进 (please come in), 请坐 (please sit down), 是不是 (do you), 不在乎 (don't care), 不一定 (not necessarily), 赶不上 (can't catch up), 好不容易 (finally), 开会 (have a meeting), 表面上 (superficially), 没想到 (unexpected), 一般来说 (generally speaking), 想不到 (unexpected), 怎么办 (what to do), 基本上 (basically), 没用

(useless), 没法儿 (no way), 不用 (no need to), 不对 (not right), etc.

### (3) Lexicalization of language points

Some language points of the old *Curriculum* are downgraded to vocabulary, including 实际上 (actually), 事实上 (in fact), 越来越 (more and more), 看起来 (look), 看上去 (look), 能不能 (can), 一方面 (on the one hand), 决不 (never), 有没有 (has), 是不是 (is), 不能不 (can't), 从不 (never), etc., which were language points in the old *Curriculum*, but appear as vocabulary in the new *Standards*.

### (4) Lexicalization of tenses

Another major feature of the new *Standards* is that the vocabulary also incorporates the tense of verb, so that some tenses also appear lexicalized in some words, such as the word 见过 (have seen).

## 5.2.2 Enrichment Ways in Vocabulary Quantity

### (1) Many new adverbs and classifiers are added

The new *Standards* greatly enriches adverbs and classifiers, adding many new words to these two categories. The adverbs such as 不够 (not enough), 不太 (not quite), 不大 (not often), 早就 (early), 不必 (not necessary), 不光 (not only), 好好 (well), 就是 (just), 慢慢 (slowly), 早已 (already), 全都 (all), 偷偷 (secretly), 从不 (never), are added; the classifiers are also greatly increased, reflecting the feature that Chinese language has rich classifiers.

### (2) Expansion through morphemes

As Sri Haryanti (2014) points out, when learning Mandarin, students must understand clearly what morpheme and word are and the difference between morpheme and words as well as their relevant application. Consequently, as students improve their vocabulary knowledge and its application, they will be able to acquire better language proficiency.

Another major feature of the new *Standards* is the expansion of vocabulary based on morphemes. For example, the vocabulary of the morpheme 男 (male) includes 男孩 (boy), 男朋友 (boyfriend), 男人 (man), and 男生 (boy); the morpheme 边 (side) has 东边 (east side), 南边 (south side), 西边 (west side), and 北边 (north side); the morpheme 药 (medicine) has 药店 (a pharmacy), 药片 (pills), 药水 (potions); similar ones like 以后 (later), 以上 (above), 以外 (beyond), 以下 (below), 运动会 (sports meeting), 运动员 (athlete), 摄像 (to shot), 摄像

机 (camera), 摄像师 (cameraman) and so on.

### (3) Add new era elements

With the development of the times, many new things and new words have appeared, and new *Standards* have also kept pace with the times, and added many new words, such as 写字楼 (office building), 外卖 (takeaway), 公务员 (civil servants), 语音 (voice), 分享 (share), 奥运会 (Olympic Games), 微信 (WeChat), 网址 (website address), 共享 (share), 微博 (Weibo), 多媒体 (multimedia), 多方面 (multi-faceted), 峰会 (summit), 高科技 (high-tech), 太阳能 (solar energy), 可乐 (cola), 巴士 (bus), 大巴 (bus), 电动车 (electric vehicle), 特价 (low price with discount), 套餐 (package) and so on. Some old words have new conceptual meanings, and they have also been marked differently. For example, the word 牛 (bull) originally only serves as a noun regarding its part of speech, now in the new *Standards* level 5 vocabulary, its new part of speech—being an adjective, was added, and this part of speech was marked with parentheses.

### (4) Add Chinese cultural elements

Some common cultural words have been added to the new *Standards*, including Chinese culture words, such as 请客 (invite guests), 毛笔 (writing brush), 梅花 (plum blossom), 中华 (China), 中医 (traditional Chinese medicine), 中华民族 (Chinese nation), 爱国 (patriotism), 茶叶 (tea leaves), 诚信 (integrity), 白酒 (liquor), 今日 (today), 明日 (tomorrow), 能否 (whether or not), 佛教 (Buddhism), 佛 (Buddha), 清明节 (Qingming Festival). Some common expressions in Chinese culture, such as 酸甜苦辣 (ups and downs), 悲欢离合 (joys and sorrows), 一路平安 (a safe journey), 一路顺风 (a smooth journey) and vocabulary from other cultures, such as 基督教 (Christianity), are all absorbed in the new *Standards*.

### (5) Add different expressions of synonyms

The new standard has included different lexical expressions of the same or similar concepts, with synonyms such as 心中, 心里 (both mean in the heart); 英语, 英文 (both mean English language); 美元, 美金 (both mean US dollar), etc. The inclusion of these synonyms makes the vocabulary of the new standard more abundant and inclusive.

### (6) Add new construction phrases

The new standard adds some new phrases, such as 开夜车 (stay up late), 爆冷门 (upset).

(7) Add a lot of colloquial words and colloquial formats

One of the important features of the new *Standards'* vocabulary is the increase of spoken words and spoken formats, such as 比如说 (for example), 不好意思 (sorry), 不行 (no), 不一会 (not a while), 的话 (if, sometimes can be omitted if the speaker uses 如果), 接下来 (next), 天上 (in the heaven), 听讲 (listen to the lecture), 一点点 (a little), 有空 (free), 干嘛 (why), 工夫 (time), 空儿 (time), 老头儿 (old man), 老太太 (old lady), 有的是 (have a lot), 大姐 (eldest sister), 大爷 (uncle), 大妈 (aunt), 后头 (back), 老公 (husband), 没错 (yes), 搞好 (do it well), 个儿 (height), 完了 (finished), 也好 (alright), 用不着 (no need), 只不过 (just), 罢了 (nothing), 不怎么 (not so+adj.), 不怎么样 (not so good), 从不 (never), 待会儿 (later), 很难说 (it is hard to say), 就是说 (that is to say), 就算 (even), 说实话 (tell the truth), 算了 (forget it), 外头 (outside), 晓得 (know), 要不然 (or else), 要么 (or), 眼看 (seeing), 有没有 (whether or not), 这就是说 (that is to say), 按理说 (logically speaking), 别提了 (don't mention it) and so on.

### 5.3 The Parts Corresponding to the Adjustment of the Old and New Outlines

#### 5.3.1 Lexicalization of Some Morphemes in the Curriculum

Some morphemes in the *Curriculum* are used alone rarely. In the new *Standards*, they are all adjusted to the corresponding high-frequency disyllabic words, such as 春 (spring) appears in the *Curriculum* as a word itself, but in the *Standards*, we find two related disyllabic words 春天 and 春季 (both mean spring) which are used more frequently in people's daily life; the weather condition words, such as 阴 (cloudy) and 晴 (sunny), are respectively adjusted to 阴天 (cloudy days) and 晴天 (sunny days); color words, such as 黑 (black), 红 (red), 黄 (yellow), 蓝 (blue), 绿 (green) are also adjusted to 黑色 (black), 红色 (red), 黄色 (yellow), 蓝色 (blue), 绿色 (green). There are also some words that have relatively fixed collocations in daily use. The new standard adjusts these words to their fixed collocations, such as 搬 (move) changes to 搬家 (move house), 哈 (ha) to 哈哈 (haha), 胸 (chest) becomes 胸部 (chest), 汗 (noun, sweat) becomes 出汗 (verb, sweat), 雷 (noun, thunder) becomes 打雷 (verb, thunder), 沐浴 (bath) becomes 沐浴露 (shower gel), 清真 (halal) becomes 清真寺 (mosque), 橙 (orange) becomes 橙汁 (Orange Juice), 纵横 (criss)

cross) becomes 纵横交错 (crisscross), 追悼 (mourning) becomes 追悼会 (memorial meeting), 耸 (rise straight up) becomes 耸立 (rise straight up), etc.

#### 5.3.2 Phraseification of Partial Verbs in the Curriculum

Some words in the *Curriculum* are fixedly used in combination with other words, so the new *Standards* directly replace these words in the *Curriculum* with these fixed collocation phrases, such as 致力于 (dedicated to) instead of 致力 (dedicated to) appears in the new standards, 以至于 (so that) replaces 以至 (so that), and 愈来愈 (more and more) replaces 愈 (more).

#### 5.3.3 Refinement of Lexical Meaning

The new *Standards* also refined some words and corrected inaccurate Chinese characters. For example, the 熊猫 (panda) in the old *Curriculum* can refer to both giant pandas and red pandas due to the ambiguous meaning, causing confusion in understanding. In the new *Standards*, it is adjusted to 大熊猫 (giant panda), and the old *Curriculum's* 桔子 (orange) changes to 橘子 (orange), and 启程 (departure) changes to 起程 (departure) in the new *Standards*.

#### 5.3.4 Simplification that Keeps Pace with the Times

Some affixes are frequently used, making the core part of the word more important, and affixes become dispensable, such as the 多元化 (diverse) of the old *Curriculum* becomes the 多元 (diverse) of the new *Standards*.

#### 5.3.5 Scalability Enhancements

The 百分之 (percent) in the *Curriculum* has been changed to 分之 (parts of) in the new *Standards*, and the word unit of quantity has also increased by 万 (trillion), 亿 (billion), so more words and usages can be derived, such as 十分之 (tenths), 百分之 (percent), 千分之 (thousandths), 万分之 (ten thousandths), etc., so, the new *Standards'* vocabulary shows higher scalability in quantitative expression.

## 6. Characteristics of Vocabulary in the New Standards

Through the comparative analysis of the vocabulary of *Curriculum* and *Standards*, we found that the new *Standards* are more inclusive, practical and innovative.

### 6.1 Inclusion

In the new *Standards*, the vocabulary is more inclusive. Its inclusion does not only reflect in



the broad definition of vocabulary, but also in the quantity of vocabulary. As a broader concept, vocabulary includes grammatical structures, content at the levels of various linguistic units such as resultant and directional complements, phrases, colloquial constructions, and fixed collocations, and even the tense of some verbs. The boundaries between vocabulary, phrases and grammar are more blurred, and as long as there is a need for expression, it can appear in the vocabulary list. This reflects the idea and concept that everything can be lexicalized as long as it helps Chinese learning. In terms of the quantity of vocabulary, through morpheme expansion, adding elements of new era, adding Chinese cultural elements, adding different expressions of synonyms, morpheme lexicalization, etc., the total quantity of vocabulary is doubled, which shows that the new standards are all-inclusive and abundant.

#### 6.2 Practicality

The criteria for the inclusion of words in the new standard are practical. It contains a large number of spoken words and spoken formats in the elementary and intermediate grades, which fully reflects the characteristics of spoken Mandarin Chinese. It is very practical for learners to apply what they have learned. Advanced-level words tend to be words which are used more in written language as a whole, which can meet the needs of advanced learners. Different levels meet different learning needs, which is highly practical.

#### 6.3 Innovation

The definition of vocabulary in the new standard is innovative, and the standard for including new words fully reflects innovation. It does not limit the definition of words to the traditional narrow sense, nor does it collect them directly from the authoritative dictionary of native speakers, but from the perspective of learners. After careful consideration, the best collection method is found to help learners understand the meaning of words to the greatest extent and predict errors in advance so that the learners can avoid making these errors. Some of the words included in the new *Standards* are not even found in the Modern Chinese Dictionary. It includes vocabulary not only from the perspective of vocabulary, but also from a macro perspective as a whole, taking factors such as language points and verbal communication into account. Some language points, such as

resultant complements, directional complements, possibility complements, etc., are both important and difficult points for Chinese L2 learners. The new *Standards* innovatively include these fixed structures as vocabulary into the vocabulary list, which can help second language learners avoid making errors.

### 7. Conclusion

*Standards* are the top-level design of international Chinese education at the HSK3.0 stage. It pioneered a new path of 3+5 Chinese proficiency evaluation, and divided Chinese proficiency into three grades and nine levels. For level 1-6, specific indicators are put forward, but for level 7-9 which are together regarded as advanced grade in the *Standards*, there is no subdivision. The overall vocabulary requirement of the *Standards* is doubled, which is more than twice than that of the *Curriculum* at the HSK2.0 stage. The difficulty of vocabulary has been upgraded. The intermediate-level words in the *Curriculum* have basically become the elementary words in the *Standards*, and the advanced-level words in the *Curriculum* are downgraded to the intermediate-level words in the *Standards*. Many difficult words have been added to the advanced-level section, which shows that the HSK3.0 stage has higher and higher requirements for Chinese language learners to master vocabulary.

By comparing the vocabulary of the *Curriculum* and the *Standards*, it is found that the *Standards* have deleted and adjusted some of the content of the *Curriculum* and expanded the vocabulary. The expansion of vocabulary mainly includes two types: through the expansion up and down the lexical level and through different ways to enrich the quantity of vocabulary. Among them, in the expansion up and down the lexical level, the *Standards* lexicalizes affixes, phrases, language points and voices, all of which are included in the vocabulary as new words. The ways to expand the vocabulary are also very diverse, including adding more new words in some parts of speech, expanding through morphemes, adding new era elements, adding Chinese cultural elements, adding synonyms with different expressions, adding new construction phrases and adding many more spoken words, spoken format. The corresponding adjustment of the old and new syllabus is reflected in lexicalizing some morphemes, phrasing some verbs, refining the meaning of vocabulary, enhancing the scalability



of quantifiers, and simplifying with the times in the *Standards*. After comparison, we can conclude that the new *Standards* are more inclusive, practical and innovative.

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