Hou Min. *A Dictionary of Chinese Neologisms (2000–2020).* 2023, XL + 786 pp. ISBN 978-7-100-21777-4 (Hardback). Beijing: The Commercial Press. Price $17.69.

The Chinese language has been developing at a faster pace than ever before, which can be attributed to China's fast economic development and rapid technological advances. As a result, the Chinese vocabulary has experienced exponential growth with new lexical items cropping up at an unprecedented rate. Every year witnesses the addition of at least 800 new Chinese words (excluding many buzzwords, topical words and nonce words), which is comparable to that in the English language. The publication of dozens of dictionaries of Chinese neologisms is reflective of the rapid growth of the Chinese vocabulary. Since the beginning of the 21st century, more than thirty dictionaries devoted to the chronicling of Chinese neologisms have been published.

As one of the most famous researchers on Chinese neologisms, Professor Hou Min has published several neologisms dictionaries in a series entitled *An Annual List of Chinese Neologisms* (汉语新词语). The annual list was first published in 2006 under the editorship of Zhou Jian and Hou Min picked up the baton in 2007. From 2006 to 2018, every year saw the publication of a new edition, each of which records about 300 to 500 neologisms. Its 2015 edition, for instance, includes 471 neologisms that were culled from a corpus of 1.2 billion words, as is exemplified by headwords like 点赞贴 (rave post), 毒丸计划 (poison pill), 孤儿药 (orphan drug), 零工经济 (gig economy), 人口悬崖 (demographic cliff), 私播客 (SPOC), etc. Hou Min passed the baton to Zou Yu, her long-time co-editor in 2018. Since then, a new edition of the list has been published every two years.

In 2023, Hou Min published *A Dictionary of Chinese Neologisms (2000–2020)* which, as is explained in the guide to the use of the dictionary, includes about 4 200 neologisms that were created from 2000 to 2020. As the series upon which DCN was based were compiled with the help of a 5-billion-character corpus, DCN was able to indicate the frequency of its headwords by using a four-star labelling system. Those words appearing over 2 000 times are labelled with five stars, such as 表情包 (meme), 差评 (negative comment), 创客 (creator, maker), 发帖 (to post), 华丽转身 (great makeover) and 僵尸企业 (zombie company). Those appearing less than 100 times are considered low-frequency, such as 鼻影 (nose shadow), 床东 (bedlord college student who rents out his dormitory bed), 导览器 (audio guide), 婚闹 (wedding hazing), 盲约 (blind date) and 情侣衫 (matching couple tops). Another advantage of being corpus-based is the easy extraction of illustrative examples. DCN should be commended for its provision of two examples for almost all of the headwords. 边会 (bilateral or multilateral meeting), for instance, is furnished with two illustrative examples taken from *People's Daily* and *Beijing Evening Paper* respectively.

As DCN takes a corpus-based approach to new-word lexicography, it is able to reflect the latest lexical changes, which can be manifested in its inclu-

sion of two types of words. The first type concerns itself with the COVID-19 pandemic, and DCN has included at least a dozen COVID-related words, such as 鼻拭子 (nose swab), 额温枪 (forehead thermometer), 方舱医院 (mobile hospital), 封城 (lockdown), 健康码 (health code), 流调 (epidemiological survey) and 新冠肺炎 (COVID-19). The second type is related to online words and expressions which cropped up since the beginning of the century. DCN recorded scores of such words and expressions and provided the label "〈网〉" (online) for them. Some of the most popularly used online expressions include 标题党 (one who posts messages and articles using exaggerated or sensationalized titles), 菜鸟 (newbie), 点赞 (to like), 杠精 (person who argues for the sake of arguing, contrarian), 青蛙 (literally a frog, a very ugly man), 社畜 (overworked and exploited employee), 实锤 (smoking gun), 小白 (literally small white, newbie) and so forth.

　　Etymologically speaking, there are several types of Chinese neologisms. Yang and Yang (2009: 97-98) identified six types, namely new words, new meanings of existing words, dialectal or regional words that are enjoying wider currency, loanwords of all kinds, English initialisms and acronyms or lexical hybrids that contain both letters and Chinese characters, and finally, numbers used as words. These types are all present in DCN. Overall, the neologisms in the dictionary can be classified into the following categories. Firstly, a large proportion of headwords that the dictionary records are influenced by other languages, particularly the English language. Most of these words are loan translations from English, as is shown in Table 1:

Table 1:   Loan translations from English

Chinese headword	Source word in English	Chinese headword	Source word in English
暗网	dark web	第一先生	first gentleman
白金卡	platinum card	电子烟	e-cigarette
爆米花电影	popcorn movie	二手烟	second-hand smoke
边缘计算	edge computing	翻转课堂	flipped classroom
财政悬崖	fiscal cliff	间隔年	gap year
触屏	touch screen	口红效应	lipstick effect
词云	word cloud	路怒	road rage
大数据	big data	人盾	human shield

The second type of loanword is transliterations from English. Examples of this type include 艾特 (the sign @), 布基尼 (burkini), 玛丽苏 (Mary Sue), 慕客 (mook),

跑酷 (parkour), 披萨 (pizza), etc. In some entries, the source languages from which the headwords are derived are indicated right after the definitions, and such etymological information can be found in entries such as 乐活 (from English, LOHAS), 脸基尼 (from English, facekini), 尼特族 (from English, NEET), 罐头笑声 (from English, canned laughter), 轰趴 (from English, home party) and 提拉米苏 (from English, tiramisu). Neighboring languages such as Japanese and Korean have also contributed new lexical items to the Chinese language, as can be attested in headwords such as 达人 (expert, master), 卡哇伊 (kawaii), 森女 (mori girl), 手办 (garage kit), 宅男 (homebody) and 正太 (cute prepubescent young boy) from Japanese, 吃播 (mukbang), 韩流 (Hallyu, Korean wave) and 辛奇 (kimchi) from Korean. Another type of loanword that deserves mention is the so-called "letter words" (字母词), namely directly borrowed English initialisms and acronyms. The number of such borrowings has been on a steady increase, as can be seen from such entries in the appendix for words beginning with a Latin alphabet in the different editions of the authoritative *The Contemporary Chinese Dictionary*. The 1996 edition only recorded 39 such words while the number increased to 142 in the revision of 2002. In the sixth edition (2012), these words have increased to 241. They have been attracting more public attention due to the controversy over their exclusion in the A-to-Z part of Chinese dictionaries. DCN followed in the footsteps of the major general Chinese dictionaries, and put the list of neologisms beginning with signs, numerals and letters in an appendix which contains fifty pages and records more than 500 words. The majority of such words are English initialisms (e.g. ADSL, COO, O2O, UPS), and there are also combinations of numerals and Chinese characters, most of which should not be regarded as loanwords (e.g. "10后 person born after 2010," "B站 the website of Bilibili," "C字头 high-speed intra-city train beginning with the letter C").

Secondly, DCN includes over 50 Chinese characters, many of which are existing ones that have acquired new meanings. 二 (the numeral two), for instance, can now be used as an adjective meaning "stupid." Other frequently used old characters with new meanings are shown in Table 2. Some of them are rather productive as they can form many compounds.

Table 2:   Characters with new meanings

Character	Old meaning(s)	New meaning
吧	used to soften the tone	bar, recreational facility
菜	vegetables, dishes	incompetent, inferior
处	place, department	director, department head
导	to lead, to guide	to direct, director
嗨	hi, hey	high, feeling euphoric

壕	moat, trench	uncultured nouveau riche
麦	wheat, barley	mike, microphone
萌	to bud, to sprout	cute, adorable
喷	to spurt, to gush	to criticize
扫	to clean with a broom, to sweep	to scan

刷 is a case in point. Originally meaning "to brush, to scrub," it now has obtained several new meanings like "to swipe (a card)," "to browse," "to be ID'd through scanning," "to write, to finish," etc. As a result, DCN recorded 27 compounds formed with 刷, such as 刷爆 (to exhaust the credit limit of one's bank cards), 刷脸 (to scan one's face), 刷屏 (to refresh the webpage or screen) and 刷题 (to do a large number of exam questions). There are also a few new Chinese characters coined mostly online in the dictionary. 囧, for instance, was previously used as an emoticon expressing embarrassment, helplessness, awkwardness, or surprise, and now it has not only become an established Chinese character, but also spawned several new compounds like 囧剧 (light comedy with embarrassing scenes), 囧片 (movie with awkward or embarrassing scenes), 囧事 (embarrassing matter), 囧态 (embarrassment), etc.

Thirdly, DCN has recorded hundreds of abbreviations or clippings. Unlike English, there are no initialisms or acronyms in Chinese. But to shorten a longer word has already become an ever-expanding trend, which may to some extent resemble clipping or blending in English. According to Zhang (2008: 267), shortened words account for 10.9% of all the new words she surveyed. In the past two decades, this kind of new words has greatly increased, which might be attributed to the factor that people tend to use shorter words not only on social media, but also on other informal occasions. Newly clipped Chinese words usually involve the deletion of one or more Chinese characters, as is indicated in the examples in Table 3.

Table 3:   New clippings in Chinese

Clipped words	Full forms	English equivalent
半马	半程马拉松	half-marathon
超跑	超级跑车	supercar
创投	创业投资	venture capital
春招	春季招生	spring enrollment
单反	单镜头反光式取景照相机	single-lens reflex camera

电竞	电子竞技	eSports
电商	电子商务	e-commerce
黑五	黑色星期五	Black Friday
人盾	人肉盾牌	human shield
人肉	人肉搜索	to dox

Fourthly, characters or words that function like affixes or combining forms have played a key role in forming new derivatives or compounds. 族, originally meaning "tribe, clan" and "ethnic group," is used as a suffix-like character that can be attached to nouns, verbs, etc., referring to a group of people with common features. DCN did a fairly thorough job in including over 20 neologisms ending with 族, such as 乐淘族 (people enjoying shopping around), 留守族 (people who prefer to stay behind), 慢活族 (people living a simple and slow-paced life), 漂泊族 (people living a wandering life), 穷忙族 (the working poor), 穷游族 (people traveling on a budget), 银发族 (silver-haired people) and 月光族 (people who live paycheck to paycheck). Other characters or words that have formed at least four new words are indicated in Table 4.

Table 4:   Productive characters or words

Character or word	Meaning	Examples
超级	super-	超级联系人 (supercontact), 超级细菌 (super-bug), 超级月亮 (supermoon)
电子	electronic, e-	电子发票 (e-invoice), 电子护照 (e-passport), 电子垃圾 (electronic waste)
客	guest	拼客 (group buyer), 晒客 (person who shares things with others online), 职客 (person who charges a fee through providing job information)
秒	second	秒办 (to get it done quickly), 秒回 (to return a message immediately), 秒杀 (to seckill)
奴	slave	房奴 (person who works hard to pay off their mortgage), 孩奴 (parent who tries hard to satisfy their children's needs), 卡奴 (person who is unable to pay off their credit card debt)

拼	to share	拼车 (to carpool), 拼友 (person who shares the expenses)，拼租 (to rent together)
闪	flash	闪辞 (to resign shortly after being recruited), 闪赔 (to settle a claim immediately), 闪送 (to deliver within a short period)
微	micro-, Weibo or WeChat	微评 (to make comments on Weibo), 微商 (a WeChat business), 微塑料 (microplastics)
友	friend	车友 (fellow driver), 摄友 (fellow photograph buff), 微友 (fellow Weibo or WeChat user)
云	cloud	云媒体 (cloud media), 云课堂 (cloud classroom), 云平台 (cloud platform)

Fifthly, DCN also includes dozens of proper names ranging from company names to proprietary products. Those names that are well known internationally include 百度 (Baidu, a Chinese IT giant), 比特币 (Bitcoin), 谷歌 (Google), 脸书 (Facebook), 拼多多 (Pinduoduo, an online retailer), 欧冠 (European Championship), 淘宝 (Taobao, a Chinese e-commerce giant), 推特 (Twitter), 雅思 (IELTS) and so forth.

Finally, DCN records over 280 new meanings for existing characters, words and expressions. Although the Chinese language boasts many polysemous words, their number is definitely not comparable to that in the English language. However, in recent years we have seen a steady rise in new meanings created for existing words. A case in point is 八卦 (bagua), the eight divinatory trigrams according to *I Ching*, which can be used as an adjective, a verb and a noun, meaning "gossipy," "to gossip" and "gossip." Other examples are shown in Table 5.

Table 5:   Words that have obtained new meanings

Headword	Original meaning	New meaning (s)
成绩单	report card, academic transcript	performance
干爹	adoptive father	sugar daddy
过山车	roller coaster	something characterized by unpredictable changes
恐龙	dinosaur	very ugly man
免费午餐	free lunch	something that is seemingly free of charge

皮肤	skin	customized graphic user interface
骑手	horseman, rider	motorcyclist, delivery man
钱包	wallet, purse	income, wealth

What makes DCN more readable and useful is its provision of rich etymological information and the three appendices. In some entries very detailed etymological information has been furnished, explaining in depth the origin of the headwords or providing background information, as is exemplified for neologisms such as 吃瓜群众 (onlookers, bystanders), 地球堂兄 (Earth's cousin), 共享经济 (sharing economy), 光盘行动 (clean your plate), 抗埃 (to fight against the Ebola virus) and 世遗 (World Heritage). The three appendices DCN has, containing more than 160 pages, are quite useful: the first one, as was previously mentioned, lists those frequently used neologisms beginning with signs, numerals and letters, which appeared after 1990s; the second one, lists over 600 hundred neologisms that were formed in the twentieth century and have not been recorded by *The Contemporary Chinese Dictionary*; the third one, a paper entitled "A survey on the use of neologisms in contemporary Chinese," sheds light on the use of 4 263 neologisms through analyzing their distribution, frequency, word-formational features, etc.

DCN is not immune to problems that often plague monolingual and bilingual neologisms dictionaries. The major deficiencies in DCN lie in the coverage of headwords and the provision of microstructural information. The problems with its headwords can be manifested in four aspects. Firstly, some of the headwords in DCN do not qualify as neologisms as they may be terms in certain fields or free combinations of at least two words, such as 大众旅游时代 (era of mass tourism), 独生子女护理假 (care leave for one's single child), 非首都功能 (functions nonessential to the role as the capital), 国际球员 (international player), 积木型住宅 (houses resembling building blocks), 浏览器主页劫持 (pagejacking), 马铃薯主粮化 (potato as a staple food), 农民安家贷 (loans granted to farmers to buy apartments), 舌尖上的腐败 (corruption through attending dinner banquets) and 隐形贫困人口 (invisible poverty-stricken population). Secondly, DCN has also committed the so-called "sin of omission," which is reflected in its failure to record two types of words: new words etymologically or semantically related to headwords already recorded and new words that are being frequently used. Examples of the first category include 钓鱼 (phishing, "钓鱼网站 phishing site" has been recorded), 扶贫 (to alleviate poverty, "扶贫云" has been recorded), 喷饭 (to split one's sides with laughter, "喷饭剧" has been recorded), 气候变化 (climate change, "气候债 climate debt" has been recorded), etc. As for the second category, notable absentees include 孵化器 (incubator), 加密货币 (cryptocurrency), 评论区 (comments section), 上线 (higher-level members of a pyramid scheme) and 网络诈骗 (Internet fraud, online fraud).

Microstructure-wise, DCN also leaves room for improvement, especially in its definitions, etymological information and labelling. Occasionally, the dictionary provides wrong definitions. 二面, for example, is interpreted as the second interview, but as the two illustrative examples show, it should refer to the second round of the interview. The definition for 碳补偿 (carbon offset) is also problematic as it has been considered a synonym for 碳中和 (carbon neutrality). According to ODE, carbon offset is defined as "an action intended to compensate for the emission of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere as a result of industrial or other human activity, especially when quantified and traded as part of a commercial scheme" while carbon-neutral is interpreted as "making or resulting in no net release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, especially as a result of carbon offsetting." Sometimes the wording for the definition may seem inappropriate, as is exemplified by what is provided for 键盘侠 (keyboard warrior) — a person who is cowardly and selfish in real life but acts righteously and makes bold comments online, which differs greatly from how ODE defines keyboard warrior, "a person who makes abusive or aggressive posts on the internet, typically one who conceals their true identity." The definition of 以太币 (Ethereum) also needs improvement. DCN defines it as a cryptocurrency that can be used to purchase virtual products and can be traded as well, but this definition can be applied to other cryptocurrencies like 比特币 (Bitcoin) and 泰达币 (Tether).

Etymologically, some of the headwords in DCN have been folk-etymologized. 奇异果, a transliteration of kiwifruit is said to be created because of the similar shape of Chinese gooseberry and the kiwi, a national bird of New Zealand. This may be pure conjecture as most English dictionaries including the OED do not provide any etymology for kiwifruit. Although *Wiktionary* provided detailed etymological information for the word, its explanation that the fruit got its name because its fuzzy brown skin resembles the plumage of the bird differs from what DCN describes. In the same vein, the etymology of 洗绿 (to greenwash) leaves room for improvement as it was not created in the same way as 洗钱 (money-laundering). To be precise, greenwashing, as is indicated in *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, is a blend of "green" and "brainwashing."

The labelling in DCN also leaves a lot to be desired. The editor explains in the front matter that the dictionary adopts different policies of providing POS labels for words with three or more characters (e.g., three-character words being labelled on a case-by-case basis), which is unfriendly to users. The provision of labels for three-character words may seem haphazard. 霸王餐 is a case in point. It is interpreted as "do not pay one's meal at a restaurant, or can be likened to jawboning," but it is unlabeled, even though the phrase in which it is used (namely 吃霸王餐 "to dine and dash") is indicated after the definition. Moreover, DCN may have provided wrong POS labels for some headwords. 终面, for example, is defined as "the final round of interview," but is labeled as a verb. It is also quite strange to see that both 线上 (online) and 线下 (offline) are labelled as nouns. The only problem that can be identified with DCN's provision of illustrative examples lies in the fact that it provides examples showing

wrong uses of the headwords. 霸凌 (to bully), for instance, is labelled as a verb, but its two illustrative examples showed its nominal use.

Dictionaries have always been viewed as the mirror of society, and dictionaries of neologisms may offer a better reflection of societal changes as they record the latest lexical changes. DCN, with its useful selection of Chinese neologisms and an abundance of illustrative examples, will undoubtedly serve its purpose of informing users who are interested in the lexical changes taken place in the Chinese language in the first two decades of the 21st century.

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