Du Ruiqing and Jiang Yajun. *New Century Chinese–English Dictionary*. Third Edition. 2025, XXXVIII + 2490 pp. ISBN 978-7-5213-5418-8 (Hardback). Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. Price $54.43.

The *New Century Chinese–English Dictionary* (NCCED) was first published by Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press in 2003. Adopting the guiding principle of "Readers first, practicality foremost" advocated by the late Professor Hui Yu, its editor-in-chief, the dictionary aimed to include words and expressions that could reflect the present times while paying special attention to the recording of neologisms that had emerged in the previous decade. With a coverage of 140,000 entries and a heavy focus on the use of phrasal illustrative examples, the dictionary gradually established itself as one of the most popular C–E dictionaries in China. Du Ruiqing took over as editor-in-chief of the second edition which was published in 2016, and the dictionary had 8,100 additional entries and 74,000 revisions, boasting a total of 150,000 entries. The inclusion of neologisms in the dictionary was rather praiseworthy as its compilers had made extra effort to record new words and expressions created because of economic and social development. The word 网络 (online or network) had 98 sub-entries, which is evidence enough of its comprehensiveness in the coverage of neologisms. Thanks to its wide coverage, excellent translation quality and successful app launch, NCCED2 has so far stood out as one of the best C–E dictionaries now available. In consequence, it has been widely reviewed or written about. A keyword search in CNKI, a database of Chinese academic papers, came up with over 50 reviews and papers.

The publication of NCCED3 has been long expected and desired as the past few years have witnessed the creation of hundreds or even thousands of neologisms in the Chinese language. The second edition, though still popular among its wide readership, has failed in many ways to meet their needs. The third edition, co-edited by the late Professor Du and Jiang Yajun, came out after a seven-year revision. As is mentioned in the introduction written by Jiang, the revision mainly revolved around the collection of new words and new meanings, and the improvement upon deficiencies related to the coverage, translation, and illustrative examples in the previous edition. The newness of the dictionary can be illustrated by the following two examples. The first example is related to the addition of the new medical term 新冠 (COVID-19) and many examples containing the term. In the entry for 新冠, three sub-entries have been furnished, namely 新冠肺炎 (old term for 新冠感染), 新冠感染 (COVID-19; coronavirus disease 2019), and 新冠疫苗 (COVID-19 vaccine). Besides, dozens of related examples have been provided throughout the dictionary text, such as 注射新冠疫苗 (vaccinate sb. against COVID-19), 新冠病毒感染疫区 (COVID-19-affected area), 新冠病毒奥密克戎变异株 (the Omicron variant of SARS-CoV-2), 保持社交距离 (enforce/practice social distancing), and 他新冠核酸检测呈阳性 (His COVID-19 nucleic acid test came back positive). The second example is related to one of the most popular buzz-

words — 人工智能 (artificial intelligence; AI). The editors not only revised the entry through the addition of two examples (namely "人工智能技术 artificial intelligence technology" and "人工智能算法 artificial intelligence algorithm") and the provision of related entries such as 生成式人工智能 (generative artificial intelligence; generative AI) and 大语言模型 (large language model; LLM), but also provided three more related examples in other entries, namely 人工智能的创始人 (founding father of artificial intelligence), 人工智能产业方兴未艾 (The AI industry is on the upswing), and 人工智能是一种赋能技术 (Artificial intelligence is an empowering technology).

NCCED3 has included about 4,000 new entries, many of which were selected with the help of existing Chinese dictionaries, corpus data, and online search. These new words are used in various aspects of human life, as can be exemplified by the entries shown in Table 1:

Table 1:   Types of neologisms recorded in NCCED3

Different types	Entries
Political or social buzz-words	人类命运共同体 (global community of shared future), 新质生产力 (new quality productive force)
Technological terms	人形机器人 (humanoid robot), 月面着陆器 (lunar/moon lander)
Environmental terms	碳达峰 (carbon dioxide peaking; carbon peak)，碳中和 (carbon neutrality)
Online words and expressions	秒回 (reply instantly; respond immediately; shoot back instantly), 破防 (breach one's psychological defenses; be emotionally overwhelmed)
Fashion terms	汉服 (*hanfu* [traditional styles of clothing worn by the Han ethnic group])，马面裙 (*mamianqun* [a type of traditional Chinese skirt])
Proper names	长三角 (Yangtze River Delta), 粤港澳大湾区 (Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area)

Besides, NCCED3 has also recorded the new uses of many existing words. 数字, for instance, had three senses in the second edition, namely "characters that denote amounts", "numeral; figure; digit", and "quantity; amount", and the new edition has recorded its adjective use — "digital". Other new meanings that have found their way into NCCED3 are shown in Table 2:

Table 2:   New meanings recorded by NCCED3

Entries	Original sense(s)	New sense(s)
弹幕	barrage	bullet screen; bullet comment
拍	clap; racket; beat; shoot; flatter; auction	purchase on an online store
奇葩	exotic flower; extraordinarily beautiful flower	extraordinary literary or artistic work; oddball; weirdo; freak
搜索	look for; search (for)	[computing] search
团	round; roll; regiment; body; group; ball-shaped object …	group-buy
雾化	atomize	nebulize; nebulizer therapy/treatment
应用	apply; use; put to use; applied	app; application
云	cloud	[computing] cloud

Thirdly, the editors of NCCED3 have provided many existing entries with illustrative examples which not only encompass phrases and short sentences, but also include compound words or terminology formed with the entry word, as is exemplified by the entries in Table 3:

Table 3:   New illustrative examples in NCCED

Entries	New illustrative example(s)
电子烟（e-cigarette）	吸电子烟 (vape; vape an e-cigarette)/吸电子烟会损伤你的 DNA (vaping could damage your DNA)
峰会 (summit)	全球气候峰会 (global climate summit)
付款 (pay a sum of money)	扫码付款 (pay by scanning a QR code)
射击 (shooting)	残奥会射击 (shooting Para sport)
首演 (debut)	参加首演 (attend the premiere)
搜索引擎 (search engine)	搜索引擎优化 (search engine optimization)
网购 (online shopping)	网购可以节约大量时间 (shopping online is a great time-saver)
新常态 (new normal)	进入新常态 (enter a new normal)
延迟 (delay; postpone)	延迟退休 (delay retirement)

Moreover, considerable improvement has been made to the new edition, which is manifested in the following two aspects: the improvement of the translations for headwords and the replacement of existing illustrative examples. The editors made special efforts to amend the translations of many entries. 香菇, for instance, was translated as "fragrant mushroom; wood mushroom" which has been changed into "Chinese (black) mushroom", apparently a much better equivalent. Other entries whose translations have been amended are shown in Table 4:

Table 4:   The amendment of translations

Entries	Original translation(s)	Amended translation(s)
热搜	hot search list; trending list	hot/trending search; trending hashtag/topic
包子	baozi; steamed stuffed bun	bao; baozi; bao bun; steamed stuffed bun
飞碟射击	skeet shooting	clay pigeon/target shooting
电子手账	electronic organizer; personal digital assistant	digital planner; electronic planner
群主	group master	group administrator/owner
木鱼	wooden fish	wooden fish; fish-shaped woodblock; temple block
电子烟	electronic cigarette	electronic cigarette; e-cigarette
相声	xiangsheng; comic dialogue; crosstalk	xiangsheng; cross talk

Translation-wise, the adoption of the pinyin system for culture-specific words in NCCED3 is rather commendable. As a matter of fact, such practice has long been adopted by C–E dictionary-makers. In NCCED1, the editors translated 粽子 through a combination of transliteration and explanation, namely "*zongzi* — pyramid-shaped dumpling made of glutinous rice wrapped in bamboo or reed leaves [usu. eaten during the Dragon Boat Festival]". In the third edition, the editors have adopted transliteration in the translation of more culture-specific terms, such as *fensi* for 粉丝 (cellophane noodles), *Huagu* for 花鼓 (flower drum), *meihuazhuang* for 梅花桩 (plum-blossom stake), *tangbao* for 汤包 (steamed dumplings filled with juicy meat and gravy), *tangyuan* for 汤圆 (stuffed dumplings made of glutinous rice flour served in soup), and *tanghulu* for 糖葫芦 (skewered fruit coated in hardened sugar syrup). Besides, they have also made some changes to the existing body of illustrative examples, the purpose of which is to make them keep pace with the changes of the times or to improve the wording. In the entry for 邮件 (email), for instance, one of the original examples — 备份邮件到 CD (backup [sic] emails to CD) — has been replaced by 备份电子邮件到云存储账户

(backup emails to one's cloud storage account). Similar changes have been made to the entries shown in Table 5:

Table 5:   The replacement of some illustrative examples

Entries	Previous example	Current example
倡导 (advocate)	倡导计划生育 (advocate family planning)	倡导全民阅读 (promote nationwide reading)
手机 (mobile)	3G 手机 (3G mobile)	5G 手机 (5G mobile)
倘若 (if; supposing)	倘若那嫌疑犯开枪，就当场击毙他 (Should the suspect open fire, shoot him dead right away.)	倘若那嫌疑人开枪，就当场击毙他 (Should the suspect open fire, shoot him dead right away.)
物有所值 (be good value for money)	买这辆车要花5万美元，但还是物有所值 (The car will cost $50,000 but it is cheap at the price.)	买这辆车要花30万元，但还是物有所值 (The car will cost 300,000 yuan but it is cheap at the price.)
一线 (front line)	抗击非典的一线医护人员 (doctors and nurses in the front line of the fight against SARS)	抗击新冠的一线医护人员 (doctors and nurses in the front line of the fight against COVID-19)

NCCED3 is also praiseworthy for its provision of some new features that include 翻译点津 (Translation suggestions), 翻译速查 (Translations for related terms), and 话题词汇 (Related words and expressions). There are altogether 132 boxes containing very useful information that is conducive to improving one's translation skills and enlarging one's vocabulary as well.

However, NCCED3 still leaves room for improvement when it comes to the selection of headwords, the coverage of neologisms, the translations of the entries and illustrative examples, and the provision of examples. Some of the words in the dictionary, neologisms in particular, are chosen purely for the fact that their English equivalents are neologisms in the first place even though these Chinese counterparts are not being frequently used in Chinese. This deficiency can be illustrated by its inclusion of 网购踩点 (literally "examination before online shopping"). The term can be considered a nonword as there is virtually no result when searched in search engines like Google, and it is a far-fetched equivalent for the English neologism *showrooming* which is defined by *Oxford Dictionary of English* as "the practice of visiting a store or stores in order to examine a product before buying it online at a lower price". Other terms in NCCED3 that have been selected not in accordance with its usual criteria

include 不首先使用 (no first use), 池浮游生物 (heleoplankton, known more as 沼泽浮游生物), 臭氧消耗物质 (ozone-depleting substances, known more as 消耗臭氧层物质), 数字基础设施 (digital infrastructure), 网站人流量 (web traffic), etc.

The failure to record some of the latest Chinese neologisms has plagued C–E dictionaries for years as it was quite difficult for Chinese dictionary-makers to fully record the new lexicon due to various reasons. NCCED3 is not immune to this failure. As the second volume of *The Chinese English Dictionary (Unabridged)* (CEDU) was published in June 2024, we can make a comparison of the new entries recorded in the two dictionaries (as is indicated in Table 6).

Table 6:   A comparison of NCCED and CEDU in their coverage

Main entry	NCCED	CEDU
免疫 (immunity)	30 entries (e.g. 免疫反应 [immune response] and 免疫抗体 [immune antibody])	15 entries (e.g. 免疫缺陷 [immuno-deficiency] and 免疫原 [immu-nogen]) and 26 sub-entries (e.g. 免疫测定 [immunoassay] and 免疫信息学 [immunoinformatics])
纳米 (nanometer)	3 entries (e.g. 纳米材料 [nanomate-rial] and 纳米技术 [nanotechnol-ogy])	4 entries (e.g. 纳米机器人 [nano-robot] and 纳米纤维 [nanofibre]) and 17 sub-entries (e.g. 纳米计算机 [nanocomputer] and 纳米医学 [nanomedicine])
气候 (climate)	5 entries (e.g. 气候疗法 [climatic treatment] and 气候学 [climatol-ogy])	one entry (气候变化 [climate change]) and 30 sub-entries (e.g. 气候罢工 [climate strike] and 气候危机 [climate crisis])
碳 (carbon)	52 entries (e.g. 碳汇 [carbon sink] and 碳信用 [carbon credit])	93 entries (e.g. 碳补偿 [carbon off-set] and 碳足迹 [carbon footprint])

Some newly emerged Chinese words have been conspicuously missing from NCCED3. The character 脑 (brain) has formed many compounds in the past couple of years, such as 脑洞 (avenue to the brain; brain crease), 脑补 (figure out the picture or actual meaning), 脑雾 (brain fog), and 脑腐 (brain rot). However, these words have failed to make their way into NCCED3. Also missing from NCCED3 are some widely known Chinese food items or culinary terms like 韭菜盒子 (fried Chinese leek dumpling), 麻辣烫 (hot, spicy soup of meat and vegetables), 螺蛳粉 (*luosifen*), 香锅 (spicy numbing stir-fry pot), etc. As far as the recording of new scientific terminology is concerned, NCCED3 has also done a poor job. China National Committee for Terms in Sciences and Technologies (CNCTST), a governmental agency in charge of regulating the use of terminol-

ogy, has recently released the top ten scientific and technological terms of the year 2024, namely 人工智能+ (artificial intelligence plus), 低空经济 (low-altitude economy), 月背采样 (take samples from the far side of the moon), 量子科技 (quantum technology), 具身智能 (embodied intelligence), 混合现实 (mixed reality), 生物制造 (biomanufacturing), 近零碳 (nearly zero-carbon), 实景三维 (real-scene 3D), 微核糖核酸 (microRNA, miRNA). Unfortunately, NCCED3 has recorded none of them. In the same vein, some new meanings of existing words have been not recorded by NCCED3, such as 钓鱼 (entrap somebody; originally "angle; fish"), 队友 (mate, one's husband or wife; originally "teammate; fellow player"), 落地 (implement, put into effect; originally "fall to the ground"), 赛道 (track; originally "racetrack"), 虚拟 (virtual; originally "suppositional; hypothetical; invent"), 野蛮 (unrestrainedly; originally "uncivilized; savage"), and 移动 (its adjective use "mobile"; originally "move; shift").

Moreover, NCCED3, though generally viewed as the go-to dictionary for translators, has a mountain to climb as regards the quality of translations for some of its headwords and illustrative examples. The translations for many words beginning with the character 网 are rather problematic. 网红店 (Instagrammable store), for instance, has been translated into "trending shop" and "trending store", but these two translations are not idiomatic in the English language: there is no record of *trending shop* and one occurrence of *trending store* (appeared in an Indian media outlet) in the NOW corpus. Other entries whose translations need improvement are listed in Table 7:

Table 7: Suggested amendment for the translation of headwords containing 网

Entry word	Current translation(s)	Suggested version(s)
网红打卡地	trending photo spot	Instagrammable spot
网络红人	Internet sensation; Internet/web celebrity; blue-eyed boy/girl on the Internet	Internet sensation; online celebrity; influencer
网络水军	online hirelings	army of paid posters online
网络文学	net literature	online literature
网络语言	net talk; net language; cybertalk; Internetese; netspeak	cyberspeak; cybertalk; netspeak
网络主播	network anchor	online anchor; livestreamer

Similar problems can be identified in the translations of other categories of words. A case in point is 肉包子 which was translated into "steamed bun with stuffing of minced meat" in NCCED1, and in the second edition, two more equivalents — *bakpau* and *bah-pau* — were put before the previous translation. These two additions, however, are not English words. According to *Wiktionary*, *bakpau*, a variant

spelling of *bakpao*, originated from Xiamen Hokkien and is an Indonesian word while *bah-pau* seems to be its variant form. What caused the confusion may be attributed to the fact there is indeed a kind of Hokkien snack popular in Singapore and Malaysia that is known as *kong bak pau* (扣肉包). Therefore, it is suggested that deletion should be made of these two equivalents. Improvement of translations can also be suggested for the entries in Table 8:

Table 8:   Suggested translations for various kinds of words

Entries or subentries	Existing translation	Suggested translation or improvement
低调	low-key	low-key; low-profile
木须肉	muxu pork	moo shu (pork)
人肉搜索	*renrou* search; human flesh search; cyber manhunt ...	doxxing
手机	mobile/cellular phone; mobile; handset	mobile/cellular phone; cell phone; mobile; celly
小白菜	pak choi; bok choy, small Chinese cabbage [a variety of Chinese cabbage]	bok choy; pak choi; Chinese cabbage
远程办公	telework; telecommute	telecommute; work remotely

Finally, the excessive use of transliteration may sometimes backfire. 龙, for instance, has been widely accepted as the Chinese equivalent for *dragon*. But as 龙 conveys a positive meaning in the Chinese culture and *dragon* a negative one in the Western culture, many people believe the use of *dragon* as the equivalent of 龙 to be inappropriate. As a result, there has been some clamor for the use of *loong* to replace *dragon* in academia, and the editors of NCCED3 have obviously sided with this view by adopting *loong* (as opposed to *long* which unfortunately is a homonym of the English word *long*). As *loong* is by no means in accordance with the pinyin system, we believe *Chinese dragon* which has been recorded by the OED will do in this case. Other entries in which the use of pinyin is unnecessary include 国潮 (*guochao*; Chinese trend; China chic), 摔碗酒 (*shuaiwanjiu; shuaiwan* wining [drink-and-smash-wining]), 唐装 (*tangzhuang; tang* suit [a type of traditional Chinese garment]), 网红 (*wanghong*; Internet/online celebrity ... influencer), etc.

Meanwhile, the translations for some illustrative examples in NCCED3 are unidiomatic or may contain grammatical errors. Let's look at one example for 构建 (construct; establish; constitute) — 构建中国话语和中国叙事体系 which was translated into "establish our own discourse and narrative". This translation apparently sounds unidiomatic and even smacks of Chinglish, therefore it should be replaced by "develop China's discourse and narrative system". Similarly, the

translations for the following examples should be improved upon, such as "营造清朗的网络空间 ensure a clean and healthy cyberspace" (the article *a* should be deleted), "国产片又甩出了王炸 Domestic cinema has thrown out another ace." (it might be replaced by "There is a new blockbuster in the domestic box office."), "春节相互拜年是中国的传统习俗 It is a traditional Chinese custom to exchange visits at the Spring Festival" (the latter part might be changed into "pay each other visits during the Spring Festival"), and "党内斗争不久就公开了 The struggles within the party soon came/broke into the open" ("infighting" is a much better choice than "struggles").

NCCED3 would have been better if more examples were provided for some frequently used terms. 社交媒体 (social media), for example, has been a popular term for years, but no examples have been furnished for the entry. In contrast, there are three illustrative examples for this entry in CEDU. There are many other entries that would prove more useful if illustrative examples were furnished, such as 炒热 (boost the popularity through repeated media coverage/exposure), 房奴 (mortgage slave), 各行各业 (all trades and professions; all walks of life), 路怒 (road rage), 始作俑者 (the originator of an evil), and 网申 (apply online).

It has been more than 200 years since the first Chinese–English dictionary (namely Robert Morrison's *A Dictionary of the Chinese Language*) was compiled. Traditional lexicography has been facilitated by technological advances. In this era of generative AI, dictionary-makers should make good use of what AI can offer when making and revising dictionaries. The editors of NCCED3 did indeed resort to the use of AI chatbots in proofreading part of the dictionary text, but AI should have played a bigger role throughout the whole revision process. Should they have made full use of AI, the quality of the dictionary, especially that of the translations, would have been greatly improved. Despite its inadequacies, NCCED3 will continue to prove to be one of the most sought-after C–E dictionaries in China.

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