A Study on the Current Situation of Chinese Language Integration Based on the Top 10 New Words and Internet Terms in 2023

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary Mandarin continues to spread and spread to other Chinese speaking regions, and the phenomenon of Chinese language integration has attracted much attention. This article focuses on the "Top 10 New Words" and "Top 10 Internet Terms" for the year 2023, investigating the usage of mainstream Chinese media in 10 other countries or regions, in order to understand the current global integration of Chinese language. The research results show that the overall usage rates of the top 10 new words and top 10 internet terms in 2023 are 42% and 44%, respectively. The usage situation is still unbalanced, with fast dissemination speed and diverse integration forms, which is the result of the combined effect of internal and external factors in language.

Keywords: Mandarin, Chinese, Integration, Usage situation, Origin.

1. INTRODUCTION

Diao Yanbin (1997) was the first to propose the issue of Chinese language integration between different regions of the world. Tang Zhixiang (2009) pointed out that people have entered an era of global development and integration of Chinese language. Afterwards, the phenomenon of Chinese language integration received widespread attention, which was reflected in both linguistic facts and theoretical exploration. Linguistic facts include partial fusion research and overall fusion research[1]. The former includes Qiu Zhiqun (2013), Su Jinzhi (2014), Su Jinzhi, Wang Li, Chu Zexiang (2015), Diao Yanbin (2015, 2016, 2017a), Hong Shuang (2022), etc.; The latter includes Zhou Qinghai (2008), Shao Jingmin, Liu Jie (2008), You Rujie (2012), Zhou Qinghai (2016, 2017), Diao Yanbin (2018), You Rujie (2021), Peng Jian, Yang Wenquan (2021), Wang Shan, Tang Lei (2022), Diao Yanbin (2022a, 2023), etc. Theoretical exploration is mainly seen in Li Yuming (2014, 2017), Diao Yanbin (2012, 2017b, 2018, 2022b), Zhou Qinghai (2021), and others.

The research on the integration of Chinese language is constantly developing. Zhou Qinghai (2021) emphasized that "the integration of Chinese is the current situation of Chinese language", while Diao Yanbin (2023a) pointed out that the regional scope of global Chinese language integration should be further expanded. Taking into account the "three circles"[2] of the global Chinese language, this paper selects the mainstream Chinese newspapers and periodicals in ten representative Chinese speaking regions outside the mainland (Hong Kong, China, Macao, Taiwan, China, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Argentina) as the basic language materials, and examines the Chinese integration of ten new words and ten network terms in 2023.

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1. Partial integration refers to the exchange and integration of common languages between mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, while overall integration refers to the fusion of Chinese languages from a global perspective. Refer to Diao Yanbin, Review and Prospect of Research on Huayu Integration [J]. Yangtze River Academic, 2023b (4).

2. The "three circles" of global Chinese refer to the Putonghua circle in Chinese Mainland, the "Mandarin" circle in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, and the overseas Chinese circle. Refer to Diao Yanbin, Theoretical Construction and Empirical Research on Global Mandarin [M]. Beijing: Sinolingua, 2018.

2. SURVEY ON THE USE OF TOP 10 NEW WORDS IN 2023

As an important part of the annual "Chinese Language Inventory" activity, on December 16, 2023, the National Language Resources Monitoring and Research Center released the "Top 10 New Words" of the year, namely "generative artificial intelligence", "Global Civilization Initiative", "village super league", "new quality productivity", "National Ecological Day", "Consumption Boosting Year", "special forces-style tourism", "class clown", "a war of a hundred models", and "Wide Field Survey Telescope (WFST)". The researchers will conduct an investigation into its usage in the "Mandarin" and Chinese language circles, as follows in "Table 1":

Table 1. Distribution of top 10 new words in Chinese language regions for 2023

	Hong Kong, China	Macao, China	Taiwan, China	Singapore	Malaysia	Indonesia	Australia	New Zealand	The United States	Argentina
Generative artificial intelligence	30	0	8	86	197	1	25	1	1	0
Global Civilization Initiative	0	0	0	19	166	0	0	0	0	0
Village super league	10	0	7	18	152	0	3	0	0	0
New quality productivity	1	0	0	11	6	0	0	0	0	1
National Ecology Day	24	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	1
Consumption Boosting Year	0	0	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	0
Special forces-style tourism	11	2	1	4	96	1	0	1	0	3
Class clown	16	0	0	2	4	0	0	0	1	2
A war of a hundred models	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Wide Field Survey Telescope (WFST)	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0

According to "Table 1", it can be seen that:

First, from the perspective of "presence or absence", the overall usage rate of the top ten new words in 2023 is relatively high. If the usage rate is 100% in all 10 survey locations, the overall usage rate will reach 42%;

Second, in terms of specific Chinese speaking regions, Singapore and Malaysia have the highest usage rates, both at 90%; Others are New Zealand, Argentina (70%), Hong Kong, China, Spain (60%), Taiwan, China (40%), the United States, Australia (20%), and Macao, China (10%) from the highest to the lowest.

Third, in terms of the specific usage of the "Top 10 New Words", the order of usage frequency in the top 3 Chinese speaking regions from high to low is as follows:

- Malaysia: generative artificial intelligence (197), Global Civilization Initiative (166), village super league (152), special forces-style tourism (96), new quality productivity (6), Consumption Boosting Year (4), class clown (4), a war of a hundred models (1), Wide Field Survey Telescope (WFST) (1);

- Singapore: generative artificial intelligence (86), Global Civilization Initiative (19), village super league (18), new quality productivity (11), special forces-style tourism (4), National Ecological Day (3),

Consumption Boosting Year (2), class clown (2), Wide Field Survey Telescope (WFST) (1);

- Hong Kong, China: generative artificial intelligence (30), National Ecology Day (24), class clown (16), special forces-style tourism (11), village super league (10), new quality productivity (1).

It can be seen that there is a certain degree of consistency in the ranking of usage rates of the "Top 10 New Words" in various Chinese speaking regions, and there are differences in the specific usage situations among different Chinese speaking regions.

Next, the authors will analyze the usage of generative artificial intelligence, which ranks among the first in Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong, China, and is also distributed in other Chinese speaking regions.

According to a search on CNKI, the earliest Mandarin use case of "generative artificial intelligence" within the scope of "Reading Show" electronic newspapers was seen on February 9, 2023, as shown in the following example:

Eg.1: ChatGPT emerged and became popular worldwide, stimulating the sensitive nerves of technology giants. Microsoft, Google, Baidu, Amazon, and others have taken action to seize the initiative in the AIGC field; A wave of investment around generative artificial intelligence is also emerging. (Financial Times, 2023.2.9)

According to Chinese media corpus, "generative artificial intelligence" (or "generative AI") has spread to Hong Kong, China and Taiwan, China, for example:

Eg.2: This is one of the first decisions made by US courts or institutions regarding the scope of copyright protection for AI creations, coinciding with the rapid rise of generative AI software such as Midjournal, Dall-E, and ChatGPT. (www.STNN.cc, 2023.2.24)

Eg.3: The trend of generative artificial intelligence is sweeping the world, and the AI chatbot ChatGPT is also a traffic password. (China Times, 2023.2.13)

Starting from January 2024, it starts to appear in Singapore, Malaysia, and Australia, for example:

Eg.4: In early January 2024, the IDEAS Artificial Intelligence Digital Interaction Laboratory at Temasek Institute of Technology opened, believed to be the first generative artificial intelligence design laboratory located within the university in the local area. (Lianhe Zaobao, 2024.1.25)

Eg.5: On the other hand, the investigation revealed that Malaysian CEOs generally have an optimistic view of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI), although its application is popular, it faces dual challenges. (Sin Chew Daily, 2024.1.16)

From this, it can be seen that its dissemination speed is fast and its hierarchical characteristics are obvious, achieving the dissemination process from mainland China to Hong Kong and Taiwan regions, and then to overseas Chinese speaking areas, that is, the Mandarin circle → Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan "Mandarin" circle → overseas Chinese speaking circle. In addition, the relevant use cases in Malaysia include two scenarios: self-use and borrowing, for example:

Eg.6: (Kuala Lumpur, 16th) According to a survey, among the interviewed Malaysian CEOs, 82% are expected to require employee skills for advanced generative artificial intelligence, which is also higher than the global level (69%) and the Asia Pacific region (76%). (Sin Chew Daily, 2024.1.16)

Eg.7: (Tokyo, 24th) ViGPT is Vietnam's first self-developed generative AI project open to the public. The Large Language Model (LLM) behind it is rumored to be developed with 1.6 billion sets of parameters, only a few hundred times that of the latest version of OpenAI service GPT-4. (Sin Chew Daily, 2024.1.24)

Eg.8: (New York, 31st) In the past six months, generative artificial intelligence has been rampant, and Microsoft has invested in OpenAI early on, gaining early advantages in the era of artificial intelligence. (Sin Chew Daily, 2024.1.31)

Among them, Eg.6 is for personal use, while Eg.7 and Eg.8 are borrowed from Japanese and American Chinese media, respectively.

For example, "village super league", the earliest Mandarin use case was seen on November 4, 2022, as shown in the following example:

Eg.9: Recently, a unique table tennis "village super league" competition was held in the cultural hall of Baiyan Village in Xixi Town, attracting 12 table tennis representative teams from all walks of life in the town to participate. (Yongkang Daily, 2022.11.4)

The earliest use cases that appeared in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, and Australia are as follows:

Eg.10: Guizhou's "village super league" has become extremely popular and broken the circle, with crowded stadiums and fully booked seats. The lively matches have brought the football tournament to an international level. (www.STNN.cc, 2023.7.1)

Eg.11: Argentine football star Messi recently visited China, attracting a lot of attention. However, for most mainland Chinese people, the current "village super league" in Rongjiang County, Guizhou, which is in full swing, may be even more gripping. (China Times, 2023.6.28)

Eg.12: Recently, sports events such as "village BA" and "village super league" have become popular throughout China. Some people say that rural competitions are sports activities for local people to entertain themselves and should not be overly packaged or hyped up. (Lianhe Zaobao, 2023.6.24)

Eg.13: (Beijing, 16th) "The Paper" reported that the 2023 China Public Relations Development Conference was held in Beijing today. The conference held its first exhibition of excellent public relations cases, and Guizhou's "village super league", "Zibo barbecue", and "the most hardcore Chinese shopping cart" cases were selected as excellent cases. (Sin Chew Daily, 2023.12.17)

Eg.14: Chen Baixiang (Alat) and He Jiajin attended the press conference of the "Hong Kong Star Football Team x Rongjiang Village Premier League" invitation match in Hung Hom on the 12th. (Australian Chinese Daily, 2023.10.13)

From a temporal perspective, the spread order of "village super league" is basically consistent with that of "generative artificial intelligence"; "village super league" are mainly used for personal use, with very few borrowed, such as Eg.13.

3. SURVEY ON THE USE OF TOP 10 INTERNET TERMS IN 2023

The top 10 internet terms in China for the year 2023 are "Love to Future", "hustle and bustle", "digital intelligent life", "village BA", "special forces-style tourism", "class clown", "The main focus is on XX", "dopamine dressing", "the gear of fate starts to rotate", and "new employee". The researchers conducted an investigation on their usage in the "Mandarin" and Chinese language circles, as follows:

Table 2. Distribution of top 10 Internet terms in Chinese language regions in 2023

	Hong Kong, China	Macao, China	Taiwan, China	Singapore	Malaysia	Indonesia	Australia	New Zealand	The United States	Argentina
Love to Future	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Hustle and bustle	20	0	0	2	2	0	1	0	0	6
Digital intelligent life	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Village BA	1	0	20	24	2	0	1	0	0	2
Special forces-style tourism	11	2	1	4	96	1	0	1	0	3
Class clown	16	0	0	2	4	0	0	0	1	2
The main focus is on XX	29	0	1	2	16	0	0	0	0	4
Dopamine dressing	0	0	15	6	9	0	0	0	0	2
The gear of fate starts to rotate	2	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	2
New employee	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3

According to "Table 2", it can be seen that:

First, the overall usage rate of the top 10 internet terms in 2023 reached 44%, almost on par with the top 10 new words in 2023;

Second, in terms of specific Chinese speaking regions, Argentina has the highest usage rate of 90%; The other ranked from high to low are Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia (80%), Taiwan (50%), Australia (20%), Macau, Indonesia, New Zealand, and the United States (10%).

From the specific usage of the "Top 10 Internet Items", the top three Chinese language regions in terms of usage frequency are arranged in descending order as follows:

Hong Kong, China: the main focus is on XX (29), hustle and bustle (20), class clown (16), special forces-style tourism (11), new employee (2), the gears of fate begin to rotate (2), village BA (1), and Love to Future (1);

Singapore: Village BA (24), dopamine dressing (6), special forces-style tourism (4), hustle and bustle (2), digital intelligent life (2), class clown (2), the main focus is on XX (2), the gear of fate begins to rotate (1);

Malaysia: Special forces-style tourism (96), the main focus is on XX (16), dopamine dressing (9), class clown (4), the gears of fate starting to rotate (3), hustle and bustle (2), village BA (2), and Love to Future (1).

From this, it can be seen that the usage rate of the "Top 10 Internet Terms" in various Chinese language regions is ranked, and the consistency in different Chinese language regions is lower than that of the "Top 10 New Words", with significant differences.

Below, the researchers will take the high-frequency distribution of "special forces-style tourism", "the main focus is on XX", "dopamine dressing", and "the gears of fate begin to rotate" in some regions as examples to analyze their usage.

Within the scope of the "Reading Show" electronic newspaper, the earliest Mandarin use cases for "special forces-style tourism", "The main focus is on XX", "dopamine dressing", and "the gears of fate begin to rotate" appeared on April 7, 2023, June 7, 2023, May 26, 2023, and July 24, 2023, respectively, as follows:

Eg.15: Young people are on the rise of "special forces-style tourism". Special forces-style high-intensity travel: "Check in to 8 attractions in a day and only sleep for 3 hours at night. The first time such an efficient travel occurred during this year's winter vacation. Zhu Daiying told reporters that she has traveled alone to 9 cities and has accumulated over 100 tourist attractions for check-in." (Peninsula Morning Post, 2023.4.7)

Eg.16: On rainy days, a truck slips and drifts, instantly scaring off a motorcycle. Netizens: The main focus is on a neat and uniform design. (QiLu Evening News, 2023.5.6)

Eg.17: The beginning of summer seems to come later than usual, but sensitive clothing sellers have already put on summer clothing and become the protagonist of clothing market sales. With high brightness and colors that can stimulate positive emotions, "dopamine" dressing is becoming popular all over the internet and may become a fashion weapon to highlight personality and enhance emotions this summer. (YangJiang Daily, 2023.5.26)

Eg.18: In such videos, people often first display an image of a celebrity before they become famous, and then display the infinite scenery of their success and fame. The standard narration is: "At this point, the gears of fate begin to rotate". (Jinan Times, 2023.7.24)

From the perspective of dissemination speed, the fastest spread is "special forces-style tourism", which spread from mainland China to Singapore in just six days, and its way of appearance is through chemical use; The gears of fate began to rotate, spreading from the mainland to Malaysia in just ten days; "Dopamine dressing" spread to Malaysia in just over twenty days; "The main focus is on XX" spread to Argentina within seven months. Please refer to the following for details:

Eg.19: The term "special forces-style tourism" has become popular on Chinese social media platforms. It refers to a popular way of traveling among young people, visiting the most scenic spots in the shortest time and at the lowest cost, challenging their physical limits like special forces. (Lianhe Zaobao, 2023.4.13)

Eg.20: He became famous when his son took his pants off, and Zhang Zhibo couldn't help but laugh and cry, pointing out that the gears of fate began to turn. (Sin Chew Daily, 2023.8.3)

Eg.21: Dopamine dressing originated from the work "Wearing the Best Life" published by fashion psychologist Dawn Karen. She claimed in the book that wearing optimistic clothing can release a large amount of the neurotransmitter dopamine, which promotes emotions. (Sin Chew Daily, 2023.6.18)

Eg.22: In daily wear, the brightly colored dopamine dressing is eye-catching and popular throughout the summer. (www.agchina.com, 2023.12.13)

From the perspective of Chinese language integration, borrowing, self-use, and transformation coexist. For example:

Eg.23a: (Beijing, 5th) The video was filmed on the evening of April 1st, and a group of tourists slept directly in the lobby of the hotel. Some netizens referred to it as "special forces-style tourism" and expressed support for "suppressing" high hotel prices. (Sin Chew Daily, 2023.4.5)

Eg.23b: However, what is somewhat surprising is that in the past few months, "special forces-style tourism" was still popular on the internet, why has it now become Citywalk's dominant leader? (Lianhe Zaobao, 2023.8.2)

Eg.23c: The term "special forces-style tourism" has become popular on Chinese social media platforms. It refers to a popular way of traveling among young people, visiting the most scenic spots in the shortest time and at the lowest cost, challenging their physical limits like special forces. (Lianhe Zaobao, 2023.4.13)

Eg.24a: (Hong Kong, 12th) Some even said, "Actually, I think it's not impossible for Nicholas Tse to reunite with Cecilia Cheung in the future. Their relationship is focused on an unexpected and somewhat reasonable one." (www.STNN.cc, 2023.7.12)

Eg.24b: (Bataling Jaya, 15th) Pacific Wise is a vibrant online shopping platform for office supplies and daily life. It focuses on a platform where high-quality office and daily life products can be easily purchased in the community. (Sin Chew Daily, 2021.10.16)

Among them, Eg.23a are from borrowed words, Eg.24b is for self-use, and Eg.23b, Eg.23c, and Eg.24a are for adaptive use. According to corpus statistics, the rates of self-use, borrowing, and adaptive use are 61.54%, 32.69%, and 5.77%, respectively.

It is worth noting that the phrase "the main focus is on a XX" has become a commonly used construction with strong emotional connotations, often with positive connotations and a few with negative connotations. In addition, in Taiwan, China and Malaysia, imitation words related to "dopamine dressing" have also appeared, such as "dopamine

makeup", "dopamine shadow", "dopamine color selection", "dopamine bouquet", etc. For example:

Eg.25: When Twice's Nalian and I-DLE's Song Yuqi recently appeared, they mostly paired high color clothing with dopamine makeup. The popular style of dopamine makeup is also similar to clothing, with high brightness and high saturation as the main tone. Many beauty brands can see the trace of dopamine in their spring and summer new products launched this year. (China Times, 2023.7.24)

Eg.26: In terms of color matching, customers can now accept colorful styles and materials. Dopamine bouquets also bring joyful emotions. (Sin Chew Daily, 2023.8.22)

In summary, the overall usage rate of the "Top 10 Internet Terms" is relatively high, with uneven distribution among different Chinese language intervals, and the difference in word usage ranking is greater than that of the "Top 10 New Words"; The dissemination speed is fast, the fusion status of Chinese is diverse, and with widespread dissemination and frequent use, common constructions and imitative word forms have emerged.

4. THE MOTIVATION OF POPULAR COMMUNICATION AND THE INTEGRATION OF CHINESE LANGUAGE

4.1 Internal Language

The popularity and dissemination of the "Top 10 New Words" and "Top 10 Internet Terms" are mainly due to two reasons from the perspective of language itself: firstly, the strong replicability and dissemination of language memes, which can be widely disseminated through imitation and repeated use. Heylighen (1998) proposed that the complete process of meme replication and dissemination can be divided into four stages; Secondly, vocabulary is the most active factor among language elements, and language contact promotes the integration of Chinese language, particularly in terms of vocabulary.

4.2 External Reasons

The first is that with the development of society and technological progress, the enhancement of China's comprehensive national strength has triggered a "China fever". The widespread use of online media has provided a convenient carrier for the dissemination of Chinese language, breaking the limitations of time and space. The speed and scope of

online dissemination have improved the efficiency of Chinese language dissemination; The second is people's desire for novelty and diversity, which has driven the rise and dissemination of new words and internet language. The mechanism of analogy and imitation enhances the productivity of new language components, reflecting the vividness of language.

5. CONCLUSION

This article is based on the outward dissemination of Mandarin and conducts a survey on the usage of the "Top 10 New Words" and "Top 10 Internet Terms" in 10 countries or regions in the national and Chinese language circles in 2023, in order to understand the current situation of global Chinese language integration. This article draws the following conclusions:

- The "Top 10 New Words" and "Top 10 Internet Terms" of Mandarin in 2023 have a fast dissemination speed and wide coverage, with an overall high usage rate in various Chinese speaking regions.

- The usage situation is imbalanced, mainly manifested as range imbalance, quantity imbalance, and stage imbalance.

- The dissemination process has a hierarchical characteristic, generally going through a process from the Mandarin circle to the Mandarin circle and then to the overseas Chinese circle; The fusion state is characterized by coexistence of self-use, borrowing, and chemical use, with proportions of 61.54%, 32.69%, and 5.77%, respectively.

- A small amount of construction usage and imitation words have emerged.

The rapid and widespread dissemination of the "Top 10 New Words" and "Top 10 Internet Terms" is based on the replicability of language memes. Language contact provides favorable conditions for them, and online platforms are effective tools for the outward dissemination of Mandarin and the integration of Mandarin. The mentality of seeking novelty and diversity promotes its dissemination and development.

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