

# An Analysis of the Chinese textbook "Developing Chinese · Intermediate Reading"

Yulan Yang

Southwest Minzu University, Chengdu, 610000, China

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**Abstract:** Reading course is a single language skill course designed to cooperate with the teaching of comprehensive course, which occupies an important position in the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language. Reading skills and knowledge affect the improvement of learners' Chinese level. Among them, the intermediate stage plays a key role in the whole reading teaching. As the basis of teaching, teaching materials are the basis of all teaching activities. Compiling good teaching material and choosing good teaching material can make reading teaching get twice the result with half the effort. This paper analyzes the development of intermediate Chinese reading I, II copies, from the text, new words and exercises, writing style and so on four aspects of the teaching material of statistical analysis, in order to intermediate Chinese reading textbooks written offer useful advice.

## 1. Introduction

"Developing intermediate reading of Chinese", compiled by xu chengwei of renmin university of China and published by Beijing language and culture university press in January 2012, is a state-level textbook for the 11th five-year plan for general higher education. The textbooks are divided into I, II two volumes, a total of 30 text, belong to "the development of Chinese" (second edition) series of form a complete set of teaching materials. This textbook is written by international students studying Chinese in China. The publication date is relatively new, and it absorbs many of the latest linguistic theories, psychological theories, pedagogy theories and textbook compilation theories. It is a good Chinese textbook.

## 2. Textbook analysis

### 2.1. Text Analysis

The text is the main part of the whole teaching material. Cheng Xiangwen believes that "the key to make the text well is to make the language teaching material well". The text serves as a support board on which the teaching of related vocabulary, grammar and culture is integrated. By learning the text, students can master the new words, grammar and the hidden cultural knowledge. Therefore, the text appears to be of vital importance. The text of reading course is mainly to train the reading comprehension ability of learners. A good text can connect new words, grammar and culture closely, conform to the reading habits of learners, and stimulate their interest in reading. The following text from the length and theme to analyze the text.

#### 2.1.1. Length analysis

(1) Length distribution

Table 1. Statistics on length analysis

Number of words in the textbook	Title number	The proportion
<=300	1	0.81%
300—600	78	63.41%
600—900	43	34.96%

Note: Telephone Numbers, train schedules, etc. are not included.

According to statistics, there are 68,148 words in volume 1 and volume 2 of Developing Chinese, with an average of 549.58 words per article. The most words are 844 words in the article of Lesson 15 in volume 2. The one with the least words is the fourth article of the sixth lesson in the first volume, Homesickness, which is 104 words in total. We define a text below 600 words as a "short text"; Define text of 600 to 1200 words as "middle text"; the text above 1200 words is defined as "long text". Therefore, there are only short texts and short texts in Developing Chinese, among which 79 are short texts, accounting for 64.22% of the total. There are 43 short texts, accounting for 35.78% of the total number. And the total words of the textbook is 68,148 words, with an average of about 550 words per essay.

### (2) Features of length

According to the above data, most texts in this textbook are short texts. As an intermediate reading textbook, it not only meets the transitional needs of the intermediate stage but also follows the principle of compiling textbooks step by step. For intermediate stage learners, the textbook is relatively reasonable in length design.

## 2.1.2. Subject analysis

### (1) Subject distribution

Developing Chinese consists of 158 texts in two volumes of 30 lessons, covering 14 topics.

Table 2. Statistics on subject distribution

Subject matter	Article number	The proportion
Social life	26	16.5%
History and Culture	20	12.7%
Humorous Stories	12	7.6%
Language class	11	7.0%
Science and Technology nature	10	6.3%
Life Philosophy	8	5.1%
Emotional psychology	7	4.4%
Geotourism	6	3.8%
Marriage and Family	6	3.8%
Healthy eating	5	3.2%
Educational learning	4	2.5%
Sports and Sports	2	1.3%
Festival customs	2	1.3%
Economics and politics	1	0.6%

According to the data statistics in the above table, we find that the number of social life texts appears the most. Social life is close to life and directly related to the overall living environment of learners. Such texts are easy to arouse the resonance and interest of learners. In addition, this set of textbooks pay more attention to the aspects of history and culture. For international students, reading texts in textbooks is not only the material for language learning, but also a window for understanding culture. The second is diet health, humorous stories, science and technology nature, emotional psychology, marriage and family, etc., and the least frequently appeared are the sports and economic politics subject texts.

### (2) Analysis of theme characteristics

First, there are various types of texts. The theme of the text almost includes all kinds of problems closely related to the daily life of international students, which can help international students to understand the real face of contemporary Chinese society and the real Chinese learning environment through the text and reading classes, which is conducive to the purpose of improving students' language communication ability through reading teaching.

Second, there is a big difference in the proportion of various topics in textbooks. Through statistical data, we find that the proportion of various topics in textbooks is quite different. The

theme of social life is widely attached importance by all textbook editors, and it is also concerned by overseas students and related to the reality of life. Humorous stories appear more often. Humorous stories are generally full of fun, one of the principles of the compilation of textbooks is fun. However, due to the cultural differences between different countries, it is still questionable whether the humor in the textbook can be recognized by Chinese learners with different cultural backgrounds. However, the text of some topics appears too little or does not appear. We suggest that the choice of material should be based on students' interests and practical needs.

## 2.2. Structure and style analysis of teaching materials

TCSL reading materials are divided into two categories according to the writing style. One is based on reading skills. Each lesson usually includes two parts: skill training and reading training. It usually carries out itemized skill training first, and then integrates the skill training into general reading training. The other type is only general reading training, and each lesson usually contains new words. "Developing Chinese" has only reading comprehension training.

The structure of the textbook includes two aspects: first, the overall macro structure of the textbook, which is mainly based on standards and unit division; Second, the structure arrangement of each text.

### 2.2.1. Macro structural Analysis of Developing Intermediate Reading of Chinese

Developing intermediate Chinese reading (second edition) is published by Beijing language and culture university publishing house. The textbook is divided into 1 volume and 2 volumes with 15 lessons in each volume. It is suggested that each lesson should be completed with 2 periods. According to the compilation instructions, this textbook is suitable for Chinese learners who have learned "Developing Chinese Elementary Reading and writing" (II) or textbooks of similar level, have intermediate Chinese introduction level, and have a general grasp of 2,000 or 2,500 common words. The book is mainly composed of a preface, a description, a table of contents and a text.

### 2.2.2. Analysis of text Structure arrangement in Developing Intermediate Reading of Chinese

Lesson 8 and Lesson 15 of each volume are recitations. In addition to the recitation section containing 5 articles and 2 practical readings, each lesson contains 4 articles and 1 practical reading. All reading comprehension exercises are placed after reading the text.

Table 3. Structure table of developing Chinese textbook

Structure	Developing The Chinese Language
The overall structure	General introduction, compilation of explanations, catalogues, texts
Inside the class,	Text, exercises
Royalty	Volume 1 and volume 2

### 2.2.3. Evaluation of teaching material structure and style

The overall structure of Developing Intermediate Chinese Reading is relatively simple and clear. There are only four parts: the preface, the explanation, the catalogue and the text. At the end of each lesson, there is a "accumulate over time" section, in which learners can find 5-8 useful words or sentences from this lesson and write them in the blank space provided in the book.

The author believes that such a design can deepen learners' memory of reading articles and make full use of reading texts to improve learners' Chinese level. Some of the texts in Developing Intermediate Reading Chinese are illustrated with pictures. According to the interaction mode and schema theory of reading, pictures play a suggestive role. Before reading, learners can use their own schemata in their mind to guess the content of the text to be read according to the observation of

pictures, so as to help learners understand the content of the text.

### 2.3. Analysis of New Words

Expanding vocabulary is the core goal of the whole reading process, and the choice of vocabulary also plays an important role in the intermediate stage of reading. When compiling reading textbooks, the number of new words and the difficulty of new words should be taken into account.

#### 2.3.1. Word selection criteria

The development of Intermediate Chinese Reading is based on the Chinese Teaching Syllabus for Foreign Students in Institutions of Higher Learning (Long-term Study), and a vocabulary syllabus writing software is designed to select new words and control the total vocabulary amount and the number of super words and super words in each lesson. However, it does not stick to the outline, referring to other types of outline and combining with the actual language life, it extensively absorbs some words that are very common in contemporary Chinese social life but are not included in the outline due to the reasons of The Times.

#### 2.3.2. Number of new words

##### (1) Quantity distribution of new words

The following statistics are all the new words noted in the reading training section. There are three kinds of new words in developing Intermediate Reading of Chinese, one is with Chinese or English explanation, one is only marked with pinyin, and one is both with Chinese or English explanation and marked with pinyin. There are no new words in 11 practical reading.

Table 4. Statistical chart of new words

The teaching material \ Project	Developing Intermediate Reading of Chinese
The total vocabulary	1134
The total number of articles	147
Average number of new words per paragraph	8
Maximum number of new words in a single paragraph	21
Minimum number of new words	1
The total number of classes	30
Average number of new words per lesson	38

The total vocabulary of Developing Chinese is 1134, with an average of 8 new words per article. Capacity of 21 of the highest single words appeared in the development of Chinese "(II) a lesson 15 article" liang sicheng < > workmen essay ", the source is the southern metropolis daily, this article is a review, the article has a lot of proper nouns related to construction, culture and professional vocabulary, so the article is difficult, more new words. The minimum number of new words in a single article is 1, which appears in the practical reading "Recruitment of Museum Explanation Volunteers" in Lesson 4 of Developing Chinese (I). The article has only about 200 words, which is relatively simple in content and used for reading exercises, so there are few new words. In addition, there are some practical reading items without new words, which are not included in the statistical range.

The total number of new words in Developing Chinese is 1134, including 521 in the first volume, accounting for 46% of the total number of words. There are 613 words in the second volume, accounting for 54% of the total number of words, which is an increase of 9% compared with the first volume. This is in line with the student's level of study and the syllabus.

##### (2) The quantity characteristics of new word

The number of new words in each text of Developing Intermediate Reading of Chinese is generally increasing, and the overall fluctuation is relatively small. The number of new words in the next volume fluctuates more than that in the first volume.

### 2.3.3. Difficulty of new words

The control of the level of new words is the control of the difficulty of new words, and also the control of the difficulty of the text to some extent. If the difficulty is not properly controlled, the difficulty level of the textbook cannot be guaranteed. The Syllabus of Chinese Vocabulary and Chinese Characters (1992) classifies 8,822 words into four levels: A and B are primary words, C are intermediate words and D are advanced words. The Chinese Teaching Syllabus for Foreign Students in Institutions of Higher Learning · Long-term Study (2002) clearly divides the 8,042 words into three levels: primary, middle and high.

(1) The difficulty distribution of new words in Developing Intermediate Reading of Chinese

Table 5. Vocabulary statistics

The teaching material	The total	Elementary vocabulary (most commonly used)	Primary vocabulary (less commonly used)	Intermediate stage vocabulary	Advanced stage vocabulary	Super class word
Developing The Chinese Language	1134	3	116	279	126	610
The development of Chinese I	521	2	57	126	58	278
Developing reading II	613	1	59	153	68	332

The total number of new words in Developing Chinese is 1134, including 521 in Volume I and 613 in Volume II. In volume 1, there are 2 vocabularies of the primary stage (the most commonly used), 57 vocabularies of the primary stage (the second most commonly used), 126 vocabularies of the middle stage, 58 vocabularies of the advanced stage, and 278 vocabularies of the supermajor stage. In volume II, there are 1 elementary vocabulary (most commonly used), 59 elementary vocabulary (second commonly used), 153 intermediate vocabulary and 68 superbasic vocabulary. All the superclass words account for 53.79%, and the advanced stage words and superclass words account for 64.9% of the total.

(2) Features of difficulty distribution of new words in Developing Intermediate Reading of Chinese

In compiling this textbook, the author fully considers that the difficulty of new words will gradually increase with the improvement of learners' Chinese proficiency, which is more suitable for international students in the intermediate stage.

## 2.4. Analysis of exercise questions

### 2.4.1. Question quantity analysis

Table 6. Statistical table of the number of questions in Question quantity distribution

Name of the teaching material		Original topic quantity	The Lesson number	Average amount per project	Article number	Average amount per project
The development of Chinese	I	675	15	45	79	8.54
	II	668	15	44.53	79	8.46
	The total	1343	30	44.77	158	8.50

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"Developing Chinese", two volumes, a total of 30 lessons, 158 reading comprehension texts, the total original number of questions is 1343. The number of questions in the first volume is 675, and that in the second volume is 668. There is a difference of 7 questions between the two volumes, and the number of questions in the two volumes is roughly equal. The average number of questions per topic was 44.77, and the average number of questions per topic was 8.50.

The text of "Developing Intermediate Reading of Chinese" is generally shorter and has fewer questions.

### 2.4.2. Question type analysis

#### (1) Question type distribution

The exercises are:

1. Choose to fill in the blanks to restate the content of the article;
2. Choose the correct answer according to the content of the article;
3. Choose the appropriate explanation for the underlined part;
4. Choose the main idea of the article;
5. Judging right and wrong according to the content of the article;
6. Fill in the blanks according to the text;
7. Fill in the form according to the content of the article;
8. Short answer questions;
9. Types of tutorial articles, etc.

After each lesson, there is a cumulative section for students to accumulate useful words or sentences.

#### (2) Characteristics of question type distribution

The selection of articles takes into full consideration the practicability of the content and the diversity of fields, and tries to choose practical, interesting and readable articles that mainly reflect the real life of contemporary China and give consideration to others. In order to facilitate the learners to have extensive access to Written Chinese materials, there are various styles of reading materials. There are 19 types of questions in the textbook. Each class has a variety of exercises. The arrangement of exercises shows the degree of difficulty before and after.

## 3. Comments and Suggestions

### 3.1. Text

Expand the source channels of text selection, not only from traditional print media and the Internet, but also from common reading texts in daily life, such as supermarket discount information, community announcement, flight schedule, business card, product packaging belt and so on. At the same time, pay attention to coordinate the proportion of various themes, increase the proportion of practical themes. Also avoid inappropriate topics and content in the textbook. In addition, all texts should be marked with their sources to show respect for copyright. Finally, attention should be paid to the proportion of long, medium and short texts.

### 3.2. New Words

First, strictly control the production quantity and difficulty, follow the principle of written Chinese as a foreign language reading teaching aim, to choose intermediate stage the learner need to master vocabulary: second, we must standardize the presentation of the new words, should avoid comments caused unclear understanding obstacle: in the end, when choosing the definition of what language word, best can perform of the increased frequency of Chinese interpretation.

### 3.3. Writing style

First, it is suggested that the teaching material for intermediate Reading of Chinese as a foreign language should take skill training as a unit, and the subject matter appears in a spiral cycle.

Second, control the number of reading exercises per lesson;

Third, set up review units and test units for students to test themselves or teachers to examine;

Fourthly, pre-reading prompts are set to micro-activate the existing schema in the learner's brain to promote the improvement of reading ability:

Fifthly, more lively binding design is adopted to make learners and teachers willing to learn:

Sixth, the textbook should provide practice reference answers for learners to learn by themselves.

### **3.4. Practice**

First, practice the topic quantity of moderation, pay attention to coordination reading time and the proportion of practice time: second, coordinate the proportion of primary and secondary questions: again, reasonable arrangement of practice and the text of the order, the order of the various questions between: also, fixed practice instruction is clear, ensure the smooth progress of practice: in the end, the design is novel and lively practice form, strengthen the teaching material more interesting.

## **4. Conclusion**

"Developing Intermediate Reading of Chinese" is an excellent teaching material for reading Chinese as a foreign language. Through the systematic study of this textbook, we can absorb its features and improve its shortcomings in order to write a better reading textbook for Chinese as a foreign language.

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