
New Chinese Buzz words for 2020 released by LIVAC Pan-Chinese linguistic database

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The Covid-19 pandemic has had a considerable impact around the globe. It has become the theme underlying many new terms, according to the 2020 LIVAC Pan-Chinese New Word Rosters released by the Department of Linguistics and Translation of City University of Hong Kong (CityU).

The hottest new term in the Pan-Chinese media is “Stay-At-Home Order”, while “Support Hubei”, “Prohibition on Group Gathering”, and “American Pigs” are the top new words in Beijing, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, respectively.

The rosters are based on the LIVAC Synchronous Corpus in Chinese developed by **Professor Benjamin T'sou Ka-yin**, Emeritus Professor of CityU's Department of Linguistics and Translation.

These new terms reflect the life and times of 2020. Among the 20 new terms, 12 have been created during, or are related to, the pandemic. They include disease prevention and control regulations, healthcare workers, ways of using the internet for work and entertainment, and economic policies for rebooting the economy. Wearing a mask and maintaining social distance become the norm this year, and the internet has become the medium for communication and development.

While the Pan-Chinese regions commonly focus on the coronavirus, the three communities have different second priorities in terms of development.

Beijing has concentrated on economic recovery and aerospace science and technology. It conducted the “Two Initiatives and One Major Project”, referring to new infrastructure and urbanisation initiatives and other major projects. The launch of “Chang'e 5”, which brought lunar soil and rock samples back, was also well noted. However, the Pan-Chinese media did not put as much focus on this story compared to previous Moon landing project.

Hong Kong has focused mainly on the restoration of social stability and a return to progressive development. The new term “Mutual Destruction Theory” is related to the social unrest, which continued from last year. To cope, the Hong Kong government has implemented the “National Security Law”, and the police introduced the “Purple Flag” as a warning to protesters during demonstrations.

Taiwan tends to address more local and social issues such as the import of American pigs, which contain ractopamine chemicals, the impeachment of Han Kuo-yu as the former mayor of Kaohsiung and presidential candidate, and the phenomenon of outbound workers.

The rosters are sorted by the frequency of new words in Chinese-language newspapers in the Pan-Chinese region and based on an analysis of print media materials processed by the LIVAC (Linguistic Variations in Chinese Speech Communities) database (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LIVAC_Synchronous_Corpus), which systematically analyses language used by the media in the Pan-Chinese region, including Beijing, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

The database has analysed over 600 million words from major press outlets in the Pan-Chinese region since 1995, and the LIVAC databank has accumulated about 2.5 million words.

The relevant meaning and background information on the new words can be found below and the website <http://www.livac.org>.

2020 LIVAC Pan-Chinese New Word Rosters:

Pan-Chinese	Stay-At-Home Order 居家令	Heroes in harm's way 逆行者	National Security Law 港區國安法	Livestream Sales 直播帶貨	Cloud-based Conference Call 雲會議
Beijing	Support Hubei 援鄂	Two initiatives and one major project 兩新一重	Health Kit 健康寶	Mukbang 吃播	Chang'e 5 嫦娥五號
Hong Kong	Prohibition on Group Gathering 限聚令	Mutual Destruction Theory 攞炒論	Purple Flag 紫旗	Employment Support Scheme 保就業	Online Concert 網上騷
Taiwan	American Pigs 萊豬	Triple Stimulus Vouchers 三倍券	Han Recall 罷韓案	Coupon 酷碰券	Outbound worker 外漂族

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