Using Chinese Synonyms

*Using Chinese Synonyms* is an essential reference book, specifically designed for non-native speakers of Chinese, and for teachers and other language professionals who want a user-friendly guide to the finer nuances of Chinese synonyms. It contains approximately 1700 synonyms in 315 groups. With the particular needs of non-native speakers of Chinese in mind, this invaluable book selects and explains words and phrases in everyday use, allowing students to enhance their knowledge of one of the most important and widely spoken languages in the world. This book assists in the development of fluent, spontaneous and skilful use of Chinese synonyms.

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Acknowledgements

This book has taken six years to complete. I am immensely indebted to GUAN Zhigang, ZHANG Shimin, ZHANG Xiaodan, ZHAO Xiaohua and Margaret Johnson. They played an important role in the later stages of this project, helping to painstakingly proofread drafts of this book. My sincere thanks also go to the anonymous readers, especially the final clearance reader. Their feedback and suggestions were invaluable in shaping design and content, and in bringing this project to completion.

ZHANG Shi, MA Rong, GUAN Anne, GONG Qian, REN Wei, FU Yuxian, ZHAO Zhongde, CHENG Yijun, REN Ming, XU Zhichang, Michael Kocken, James Seaford, Alissa Sharples and Lidia Sakarapani also proofread parts of the draft, participated in field testing and helped in many other ways; to them too I am most grateful. I thank Richard Xiao for his expert advice on online resources relevant to the project. To any whom I may have failed to mention, I extend my gratitude.

Throughout this project, my commissioning editor at Cambridge University Press, Helen Barton, was extremely supportive, especially when progress became slow. It has been a pleasure working with her. I am also thankful to Elizabeth Davey, Alison Powell, Sarah Green, Ann Mason and Nancy Lawrence, whose assistance and sharp eye for detail were valuable in the later stages of production.

My appreciation goes to all the authors and organisations of the relevant dictionaries and online resources I consulted (see Bibliography). I also acknowledge with gratitude the financial assistance provided by Curtin University, in particular the Centre of Advanced Studies for Australia, Asia and the Pacific 2006–2009, the Humanities Publication Grants 2008–2009 and the Research Seeding Grants 2006.

Finally, I thank my loving family from the bottom of my heart. My father ZHANG Shimin, mother ZHANG Lanyin, husband GUAN Zhigang and daughter GUAN Anne have my eternal gratitude. Their unconditional love and unwavering support have kept me going with this project.
Abbreviations and notes

Abbreviations

n. noun
v. verb
adj. adjective
adv. adverb
aux. auxiliary
num. number
mw. measure word
pr. pronoun
conj. conjunction
oft. often
ph. phrase
sb. somebody
sth. something
usu. usually
[ ] [notes] (used in sample sentences to differentiate notes from English translations)
* see Note beneath a synonym group

Grammar notes

Parts of speech

noun: book, man, today, economics, Australia, etc.
verb: to eat, to discuss, to enlarge, to think, to begin, etc.
adjective: glorious, bad, tall, happy, polite, etc.
adverb: very, extremely, somewhat, often, probably, etc.
auxiliary word: can, may, will, have to, should, etc.
conjunction: and, or, when, while, if, etc.
pronoun: I, you, she, they, it, etc.

Syntactic terminology

He (subject) quickly (adverbial) finished (predicate) his (attributive) dinner (object).
### Layout notes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pinyin frame title, part of speech</th>
<th>English translation</th>
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<td>pinyin headword, part of speech *register, **HSK word frequency</td>
<td>English translation and exposition of the headword</td>
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*Level of register*

3 – formal/ written
2 – neutral
1 – informal/ colloquial
1* – vulgar

**Level of HSK word frequency and language difficulty**
(HSK: Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi, the Chinese Proficiency Test, equivalent to TOEFL or IELTS)

A – most commonly used and the least difficult, equivalent of HSK jiˇa (‘first’)
B – more commonly used, equivalent of HSK yˇı (‘second’)
C – commonly used, equivalent of HSK bˇıng (‘third’)
D – currently used, equivalent of HSK d¯ıng (‘fourth’)
N/A – not HSK listed

Within each frame title, items are arranged firstly by the level of register, from 3 to 1*, then alphabetically for headwords within each register level. Within the same level of register, order is determined first by

- alphabetical order of the initials of the first characters of headwords; then by
- *pinyin* ordering of the finals; then by
- the order of tones (from the first to the fourth); then by
- the number of strokes, i.e. characters with fewer strokes precede ones with more strokes; then by
- the order of the beginning stroke: horizontal line (—), then vertical line (‖), then left slash (\), then dot (.), then straight stroke with a bending tip (—).  

If the first characters of headwords are the same in every way, the same principle is applied to the next character, and so on. The above also applies to the arrangement of frame titles, less the level of register.

**Pinyin initials:**

b p m f, d t n l, g k h, j q x, zh ch sh r, z c s
### Pinyin finals:

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