

Examining YCT-based Curriculum as a Preparation

Curriculum for GCSE Chinese in England

Yan, Chun Hong * Chan, Rainbow Rung

Abstract

Over the past two decades, an increasing number of students in England have begun learning Chinese, with thousands of students sitting the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) Chinese examination. Although Chinese language education in England has progressed from being offered as an ‘enrichment’ activity to becoming part of the ‘mainstream’ curriculum, it remains a niche subject compared to languages such as German and French. Despite various schools and institutions beginning to support Chinese language teaching, including providing teacher training and organising study tours to China, Chinese language teachers in England still face challenges such as a lack of adequate teaching materials and inadequately structured curricula.

This paper is underpinned by the theoretical concepts of constructive alignment, backward curriculum design and spiralling curriculum. It aims to review the foreign language teaching and learning framework in England and compare the themes, vocabulary, grammar, and examination formats of the Youth Chinese Test (YCT) and GCSE Chinese curricula, in order to explore whether a YCT-based curriculum can serve as a bridge for students from a beginner level to the GCSE Chinese course. Additionally, it aims to provide pedagogical recommendations for integrating the YCT and GCSE curricula, enabling teachers to effectively implement the YCT curriculum during the Key Stage 3 period, thus facilitating a smoother transition for students to the Key Stage 4 GCSE Chinese course.

* Yan, Chun Hong, PhD student, University of Southampton, UK. Email: C.H.Yan@soton.ac.uk.
(corresponding author)

Chan, Rainbow Rung, New Directions College, UK. Email: rainbowrungchan@gmail.com.

Keywords: assessment for learning, Chinese as a foreign language, General Certificate of Secondary Education Chinese, modern foreign language curriculum, Youth Chinese Test

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Chinese language education in England has been developing.

The British government has placed Chinese on par with major foreign languages such as French, Spanish, and German, recognising it as one of the key foreign languages (Tinsley & Board, 2017). Furthermore, the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and the General Certificate of Education Advanced Level (A-level) courses in England both offer Chinese as a subject for students aged 14 to 19.

However, the development of Chinese language education in England is still in its early stages (Lam, 2020a). Zhang and Li (2010) pointed out that there is a lack of suitable Chinese curricula and teaching materials in the English secondary education system. Concurrently, although students can sit for the GCSE Chinese examination, they tend not to do so because they cannot gain confidence in learning Chinese through a systematic Chinese language curriculum (Wang, 2009). Song (2019) also noted that there is no appropriate preparatory course for GCSE Chinese. In this case, this study suggests a Youth Chinese Test (YCT)-based curriculum might be suitable as a preparatory curriculum for GCSE Chinese.

This study aims to explore a YCT-based curriculum as a preparatory curriculum to bridge the gap between the beginner level and GCSE Chinese level. This study first

outlines the framework of the Modern Foreign Language (MFL) curriculum under the English education system to identify the most suitable time for students to study YCT. It then discusses the development of Chinese language education in England, highlighting the challenges of Chinese teachers in England. After that, the theoretical concepts of constructive alignment, backward curriculum design and spiralling curriculum are introduced, justifying the investigation of the alignment and overlapping space between YCT and GCSE as an important step in reviewing the potential of YCT as a preparatory curriculum for GCSE. Finally, it suggests that a YCT-based curriculum can possibly be a suitable way to further develop Chinese language education in England, by comparing YCT and GCSE Chinese in terms of teaching materials, examination requirements, and examination formats. Meanwhile, after exploring the relationship between these two examinations and courses, this study provides pedagogical recommendations to enable teachers to effectively implement the curriculum and thus facilitate a smoother transition for students to the GCSE Chinese course.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview of the English Education System, MFL Curriculum and GCSE Chinese

The United Kingdom is composed of England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, each with its own educational system. This study mainly focuses on England's baccalaureate — GCSE and therefore discusses the educational context in England.

The English government provides compulsory free education for children aged 5 to 16, dividing these 11 years into four Key Stages. All children must attend full-time education in secondary schools until the age of 16. Generally, every student studies for the GCSE and participates in the examinations during Key Stage 4.

GCSE covers a wide range of subjects, including Chinese, with Pearson Edexcel and AQA being the most popular examination boards responsible for offering the GCSE Chinese examination. Whilst Pearson GCSE Chinese is available in both Mandarin and Cantonese, as well as in traditional and simplified characters, AQA is only available in Mandarin and simplified characters. Regardless of the examination board, the examination consists of four papers: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students can take the Foundation Tier or the Higher Tier examination. This

study uses the Higher Tier examination format as the standard.

According to the national curriculum framework in England, students are expected to start learning a modern or ancient foreign language (including Ancient Greek, Chinese, Spanish, and so forth), from Key Stage 2 in primary school. During this stage, students should acquire basic linguistic knowledge and practical communication skills, laying the groundwork for language learning in Key Stage 3 (Department for Education [DfE], 2013a). Then, language remains a compulsory subject during Key Stage 3, specifically focusing on MFLs. This stage allows students to deepen their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills to prepare them for future language studies for GCSE in Key Stage 4.

In terms of Chinese language education, seemingly, implementing a foundation language curriculum in Key Stage 2 is the best option to ensure that students have enough time to immerse themselves in learning Chinese and then become well-prepared for the GCSE Chinese examination. However, in reality, the availability of Chinese language courses in English primary schools remains limited. In 2020, less than 3% of the 608 surveyed primary schools in England offered Chinese courses, and by 2021, this figure had only slightly increased to around 3% (Collen, 2020, 2021). Moreover, Holmes and Myles (2019) argued that English primary schools have not developed a long-term language learning curriculum and appropriate teaching and

learning strategies that can help students further develop their language skills in the consecutive Key Stage. Tinsley and Doležal (2018) also pointed out that some primary schools have not effectively implemented foreign language education and have a lack of resources to develop a concrete language learning curriculum, particularly as Chinese is considered a minority language in English primary education. Therefore, the likelihood of establishing a solid foundation in Chinese education from Key Stage 2 is low. Meanwhile, in terms of learning hours, Collen (2020, 2021) noted that by 2021, 97% of the surveyed state schools provided students with at least two hours per week for foreign language learning at Key Stage 4. Given the limited time available in Key Stage 4, it seems unrealistic to expect students to start from scratch and reach the level required to take the GCSE Chinese examination within two years.

Instead, in Key Stage 3, by 2021, among the 617 surveyed public secondary schools, 39 had a complete Chinese course, and 54 schools offered GCSE Chinese as an option for students (Collen, 2020, 2021). The surveys also found that 43% of the 138 surveyed private schools allowed students to take GCSE Chinese. A more feasible option to prepare GCSE Chinese seems to be starting at Key Stage 3, where schools can introduce a foundation Chinese curriculum and Chinese courses, in this article, which is informed by YCT, and then incorporate the content of YCT syllabi, YCT

examination requirements and relevant materials into the Chinese language curriculum.

2.2 The Development and Challenges of Chinese Language Teaching in England

Scholars have described the development of Chinese language teaching in England as transitioning from ‘enrichment’ to becoming ‘mainstream’ (Lam, 2020a; Tinsley & Board, 2014b). For instance, Chinese was even ranked as the fourth most important language in 2013 and 2017 (Tinsley & Board, 2014a; 2017). The National Centre for Languages (2007) reported that among 400 surveyed public secondary schools, 160 offered Chinese classes as extra-curricular activities, allowing students to experience Chinese language learning in a casual, enrichment-based way. From 2001 to 2006, approximately only 2,000 students annually took the GCSE Chinese examination. In 2024, there were a total number of 7,915 students taking the AQA and Pearson GCSE Chinese examinations (AQA, 2024; Pearson, 2024). This data indicates that Chinese is increasingly viewed not just as a hobby but as an integral part of formal education and a pathway to higher education. However, the quantitative data may overshadow the nuanced characteristics of examination candidates. For instance, Wang and Higgins (2008) indicate that many GCSE candidates are British-born Chinese or Chinese migrant youths, the majority of whom have Chinese as their

mother tongue. A similar case can be found in Australia. In 2015, a total of 4,500 Year 12 students in Australia were studying Chinese, of which only 400 students did not have a Chinese background (Orton, 2016a). Many Chinese migrant parents encourage their children to study Chinese because they believe that their children's Chinese proficiency is good enough to easily manage local public exams and increase their chances of gaining university admission (Orton, 2016b). Therefore, the upward trend may conceal the challenges experienced by non-native Chinese learners, who constitute a minority among GCSE Chinese candidates. These challenges will be further explored in the following discussion.

Despite some progress in Chinese language education in England, the limited resources and inadequate teaching materials continue to pose significant challenges for teachers and students. The National Centre for Languages (2007) also surveyed teachers' opinions on Chinese language teaching, revealing a widespread concern about the scarcity of Chinese teaching materials at all levels. Teachers expressed a desire for simple, engaging materials to spark young learners' interest. For example, local teachers criticised textbooks like *Chinese in Steps*, *Chinese for GCSE*, and *Ni Hao* as inadequate for the needs of English students. Since relatively few students purchase Chinese textbooks, publishers have not invested significant resources in improving these materials (Wang & Higgins, 2008). Zhang and Li (2010) also

highlighted the issue of insufficient teaching materials, noting that the content often does not align with the English education system, fails to reflect the relationship between language and culture, and that only a small portion of the materials help students attain recognised Chinese language qualifications in England.

Ensuring curriculum continuity between Key Stages 3 and 4 is essential for retaining students in Chinese language studies and preparing them for success in GCSE Chinese. If the Key Stage 3 Chinese course fails to build students' confidence and proficiency, they are unlikely to choose GCSE Chinese in Key Stage 4. Clegg (2003) pointed out that Chinese language teaching in England is still developing, and many secondary schools that previously adopted commercial Chinese courses failed to prepare students for the academically focused GCSE Chinese course. To encourage more students to learn Chinese and even take the GCSE Chinese examination, greater efforts are needed in curriculum planning. Wang (2009) conducted a study at a grammar school in Liverpool to understand the school's Chinese language programme. The study found that although the school initially had around 100 students learning Chinese in Key Stage 3, only 10 students continued to study GCSE Chinese in Key Stage 4. A questionnaire revealed that over half of the students who dropped Chinese found the language too difficult, and a quarter believed the introductory Chinese course in Key Stage 3 was already challenging, making it

impossible to achieve good results in GCSE Chinese. Developing a well-structured introductory Chinese course that gradually builds students' confidence in learning Chinese and provides them with a solid foundation is necessary. This will prevent students from feeling overwhelmed when they start Key Stage 4 and contemplating giving up on learning Chinese. If a curriculum based on YCT can enable students to first learn some of the basic grammar, vocabulary, and topics covered in the GCSE Chinese course within one to two years, it could be a pathway for curriculum continuity.

Several initiatives have been launched in England to address the challenges in Chinese language education, with organisations and institutions like the University College London (UCL) and the British Council leading efforts such as the Mandarin Excellence Programme, which aimed to train 5,000 proficient Chinese speakers by 2020 through supporting teacher training, developing effective teaching strategies, and creating immersive experiences (Institute of Education Confucius Institute for Schools, 2017). The Swire Chinese Language Foundation (2019) has also established 12 centres supporting Chinese education, benefiting over 26,110 students, whilst the Centre for Language Education and Cooperation and the British Council have programmes to train Chinese teaching assistants (British Council, 2021).

Despite these efforts, the development of Chinese teaching materials and

curriculum content in England remains in its early stages, leaving a significant shortage of well-developed resources. The UCL Institute of Education has collaborated with Pearson to publish materials like *Jinbu 1* and *Jinbu 2* for younger students, and *Edexcel GCSE (9-1) Chinese* for older students. However, scholars have noted that Chinese language education has long been on the fringes in terms of student numbers and its role within English education systems. Although it has recently been integrated into the English MFL curriculum, research on the further development of Chinese language education in England, including teaching materials, teaching methods and curriculum reform, is still insufficient (Zhang et al., 2010; 2019). This makes it challenging for educators to find appropriate resources and effectively implement Chinese language instruction.

In addition to the issues with teaching materials, competition among different foreign languages has also affected the development of Chinese language teaching in England. Due to historical and geographical factors, French, Spanish, and German have long been popular among English students (Lam, 2020b). Since students typically study only one foreign language, Chinese often receives less attention compared to European languages. Pérez-Milans (2014) visited a secondary school in West London closely associated with Hanban (Confucius Institute Headquarters) and the British Council to gather opinions from teachers and students about the Chinese

language programme. A Chinese teacher at the school humorously mentioned a ‘competition’ between himself and the French teacher, as the French department had the privilege of selecting the most outstanding students to study French and to complete the fast-tracked GCSE French course in just three years starting from Year 7. Conversely, students who chose Chinese had to follow a regular five-year learning schedule. The extended learning period can diminish students’ interest. This case study also reveals the importance of establishing a Chinese language curriculum that can well co-operate with the national curriculum, students’ needs and the school’s policy. We suggest that the YCT curriculum could be one of the possible options that can assist students in learning Chinese and then preparing for GCSE Chinese.

2.3 The Youth Chinese Test (YCT) and YCT Standard Course

YCT is a standardised Chinese language proficiency test designed and administered by the Center for Language Education and Cooperation (previously Hanban) in China. The purpose of YCT is to encourage primary and secondary school students worldwide to learn Chinese. The YCT consists of two sections: a written test and an oral test. The written test is divided into four levels, with the first three levels only assessing reading and listening skills, and the fourth level including all reading, listening and writing skills. The oral test is further divided into two levels: primary and intermediate (Hanban, n.d.-a, n.d.-b, n.d.-c, n.d.-d, n.d.-e). Each level’s syllabus

lists the vocabulary and grammar required for that level and the preceding level. The reading passages and listening recordings are based on these lists, giving students a clear scope for their preparation.

Zhang and Li (2009) analysed the quality, reliability, and validity of YCT based on students' performance in 2007, with a particular focus on YCT Level 2. Their research found that YCT Level 2 is relatively appropriate for students at beginner level, with fewer challenging questions in the examination. They also concluded that the structure of the YCT Level 2 paper aligns with its purpose, with overarching question formats and content based on students' everyday lives, effectively assessing students' listening and reading skills, and knowledge of Chinese culture.

To ensure YCT meets international language standards, YCT is aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The Council of Europe established the CEFR in 2001, categorising learners' proficiency in foreign languages into six levels (see Appendix 1). It allows educators to structure the curricula according to descriptions of language proficiency levels. This classification enables educators and learners to more effectively identify which specific areas of knowledge and skills need to improve, making the learning objectives more precise and efficient (Council of Europe, 2020). According to the UCD Confucius Institute for Ireland (2020), students who pass YCT Level 2 can understand and use simple

Chinese phrases and sentences, enabling them to handle basic communication. This corresponds to CEFR A1. Those who pass YCT Level 3, having achieved proficiency in basic Chinese, can communicate familiar everyday topics in a simple manner, equivalent to CEFR A2. Students who pass YCT Level 4 can communicate at a basic level in daily and academic settings. They are also able to manage most forms of communication when travelling in China, equivalent to CEFR B1.

To facilitate Chinese language teaching and learning and the development of YCT, the textbooks *YCT Standard Course 1 to 6* are developed by Hanban with a group of experts in teaching Chinese as a foreign language. Jin (2016), one of the authors of the *YCT Standard Course*, indicated that the textbooks were designed based on the YCT syllabus, providing structured support for teachers and students to meet specific language objectives tested in the examination. The whole YCT curriculum consists of six books: Book 1 corresponds to YCT Level 1, Book 2 to Level 2, Books 3 and 4 to Level 3, and Books 5 and 6 to Level 4. Upon completing the course, students are expected to have learned 600 Chinese vocabulary words.

2.4 Constructive Alignment, Backward Curriculum Design and Spiralling Curriculum

After introducing GCSE and YCT, it is necessary to draw on the theoretical

concepts of constructive alignment, backward curriculum design, and spiralling curriculum to underpin the research direction.

Curriculum refers to the structured framework that guides students' knowledge, skills, and learning experiences. It includes both the content (what is taught) and the pedagogy (how it is taught), including assessment methods and teaching materials (Hill et al., 2021). Angelo (2021) argues that inadequate curriculum design reduces both the effectiveness of student learning and the efficiency of teaching. Ineffective and inefficient curricula often suffer from a lack of clarity and coherence, in which there is little to no clear connection between the learning objectives, teaching materials and assessments. Thus, he proposes that during the curriculum design process, the concepts of constructive alignment and backward curriculum design, stemming from constructivism, can be used to facilitate overall teaching and learning outcomes. In this study, these two concepts are extended to apply to bridging two separate curricula (i.e. YCT and GCSE). Constructivism, constructive alignment and backward curriculum design are introduced by turns below.

In terms of constructivism, Piaget (1964) suggests that learning involves modelling, reshaping, and comprehending the structural formation of knowledge. In other words, learning is not merely the accumulation of new knowledge; it also involves modifying pre-existing knowledge to integrate new understandings.

Therefore, teachers must actively engage with students' prior conceptions and bridge them to facilitate meaningful learning (Mathieson, 2015). In practice, the concept of constructive alignment can be utilised to effectively connect two separate curricula, aiding students' transition from the preparation curriculum to the subsequent one (Angelo, 2021). Constructive alignment is based on constructivism, which emphasises that meaningful and lasting learning occurs when students progressively construct knowledge. The concept of alignment refers to the deliberate connection between curricula, teaching materials, and assessments to ensure they support the intended learning outcomes (Biggs, 2003). Well-structured and aligned curricula facilitate deeper, more meaningful, and practical learning experiences for students (Biggs & Tang, 2011). On top of this, the concept of backward curriculum design can be employed to assist teachers in ensuring that two separate curricula are aligned to achieve the intended learning outcomes. As per Angelo (2021), backward curriculum design, as its name implies, entails starting with the desired outcomes to be achieved upon completion and then returning to carefully review the whole curriculum design, including assessment and teaching materials.

When applying these two concepts to underpin this research, it is necessary to assume that the goal of the YCT-based curriculum is to facilitate students' smooth transition to GCSE Chinese. In order to achieve this goal, the YCT and GCSE

curricula, their teaching materials and assessments should be taken into account concurrently, ensuring they are all interrelated. Ideally, these two separate curricula can be combined into a larger spiralling curriculum, which refers to a constructivist approach in which students can build upon their prior knowledge by gradually introducing more complex knowledge (McHarg & Hay, 2009). This iterative process not only reinforces learning but also enhances motivation, as it activates prior knowledge, sparks interest, and solidifies understanding (Coelho & Moles, 2016; Mattick & Knight, 2007). Given the importance of prior knowledge accumulated at the preparatory stage, it is fundamental to examine the overlapping and differing aspects of learning objectives, syllabi, teaching materials, examination requirements, and examination formats between YCT and GCSE. The noticeable overlap may suggest that YCT can help students accumulate sufficient prior knowledge to support their further GCSE studies.

2.5 Alignment of YCT with the Key Stage 3 MFL Curriculum

Further analysis is needed to determine whether the YCT examination and its accompanying materials align with the learning objectives of the English Key Stage 3 foreign language curriculum, and if they can effectively prepare students for the transition to GCSE Chinese.

In terms of learning objectives, the Key Stage 3 foreign language curriculum should enable students to culturally deepen their understanding of the world. *YCT Standard Course 1 to 6* facilitate students' understanding of Chinese traditional culture, etiquette and norms. For example, YCT Standard Course 6 introduces the custom of the Mid-Autumn Festival (Su & Wang, 2016b).

Concerning the curriculum times, according to Hanban (n.d.-a, n.d.-b, n.d.-c, n.d.-e), YCT Level 1 is designed for students who have studied Chinese for three months with 2 to 3 hours of classes per week; Level 2 for those who have studied Chinese for half a school year with the same learning hours. Since learning hours accumulate, students could complete a basic Chinese course in just over a year to two years. Combined with two additional years of GCSE Chinese preparation, this approach, though slower than the above-mentioned French fast track, provides a more efficient pathway than the typical five-year learning period, which could make it more appealing.

Regarding the curriculum content, the teaching approach of MFL should allow students to communicate in a foreign language for practical purposes, equipping them with the basic linguistic knowledge necessary for their future needs to study and work in other countries, emphasising the depth and breadth of listening, speaking, reading,

and writing skills, with a focus on core vocabulary and grammar (DfE, 2013b). YCT includes both oral and written examinations, which can help train students in listening, speaking, reading, and writing Chinese. Students who pass YCT are expected to have acquired basic to intermediate vocabulary and grammar, enabling them to meet specific communication needs in everyday life and academics (Hanban, n.d.-e). In terms of grammar, students in Key Stage 3 should be able to distinguish and use various tenses and grammatical structures, particularly those conveying present, past, and future tenses. As for vocabulary, students should develop and use an extensive range of words to express immediate needs and personal interests, explain their views, and participate in discussions (DfE, 2013b). The YCT Level 4 includes 606 vocabulary items and 176 grammar structures, while the YCT Level 3 requires students to master structures like ‘在……呢’ to indicate ongoing actions, ‘了’ and ‘過’ to indicate completed actions, and ‘要……了’ to indicate impending actions (Hanban, n.d.-b), all of which are closely related to tense. Based on the analysis above, the YCT examination content and related materials can generally meet the requirements of the English Key Stage 3 foreign language curriculum.

However, the YCT reading examination falls short of the MFL framework’s broader expectations, particularly in requiring students to engage with various text genres and translation skills. The MFL framework requires students to read different

types of texts, such as stories, songs, poems, and letters. This helps enhance creativity, expression, and a deeper understanding of language and culture. Students are also expected to be able to translate from a foreign language into English (DfE, 2013b).

The YCT reading examination, however, only requires students to read a short passage and then answer questions, without requiring them to read multiple text genres (Hanban, n.d.-b). Nevertheless, the teaching materials can fill the gap; for example, a traditional story *Mr Ye likes dragons* (葉公好龍), and a poem called *Family Song* (家庭歌) allowed students to learn different text genres (Su et al., 2016c). However, YCT does not meet the English education system's requirement for students to develop translation skills from a foreign language into English.

In summary, the YCT's examination objectives and curriculum content generally align with the requirements of the Key Stage 3 foreign language curriculum in England. However, YCT lacks a translation component, which is a significant difference between YCT and GCSE. The following sections will elaborate on this aspect and propose improvements in teaching strategies.

3. RESEARCH GAP

Following the growing interest in Chinese language education in England, a significant research gap remains in how to effectively bridge the transition from

beginner level to GCSE Chinese. Current curricula often lack continuity, leaving students unprepared for the GCSE Chinese course. Whilst initiatives like the Mandarin Excellence Programme aim to improve proficiency, there is still a shortage of teaching materials and strategies tailored to the needs of English students.

YCT, with its structured approach to basic vocabulary and grammar, offers a potential solution to this gap. However, its effectiveness as a preparatory course for GCSE Chinese has not been thoroughly explored. Investigating YCT as a bridge between introductory learning and GCSE Chinese is crucial, as it could provide a more cohesive learning pathway, enhance student confidence, and ultimately increase retention and success rates in Chinese language studies.

4. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs content analysis and textual analysis to examine the correlations between the YCT and GCSE Chinese curricula. Key materials analysed include the GCSE and YCT examination syllabi and textbooks, such as *YCT Standard Course 1 to 6*, and *Pearson GCSE (9-1) Chinese Specification*. The analysis focuses on comparing the themes, grammar, vocabulary, and examination formats of YCT and GCSE Chinese to assess whether YCT can serve as an effective preparatory curriculum for GCSE. Additionally, document analysis is employed to review relevant

literature, official documents, and reports from both England and Hanban. This helps contextualise YCT within the English education system and explore its potential benefits as a foundation curriculum for GCSE Chinese.

5. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Themes

The GCSE Chinese curriculum is organised around five major themes, each with specific sub-topics (see Appendix 2). These themes encompass areas such as identity, culture, environmental issues, and so forth. The first three themes primarily focus on students' daily lives, aiming to equip them with the ability to introduce themselves, describe everyday activities, and narrate experiences such as travel in Chinese. The fourth and fifth themes, however, delve into more complex topics, encouraging students to reflect on their future careers through language learning and even engaging in discussions on global affairs. This approach is designed to help students understand the differences between nations. The rationale behind this structure lies in the Department for Education's goal of enhancing students' language skills at the GCSE level, preparing them for further education and employment. The GCSE curriculum emphasises not only understanding and using language across various contexts, including those encountered during their school years, but also engaging

with more sophisticated societal issues (DfE, 2015). Additionally, schools are expected to develop students into educated citizens capable of critically analysing issues (DfE, 2014b). Consequently, the GCSE Chinese curriculum requires students to express well-founded and logically sound arguments on social and global topics, such as environmental protection and climate change. Meanwhile, the GCSE Chinese examination content is structured across the five themes. For example, the writing examination in June 2019 requires students to write a letter to the hotel manager to provide relevant information (Pearson, 2021c), which resonates with the second theme Local Area, Holiday and Travel.

YCT does not specify any particular themes, which, on the surface, appears to allow for overarching content. However, we can glean insights from the official textbooks of *YCT Standard Course 1 to 6*. The themes of all the lessons from these six textbooks with those of the GCSE Chinese curriculum are compared as follows (see Appendix 3).

Through the comparison outlined, it becomes evident that the content of YCT primarily covers the first three of the five main themes in the GCSE Chinese curriculum. These themes are relatively fundamental and revolve around students' daily lives. This alignment is consistent with YCT's objective, which is mainly to encourage primary and secondary school students in non-Chinese-speaking countries

to learn Chinese with interest while cultivating and improving their language proficiency (Hanban, n.d.-d). Therefore, sparking students' interest in learning Chinese is particularly important. To achieve this goal, the curriculum content should not be overly challenging.

In terms of themes, a curriculum modelled on YCT generally enables students to master how to describe school life, express ownership, and recount experiences, such as shopping or travelling, in Chinese. If used as a preparatory course before GCSE Chinese, with a duration of just over one to two years, this coverage would be sufficient. When teaching the GCSE course, teachers could briefly revise the first three themes with students before focusing on the remaining two themes.

5.2 Vocabulary

As per Pearson's (2022b) GCSE Chinese Specification, the vocabulary list for GCSE Chinese is divided into two main sections. The first section is High-Frequency Language, further categorised into 16 subgroups, including verbs, adjectives, adverbs, colours, numbers, and so forth. The second section is Topic-Specific Language, subdivided into 12 thematic categories such as identity and culture, clothing and style, cultural life, and directions. Together, these two sections include a total of 840 vocabularies.

In contrast, the vocabularies assessed in YCT are not as finely categorised; they are primarily organised by examination level. Each level's vocabulary list includes words from the previous levels and is arranged alphabetically according to pinyin. Additionally, a 'Language Functions' section is provided before the vocabulary list, indicating the language functions that students at that level are expected to master, such as greeting others or introducing personal information. However, the official documents do not explicitly link specific vocabulary items to these language functions. According to the YCT Level 4 syllabus (Hanban, n.d.-c), the entire YCT examination covers a total of 606 vocabulary items.

A comparison of the two vocabulary lists reveals that there are 424 overlapping vocabulary items (see Appendix 4) and 31 pairs of similar vocabulary items (see Appendix 5). Notably, the GCSE Chinese vocabulary list contains many single-morpheme words, which are the smallest phonetic-semantic units (Lu, 1979), such as 忘 (forget), 跳 (jump), 踢 (kick), 騎 (ride), 說 (speak), 蛋 (egg), 人 (person), and 春 (spring). In contrast, YCT tends to use compound words or phrases to express these concepts. Compound words consist of two or more morphemes (Li & Thompson, 1981), whilst phrases are grammatical units formed by combining two or more words (Zhang, 2010), such as 忘記 (forget), 跳舞 (dance), 踢足球 (play football), 騎馬 (ride a horse), 說話 (speak), 雞蛋 (egg), 中國人 (Chinese

people), and 春季 (spring season). When students learn vocabularies like 踢足球 (play football), teachers are likely to explain the meanings of both 踢 (kick) and 足球 (football), which is why such vocabulary items are classified as similar.

Additionally, there are 385 vocabulary items in GCSE Chinese that are not covered by YCT (see Appendix 6).

As above-mentioned, YCT rarely addresses themes related to globalisation, the future, work, and relevant topics. As a result, students have limited opportunities to learn relevant vocabularies, such as 全球變暖 (global warming), 氣候 (climate), 自然資源 (natural resources), with these categories accounting for 69 items in GCSE Chinese. Additionally, the Department for Education in England aims for the GCSE Chinese curriculum to enable students to understand global issues and apply the Chinese language in quotidian life, leading to a broader range of vocabularies, including 22 items related to countries or regions, such as 非洲 (Africa), 香港 (Hong Kong), 美國 (United State). It also includes more down-to-earth vocabulary like 發 (send), 炒飯 (fried rice) and 自助餐 (buffet).

Moreover, the objectives of YCT and GCSE partially differ, which further influences the vocabulary list in the two curricula. YCT primarily focuses on helping students learn Chinese, with its content largely centred on Chinese culture and living environments. In contrast, GCSE not only focuses on Chinese culture and

communities but also requires students to describe their own countries and related matters in Chinese (Pearson, 2022b). Therefore, the vocabulary list includes items with distinct British characteristics, such as 聖誕節 (Christmas), 教堂 (church), 英鎊 (pound sterling), 中學會考 (baccalaureate) and 英語 (English).

Lastly, the GCSE Chinese curriculum also involves some more complex phrases, such as 想做的事 (things to do), 住的地方 (place to live) and 馬上回來 (come back immediately). Although the YCT vocabulary list does not cover such phrases, given their simplicity and practicality, they may still appear in lessons or classroom interactions. With the support of teaching materials and various instructional methods, the teaching process should be able to equip students with a broader range of GCSE Chinese vocabulary.

5.3 Grammar

Similarly, the GCSE Chinese curriculum divides grammar into basic and higher levels, with each level further subdivided into specific grammatical functions, such as measure words. There are 149 grammatical items across both levels (Pearson, 2022b). YCT is similar to GCSE, further dividing different levels by grammatical functions, and providing more detailed examples. For instance, measure words are categorised into used after numerals (用在數詞後), used after ‘this’, ‘that’, ‘several’ and ‘every’

(用在‘這’,‘那’,‘幾’,‘每’後), and others (其他) (Hanban, n.d.-c). This allows students to have a clearer understanding of the grammatical elements they need to master. Across the four levels, there are a total of 176 grammatical items.

At first glance, YCT seems to have more grammatical items than GCSE. This is because YCT classifications are more detailed; for example, measure words used after numerals (用在數詞後的量詞) include 12 items, and adverbs of degree include 8 items. The extensive range of items helps students better understand how the same grammatical function can be expressed in different ways and clarifies the specific usage of each grammar point. There is a 76.5% overlap, with 114 grammatical items fully shared between YCT and GCSE (see Appendix 7).

Among the 35 non-overlapping grammatical items, some are relatively simple or are already covered in teaching materials. For example, measure words like 杯 (a cup of) are introduced in Lesson 4 of *YCT Standard Course 1* (Su et al., 2015).

Additionally, although 又……又 (both ... and ...) is not included in the YCT grammar list, it appears in Lesson 1 of *YCT Standard Course 6* as 老虎又勇敢又漂亮 (The tiger is both brave and beautiful) (Su & Wang, 2016b). This indicates that even if a grammar point is not explicitly listed in the YCT curriculum, some commonly used items are still integrated into textbooks.

However, it is worth noting that YCT does not require students to master the Chinese grammatical concept of complements of direction (趨向補語). Lu (1996) identifies 12 commonly used grammatical categories, including complements of direction. Complements of direction express direction and can be divided into simple complements of direction (簡單趨向補語) and compound complements of direction (複合趨向補語). The former places 來 (to come) or 去 (to go) after a verb as a complement, while the latter adds verbs like 進 (to enter) before or after simple complements of direction, resulting in expressions like 進來 (to come in) (Lu, 2006). Additionally, although English language also has complements, the meanings and uses of Chinese complements of direction differ, becoming a learning barrier to English-speaking students (Ju, 1992). For instance, Xiao and Zhou (2009) mention that English-speaking students often struggle with complements of direction due to negative transfer from their mother tongue. In sentences like 我要回美國去 (I want to go back to the US), students often incorrectly write *我要回去美國, influenced by the English structure 'go back to the US', where the object 'the US' is placed at the end of the sentence. Given this, when handling both YCT and GCSE courses, teachers should be mindful of commonly used but challenging grammatical items that do not overlap between the two curricula. Teachers could consider introducing simple complements of direction in advanced YCT courses. As Yang (2003) points out,

simple complements of direction are easier than compound complements of direction.

Teaching the former first would help students grasp the concept of complements of direction before moving on to compound forms and extended uses.

5.4 Assessment

Both YCT and GCSE consist of four examined papers based on listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. However, the examination formats of YCT and GCSE are quite different.

In the GCSE Chinese listening examination, both the questions and instructions are written in English. The examination lasts 45 minutes, including a 5-minute period for reading the questions and instructions. Students are required to listen to Chinese monologues or conversations involving one or more speakers in various scenarios, with differences in the speakers' gender, age, and accent. After listening to the recordings, students answer multiple-choice questions or respond to short-answer questions in English. The questions aim to assess whether students can distinguish between past, present, and future events, make inferences based on different contexts, and identify general information, key points, details, and the speakers' opinions in the recordings (Pearson, 2022b). In contrast, the YCT examination presents both the questions and instructions in Chinese, supplemented

with pinyin. The examination duration varies by level: Level 1 is 10 minutes, Level 2 is 15 minutes, Level 3 is 20 minutes, and Level 4 is 30 minutes, reflecting an increase in time with the level and difficulty. Moreover, the question formats across all levels are generally consistent. Levels 1 to 4 require students to determine whether the content of the images matches the audio, or to select the corresponding image. Levels 2 to 4 also include multiple-choice questions in text format. However, the presentation of the recordings differs according to the difficulty of each level: Level 1 includes words, phrases, sentences, and dialogues; Level 2 involves phrases, sentences, dialogues, and questions; Level 3 consists of dialogues and questions; and Level 4 features dialogues and short passages (Hanban, n.d.-a, n.d.-b, n.d.-c, n.d.-e). Thus, YCT starts with vocabulary and gradually progresses to short passages, whilst GCSE primarily focuses on dialogues and short passages. Consequently, after completing YCT Level 4, students are likely to find the GCSE Chinese listening examination familiar. However, unlike YCT, GCSE requires students to answer questions in English. For example, in the June 2019 GCSE examination, after listening to a monologue, students had to fill in the blank in the sentence ‘They spent the first night in a hotel in the _____’ with ‘city centre’ (Pearson, 2021a, 2021b). Both the questions and answers are in English. This highlights the key difference between YCT and GCSE: the latter also requires students to respond to questions in writing and to

have translation skills between Chinese and English.

Regarding the speaking examination, the GCSE Chinese examination adopts a unique format as it is conducted within the school, where the examination process is recorded by the teacher and then submitted to Pearson for assessment. The speaking examination lasts between 10 and 12 minutes, with an additional 12 minutes for preparation. The examination comprises three sections: a role-play based on a specific topic, a question-and-answer session involving a particular type of image, and a conversation covering two selected themes. The examination requires students to convey information coherently and confidently, narrate events, express opinions, use language for different purposes continuously, and demonstrate a range of vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structures (Pearson, 2022b). In comparison, the YCT speaking examination is divided into beginner and intermediate levels. The beginner examination lasts 10 minutes with 7 minutes for preparation, whilst the intermediate examination lasts 9 minutes with 10 minutes of preparation. The speaking assessment format for YCT is significantly different from that of GCSE. YCT employs an integrated listening and speaking model. In the beginner examination, students listen to sentences and either repeat the recorded content or answer related questions, followed by describing images in two to three sentences. In the intermediate examination, students repeat the recorded sentences, describe the content of images

presented to them, and then answer questions printed on the examination paper (Hanban, n.d.-d). Comparing the two examination formats, both incorporate a ‘read and speak’ component where students describe the content of images. However, YCT emphasises integrated skills by requiring students to repeat the audio content, whilst GCSE Chinese is more aligned with real-life situations where students simulate authentic scenarios to produce relevant sentences.

Regarding the reading examination, the differences are more pronounced than in the listening and speaking. GCSE students have 1 hour and 5 minutes to complete two sections: the first involves answering questions in English based on Chinese texts, including multiple-choice and short-answer questions; the second involves reading instructions written in English and then translating a Chinese text into English. The text types are diverse, ranging from advertisements, emails, and letters to articles and literature. The focus of the assessment is whether students can distinguish the overall information, key points, details, and speakers’ opinions in the texts, make inferences based on context, and, importantly, discern the implicit meaning of the texts (Pearson, 2022b). In contrast, the duration of the YCT reading examination varies by level: Level 1 is 17 minutes, Level 2 is 27 minutes, and Levels 3 and 4 are each 30 minutes. The question types include determining whether images match words, sentences, or dialogues, selecting the correct answer based on images and incomplete dialogues,

identifying the relationship between questions and answers, filling in blanks in dialogues with appropriate words, and selecting the correct answers based on text content (Hanban, n.d.-a, n.d.-b, n.d.-c, n.d.-e). By comparing the two assessment formats, beyond testing Chinese reading ability, GCSE also emphasises whether students can translate the target language into their native language. In contrast, YCT's question formats are relatively simple, consisting entirely of multiple-choice questions, without requiring students to write any Chinese characters in the examination.

Finally, regarding the writing examination, there is a significant difference between GCSE and YCT. The aim of the GCSE Chinese writing examination is to assess students' ability to write texts of varying lengths and formats in different contexts, expressing opinions whilst accurately using different vocabularies, grammar, and sentence structures to effectively communicate and exchange information. The question types include two open-ended tasks, requiring students to write short essays on selected topics, with different word limits: the first task requires 80-110 words, and the second 130-180 words, with each task offering two sub-questions, of which students only need to answer one. Additionally, there is a translation task that requires students to translate an English passage into Chinese (Pearson, 2022b). In contrast, YCT Levels 1 to 3 do not assess writing skills, and even in Level 4, the writing

examination lasts only 15 minutes and is divided into two sections. The first section contains five questions, each providing a set of words that students must rearrange into a grammatically correct sentence without using words outside the given set. The second section is a fill-in-the-blank task, where each question presents a sentence with a missing word, accompanied by pinyin, requiring students to fill in the corresponding character based on the sentence meaning and pinyin (Hanban, n.d.-c). Clearly, there is a substantial gap in difficulty between the two examinations. The YCT writing examination remains focused on words, phrases, and sentences, whilst GCSE requires students to write a complete essay and demonstrate skills in translating from English to Chinese.

In terms of assessment format, objectives and requirements, YCT and GCSE are heterogeneous. However, the YCT's simpler question formats, such as multiple-choice or fill-in-the-blank, can serve as an accessible starting point, helping students build confidence and fostering a positive attitude towards learning Chinese.

6. FURTHER DISCUSSION

6.1 Curriculum Plan

The previous sections highlight a certain degree of overlap between the YCT curriculum and the GCSE Chinese curriculum. In light of this observation, teachers

are encouraged to further explore how to structure the YCT-based curriculum.

Teachers may design the curriculum framework, learning hours, and teaching content based on the principles established by the CEFR and in alignment with the YCT examination syllabus and designated teaching materials.

Given that the CEFR is the most highly regarded foreign language learning framework in Europe, aligning YCT with it would signify that the YCT's curriculum and content design conform to the principles of the CEFR, thereby facilitating students' transition to other CEFR-aligned exams, such as GCSE. However, since the CEFR is not designed for any specific language and does not specify which grammar, vocabulary, or other linguistic functions students should learn, it must be supplemented by various elements such as teachers and teaching materials to meet diverse needs and develop a comprehensive curriculum (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). In light of this, teachers should first clarify the integration of the English education system, YCT, CEFR, YCT teaching materials, and learning time (see Appendix 8).

Teachers may divide the Key Stage 3 YCT-based curriculum into three phases: foundational, intermediate, and advanced. Each phase should be taught using two corresponding textbooks, with the curriculum objectives determined by the CEFR level descriptors, the YCT examination syllabus, and the characteristics of the Chinese language. For example, in the foundational phase, teachers may set the

following curriculum objectives: ‘Students should be able to grasp basic Chinese sentence structures, pinyin, and the strokes and structure of Chinese characters’, ‘Students should be able to understand and use simple everyday expressions and introduce themselves, providing basic personal information such as place of residence and relationships’, and ‘Students should be able to engage in simple interactions if the other person speaks slowly and clearly’ (Council of Europe, 2020; Hanban, n.d.-e). These objectives can then be taught using *YCT Standard Course 1* and *YCT Standard Course 2*. For instance, in Lesson 11 of *YCT Standard Course 2*, students can learn how to express their experiences, preferences, and basic information about their physical characteristics.

Moreover, as previously mentioned, all secondary schools in the UK typically allocate 2-3 learning hours per week for foreign language study. Based on the recommended learning hours in *YCT Standard Course*, it is estimated that the foundational phase will require approximately 23 weeks, the intermediate phase about 33 weeks, and the advanced phase around 40 weeks. This timeline suggests that the entire curriculum will span one to two years, after which students can transition to the Key Stage 4 GCSE curriculum.

6.2 Recommendations and Teaching Examples

As above-mentioned, the requirements of the GCSE Chinese and YCT examinations partially differ, but if teachers can address both, they can create a complementary learning experience that progresses from basic to advanced levels. From an examination perspective, YCT questions often include pinyin and some answers are closely tied to it, whereas GCSE Chinese examination and textbook generally do not provide any pinyin. However, when learning a foreign language, students generally begin with phonetics (Aliaga-García, 2007), where pinyin plays a crucial role. Pinyin serves as a visual aid that helps students acquire the language by making abstract phonetics more concrete (Flege, 1995). Thus, through the YCT curriculum, students can first master Pinyin, then gradually move from sounds or syllables to words, phrases, and sentences.

Additionally, although GCSE Chinese often requires students to answer questions in English and even provides instructions in English, which differs from the YCT's use of Chinese for explanations, this approach actually benefits students in England. Since English is their native language, they can easily understand the requirements of the questions. Furthermore, *YCT Standard Course 1-6* offer bilingual explanations, making it relatively easy for students to listen to Chinese and respond in English.

However, YCT covers approximately 54.2% of the vocabulary and 76.5% of the grammar required for GCSE Chinese. The moderate vocabulary coverage is due to the YCT's limited focus on topics, such as 'future aspirations, study, and work' and 'international and global dimensions', which require students to think critically about themselves, society, and global issues, thus providing fewer opportunities to learn related vocabulary. To address this gap, teachers can employ the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. The goal of CLT is to enable students to communicate effectively in the target language by selecting the most appropriate language according to the social context and audience. CLT is characterised by the use of authentic materials, such as newspapers and advertisements, and communication-focused activities in the classroom. For example, teachers can present recent Chinese newspapers and ask students to summarise the reporter's opinions (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). By doing so, teachers can introduce international news written in Chinese, allowing students to expand their vocabulary across a broader range of topics.

Moreover, whilst YCT does not assess students' abilities in English-Chinese translation, GCSE has this requirement that teachers might consider integrating translation elements into the YCT curriculum as early as Key Stage 3. Doing so would not only create a more seamless transition from YCT to GCSE but also enable

students, who might be limited by language barriers and can only express their thoughts in English, to articulate their ideas in Chinese through translation skills. This approach would enhance the authenticity of classroom interactions (Cook, 2010; Van Lier, 1996). Moreover, given the similarities and differences between Chinese and English grammar and sentence structures, as illustrated in the writing paper of the GCSE Chinese examination in November 2020, where students were required to translate the following text:

I love my city. There are lots of beautiful flowers in the parks. If the weather is good, I will walk to school. There are few cars because lots of people cycle to work. Everyone should protect the environment (Pearson, 2022c, p. 10).

The answer is:

我愛我的城市。(在)公園裡有很多美麗(漂亮)的花。如果(要是)天氣好,我會走路(步行)上學。因為很多人騎自行車(單車)去工作(上班),所以汽車(車)很少。每個人(大家/所有(的)人/人人)(都)應該(要)保護環境 (Pearson, 2022a, p. 14)。

In this context, it can be observed that there are notable differences between Chinese and English in terms of the placement of locative nouns, plurality, and the word order used to express causality. For example, both the GCSE Chinese and YCT exams

require students to learn comparative sentences, but the sentences constructed with the comparative word ‘比’ differ between Chinese and English. For instance, ‘今天比昨天暖’ can be translated as ‘Today is warmer than yesterday’. In Chinese, the adjective is placed at the end of the sentence, whereas in English, it is placed after the first noun and the verb to be. Additionally, in English, adjectives used for comparison vary in degree, whilst in Chinese, the adjective itself remains unchanged, with modifiers such as ‘最’ (most) or ‘較’ (more) added before the word to indicate degree. Therefore, when teaching translation skills, it is crucial to avoid a rote learning approach, as many Chinese textbooks are designed for students from various linguistic backgrounds, making it difficult to simultaneously compare Chinese with multiple languages. If teachers do not emphasise the differences between Chinese and English, students may easily experience negative transfer from their native language during translation.

Further, as discussed in section 5.4, the writing examination is the most divergent among the four examinations. YCT focuses on assessing student’s ability to complete sentences and rearrange words to form correct sentences, whilst GCSE requires students to compose short essays ranging from 80 to 180 words. Given this difference, it would be unwise for teachers to wait until students enter Key Stage 4 to begin writing practice. Instead, teachers can refer to the format of the GCSE Chinese

writing examination and utilise the texts in *YCT Standard Course* to achieve the goal of integrating reading and writing. However, teachers should not rush to require students to write full essays during the foundational phase, where *YCT Standard Course 1* and *YCT Standard Course 2* are taught. This phase should focus on creating short sentences. In the intermediate phase, using *YCT Standard Course 3* and *YCT Standard Course 4*, which include some short texts of 50 words or more, teachers can start asking students to write 30 to 50-word articles. Once students reach the advanced phase, they can be required to write short essays of 50 words or more, allowing them to gradually adapt to the writing demands of the GCSE Chinese exam. In practical application, teachers can organise writing exercises around each lesson's theme, taking into account the GCSE Chinese exam format. This approach includes providing not only the writing prompt but also guidance on the direction of the writing, giving students a framework to follow. For instance, in Lesson 4 of *YCT Standard Course 6* (Su & Wang, 2016b), titled 'Can you clean the room please?', teachers can combine this content with the GCSE Chinese examination format which provides prompts for students, and then ask students to write a short essay about their weekend plans. The prompt might include guiding questions such as 'What did you do over the weekend?', 'What did your family members do over the weekend?' and 'How would you describe your relationship with your family?'. Students can draw on

the lesson content, describing the day of the week and what each family member did.

By doing so, students can transfer the sentence structures, vocabularies, and organisational strategies they have learned from the texts into their writing, while also familiarising themselves with the GCSE Chinese exam format, thereby facilitating their transition to the Key Stage 4 GCSE Chinese curriculum.

7. Conclusion

This paper begins by briefly outlining the structure of the English education system, GCSE, and YCT, followed by a detailed analysis of the MFL curriculum and the development and challenges of Chinese language instruction in England. Through this analysis, the paper highlights the importance of diversified Chinese language curricula and teaching materials in England. It also emphasises the need for teachers to capitalise on the Key Stage 3 phase to establish a solid foundation in the Chinese language for students, enabling a smooth transition to the Key Stage 4 GCSE course. Furthermore, underpinned by the theoretical concepts of constructive alignment, backward curriculum design, and spiralling curriculum, this paper seeks to compare the themes, vocabulary, grammar, and examination formats of GCSE and YCT, revealing a certain degree of overlap between the two courses. In addition, it suggests that courses modelled on YCT should align with the CEFR and utilise an appropriate curriculum to enhance students' motivation for learning. Teachers may consider

adopting such a curriculum as a transition from a beginner level to the GCSE level.

With the passage of time, Chinese language courses in England may continue to expand or improve. There is no single perfect approach; every course and textbook has its strengths and weaknesses. Teachers are encouraged to draw from a variety of sources, incorporating the best elements from each, and to design curricula and materials suited to the needs and abilities of their students, thereby helping them build a strong foundation in the Chinese language.

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APPENDIX 1: The Common Reference Levels

Learner's Level	Sub-level	Description
Proficient User	C2	1. Can understand virtually all types of texts. 2. Can summarise information from different oral and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. 3. Can express themselves spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	1. Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. 2. Can express themselves fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. 3. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. 4. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	B2	1. Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in their field of specialisation. 2. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with users of the target language quite possible without imposing strain on either party. 3. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	1. Can understand the main points of clear standard

		input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. 2. Can deal with most situations likely to arise while travelling in an area where the language is spoken. 3. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. 4. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	A2	1. Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). 2. Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. 3. Can describe in simple terms aspects of their background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	1. Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. 2. Can introduce themselves and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where someone lives, people they know and things they have. 3. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Note. Adapted from *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment – Companion volume*, by Council of Europe, 2020, (<https://rm.coe.int/common-european-framework-of-reference-for-languages-learning-teaching/16809ea0d4>). Copyright 2020 by the Council of Europe.

APPENDIX 2: GCSE Chinese's Themes

Theme	Sub-topic
Theme 1: Identity and Culture	1.1 Who am I?: relationships; when I was younger; what my friends and family are like; what makes a good friend; interests; socialising with friends and family; role models
	1.2 Daily life: customs and everyday life; food and drink; shopping; social media and technology (use of, advantages and disadvantages)
	1.3 Cultural life: celebrations and festivals; reading; music; sport; film and television
Theme 2: Local Area, Holiday and Travel	2.1 Holidays: preferences; experiences; destinations
	2.2 Travel and tourist transactions: travel and accommodation; asking for help and dealing with problems; directions; eating out; shopping
	2.3 Town, region and country: weather; places to see; things to do
Theme 3: School	3.1 What school is like: school types; school day; subjects; rules and pressures; celebrating success
	3.2 School activities: school trips; events and exchanges
Theme 4: Future Aspirations, Study and Work	4.1 Using languages beyond the classroom: forming relationships; travel; employment
	4.2 Ambitions: further study; volunteering; training
	4.3 Work:

	jobs; careers and professions
Theme 5: International and Global Dimension	5.1 Bringing the world together: sports events; music events; campaigns and good causes
	5.2 Environmental issues: being 'green'; access to natural resources

Note. Adapted from *Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Chinese (spoken*

Mandarin/spoken Cantonese) Specification, by Pearson, 2022b,

(<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/Chinese/2017/specification-and-sample-assessments/specification-gcse2017-112-chinese-issue5.pdf>).

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APPENDIX 3: Comparison between the Themes of YCT and GCSE Chinese

YCT Textbook	Theme	Theme and Sub-topic Corresponding to GCSE Chinese
YCT Standard Course 1	1. Hello!	1. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	2. What's your name?	2. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	3. Who is he?	3. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	4. There are four people in my family.	4. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	5. I'm 6 years old.	5. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	6. You're so tall!	6. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	7. Whose dog is this?	7. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	8. I'm going to the store.	8. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	9. What day is it today?	9. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	10. What time is it?	10. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	11. What would you like to eat?	11. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
YCT Standard Course 2	1. May I sit here?	1. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	2. When do you get up in the morning?	2. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.2 Daily life
	3. Where is your pencil?	3. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	4. There are two books in the schoolbag.	4. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	5. Can you cook?	5. Theme 1: Identity and Culture –

		1.1 Who am I?
	6. How much is one baozi?	6. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.2 Daily life
	7. Today is hotter than yesterday.	7. Theme 2: Local Area, Holiday and Travel – 2.1 Holidays
	8. Martin is three years older than me.	8. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	9. What did you do today?	9. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.2 Daily life
	10. What's wrong with you?	10. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	11. I've been in Beijing for one year.	11. Theme 2: Local Area, Holiday and Travel – 2.3 Town, region and country
YCT Standard Course 3	1. I'm in the third grade.	1. Theme 3: School – 3.1 What school is like
	2. What's your favorite sport?	2. Theme 3: School – 3.2 School activities
	3. I'm drawing a picture.	3. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.3 Cultural life
	4. Hello!	4. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	5. Have some more.	5. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	6. I can put it on by myself.	6. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	7. Happy birthday!	7. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	8. It's snowing.	8. Theme 2: Local Area, Holiday and Travel – 2.3 Town, region and country
	9. Smile!	9. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	10. Who runs fast?	10. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	11. Mom has given the candy to your brother.	11. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?

YCT Standard Course 4	1. We have 108 students.	1. Theme 3: School – 3.1 What school is like
	2. How long have you been learning Chinese?	2. Theme 3: School – 3.1 What school is like
	3. It opens as early as 8:30 in the morning.	3. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.2 Daily life
	4. I have a cold.	4. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.2 Daily life
	5. Close the door.	5. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	6. Have you been to our new classroom?	6. Theme 3: School – 3.1 What school is like
	7. How do you go to school every day?	7. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.2 Daily life
	8. It's going to rain.	8. Theme 2: Local Area, Holiday and Travel – 2.3 Town, region and country
	9. When did you go there?	9. Theme 2: Local Area, Holiday and Travel – 2.1 Holidays
	10. Why doesn't Dad have a rest?	10. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	11. It grows really fast.	11. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
YCT Standard Course 5	1. Are you interested in Chinese kung fu?	1. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.3 Cultural life
	2. Rabbits are even cuter.	2. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	3. There is something wrong with the elevator.	3. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	4. Everyone has their own habits.	4. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	5. They're so young!	5. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	6. The one standing or the one sitting?	6. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	7. I often go to the gym to work	7. Theme 1: Identity and Culture –

	out.	1.1 Who am I?
	8. Beijing has four seasons altogether.	8. Theme 2: Local Area, Holiday and Travel – 2.3 Town, region and country
	9. The ice cream is delicious and cheap.	9. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	10. Your Chinese will get better and better.	10. Theme 3: School – 3.1 What school is like
	11. I'd like a plate of lamb dumplings.	11. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.2 Daily life
	12. You can either take the plane or the train.	12. Theme 2: Local Area, Holiday and Travel – Travel and tourist transactions
	13. I'll do the filling for you first.	13. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.2 Daily life
	14. I'm planning to go travelling in China.	14. Theme 2: Local Area, Holiday and Travel – Travel and tourist transactions
YCT Standard Course 6	1. I was born in the year of the monkey.	1. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.3 Cultural life
	2. He's really good at math.	2. Theme 3: School – 3.1 What school is like
	3. The little birds are singing.	3. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.2 Daily life
	4. Can you clean the room please?	4. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.2 Daily life
	5. You are so careless!	5. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.2 Daily life
	6. What role did you play?	6. Theme 4: Future Aspirations, Study and Work – 4.3 Work
	7. They are not twins.	7. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	8. The little fish was eaten by the kitten.	8. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	9. He moved house near the zoo.	9. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	10. How far is the moon from	10. Theme 1: Identity and Culture

	us?	– 1.3 Cultural life
	11. Let me swap my hat for your plate.	11. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.2 Daily life
	12. Be more careful in the future	12. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.2 Daily life
	13. I like spicy food.	13. Theme 1: Identity and Culture – 1.1 Who am I?
	14. Some pandas slept all the time	14. Theme 2: Local Area, Holiday and Travel – 2.1 Holidays

Note. Adapted from *Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Chinese (spoken Mandarin/spoken Cantonese) Specification*, by Pearson, 2022b, (<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/Chinese/2017/specification-and-sample-assessments/specification-gcse2017-112-chinese-issue5.pdf>). Copyright 2022 by the Pearson Education Limited; *YCT Standard Course 1*, by Y. X. Su, F. F. Jin, and L. Wang, 2015, Higher Education Press. Copyright 2015 by the Higher Education Press; *YCT Standard Course 2*, by Y. X. Su, and L. Wang, 2016a, Higher Education Press. Copyright 2016 by the Higher Education Press; *YCT Standard Course 3*, by Y. X. Su, S. H. Wang, and L. Hao, 2016a, Higher Education Press. Copyright 2016 by the Higher Education Press; *YCT Standard Course 4*, by Y. X. Su, S. H. Wang, and H. Xie, 2016b, Higher Education Press. Copyright 2016 by the Higher Education Press; *YCT Standard Course 5*, by Y. X. Su, W. L. Wang, and L. Wang, 2016c, Higher Education Press. Copyright 2016 by the Higher Education Press; *YCT Standard Course 6*, by Y. X. Su, and L. Wang, 2016b, Higher Education Press. Copyright 2016 by the Higher Education Press.

APPENDIX 4: Overlapping Vocabulary Items between YCT and GCSE Chinese

Vocabulary	YCT Level	GCSE Tier
是	1	F
叫	1	F
喝	1	F
吃	1	F
去	1	F
有	1	F
認識	1	F
喜歡	1	F
聽	1	F
愛	1	F
看	1	F
大	1	F
好	1	F
高	1	F
長	1	F
高興/開心	1	F
小	1	F
這兒/這裡	1	F
不	1	F

那兒/那裡	1	F
很	1	F
一至十	1	F
十一至九十九	1	F
多	1	F
個	1	F
號/日	1	F
月	1	F
現在	1	F
點	1	F
今天	1	F
明天	1	F
星期	1	F
星期一	1	F
星期二	1	F
星期三	1	F
星期四	1	F
星期五	1	F
星期六	1	F
星期日，星期天	1	F
一月	1	F
二月	1	F
三月	1	F

四月	1	F
五月	1	F
六月	1	F
七月	1	F
八月	1	F
九月	1	F
十月	1	F
十一月	1	F
十二月	1	F
嗎	1	F
什麼	1	F
哪兒	1	F
哪（個、本）	1	F
誰	1	F
他	1	F
我	1	F
她	1	F
那	1	F
這	1	F
我們	1	F
你	1	F
再見	1	F
謝謝	1	F

在	1	F
魚	1	F
牛奶	1	F
麵(條)	1	F
米飯	1	F
水	1	F
鳥	1	F
貓	1	F
狗	1	F
哥哥	1	F
姐姐	1	F
家	1	F
爸爸	1	F
頭髮	1	F
媽媽	1	F
歲	1	F
商店	1	F
學校	1	F
老師	1	F
電	1	F
沒	1	F
你們，他們，她們	1	F
中國	1	F

人	1	F
燈	1	H
買	2	F
來	2	F
做	2	F
畫	2	F
睡覺	2	F
請	2	F
會	2	F
學習	2	F
玩	2	F
坐	2	F
覺得	2	F
要	2	F
漂亮	2	F
冷	2	F
熱	2	F
也	2	F
了	2	F
綠	2	F
紅	2	F
顏色	2	F
黃	2	F

兩	2	F
零	2	F
隻	2	F
晚上	2	F
分鐘/分	2	F
早上/上午	2	F
昨天	2	F
呢	2	F
多少	2	F
漢語/普通話	2	F
沒關係	2	F
對不起	2	F
裡（邊）	2	F
好吃/美味	2	F
錢	2	F
茶	2	F
塊	2	F
床	2	F
椅子	2	F
名字	2	F
朋友	2	F
關係	2	F
桌子	2	F

年	2	F
弟弟	2	F
妹妹	2	F
北京	2	F
坐（車/火車……）	2	F
醫院	2	F
天氣	2	F
書	2	F
筆	2	F
同學	2	F
學生	2	F
醫生	2	F
學習	2	F
打	2	F
說	2	F
電話	2	F
能	3	F
關（燈/電視/門 etc.）	3	F
進	3	F
找	3	F
給	3	F
送	3	F
出	3	F

幫助	3	F
知道	3	F
笑	3	F
讓	3	F
回	3	F
賣	3	F
花	3	F
開（燈/電視/門 etc.）	3	F
教	3	F
懂	3	F
想	3	F
穿	3	F
寫	3	F
壞	3	F
忙	3	F
舒服	3	F
對	3	F
快	3	F
胖/肥	3	F
飽	3	F
快樂	3	F
難	3	F
餓	3	F

可愛	3	F
最	3	F
新	3	F
慢	3	F
瘦	3	F
累	3	F
再	3	F
都	3	F
太	3	F
黑	3	F
藍	3	F
白	3	F
百	3	F
千	3	F
本	3	F
把	3	F
件	3	F
少	3	F
半	3	F
小時/鐘頭	3	F
去年	3	F
中午	3	F
吧	3	F

為什麼	3	F
小姐	3	F
先生	3	F
些/一些	3	F
東西	3	F
時間	3	F
後（邊）	3	F
下	3	F
前（邊）	3	F
外（邊）	3	F
麵包	3	F
蛋糕	3	F
餃子	3	F
水果	3	F
果汁	3	F
運動	3	F
鞋/鞋子	3	F
裙子	3	F
褲子	3	F
生日	3	F
衣服	3	F
爺爺	3	F
奶奶	3	F

自己	3	F
騎自行車(單車)	3	F
打球	3	F
(打)籃球	3	F
(踢)足球	3	F
跑步	3	F
跳舞	3	F
唱歌	3	F
游泳	3	F
電腦	3	F
上網	3	F
自行車/單車	3	F
公共汽車	3	F
花	3	F
禮物	3	F
飛機	3	F
問題	3	F
車站	3	F
歡迎	3	F
動物園	3	F
月亮	3	F
雨	3	F
雪	3	F

太陽	3	F
下雨	3	F
下雪	3	F
風	3	F
刮風/大風	3	F
後邊	3	F
遠	3	F
在……前邊	3	F
在……旁邊	3	F
左邊	3	F
右邊	3	F
過	3	F
壞了	3	F
生病/不舒服	3	H
教室	3	F
休息	3	H
運動	3	F
跳	3	F
踢	3	F
唱	3	F
洗	3	F
雞	3	F
蛋	3	F

歌	3	F
看電視	3	F
應該	4	F*
問	4	F
安靜	4	F
開始	4	F
換（錢/車/衣服 etc.）	4	F
生氣	4	F
希望	4	F
住	4	F
見/見面	4	F
準備	4	F
放	4	F
記	4	F
好像	4	F
停	4	F
參加	4	F
告訴	4	F
用	4	F
等	4	F
乾淨	4	F
容易	4	F
努力	4	F

健康	4	F
近	4	F
老/舊	4	F
一樣	4	F
短	4	F
渴	4	F
錯	4	F
已經	4	F
正在	4	F
特別	4	F
非常	4	F
馬上	4	F
更	4	F
附近	4	F
可能	4	F
萬	4	F
條	4	F
張	4	F
雙	4	F
從	4	F
將來	4	F
秋	4	F
夏	4	F

冬	4	F
號碼	4	F
辦法	4	F
國畫	4	F
國家	4	F
以前	4	F
中間	4	F
便宜	4	F
筷子	4	F
方便	4	F
電影	4	F
飲料	4	F
羊肉	4	F
湯	4	F
元	4	F
選擇	4	H*
甜	4	H
辣	4	H
號/號碼 (大號, 中號, 小號)	4	F
手錶	4	F
孩子/兒童	4	F
冰箱	4	F

節目	4	F
(打)乒乓球	4	F
(打)網球	4	F
表演/演出	4	F
節日	4	F
比賽	4	F
鄰居	4	H
照顧	4	H
沙發	4	F
眼鏡	4	F
散步	4	H
電子郵件	4	F
聊天	4	F
空調	4	F
橋	4	F
(一，二，……)層/樓	4	F
草	4	F
山	4	F
圖書館	4	F
地圖	4	F
公園	4	F
路	4	F
海	4	F

上海	4	F
體育館	4	F
長城	4	F
票	4	F
旅遊	4	F
參觀	4	F
火車站	4	F
火車	4	F
地鐵站	4	F
地鐵	4	F
服務員	4	F
出發	4	H
住	4	H
秋天	4	F
雲	4	F
多雲	4	F
春天	4	F
夏天	4	F
冬天	4	F
近	4	F
向	4	F
東	4	F
北	4	F

南	4	F
西	4	F
換	4	F
不對/錯	4	F
警察	4	F
服務	4	F
安全	4	H
考試	4	F
作業	4	F
體育	4	F
成績	4	F
暑假	4	F
畢業	4	H
打算	4	H
有名	4	F
介紹	4	F
工作	4	F
雜誌	4	F
新聞	4	F
報紙	4	F
護士	4	F
(音樂)節	4	F
重要	4	F

安全	4	H
對……有興趣	4	F
忘	4	F
騎	4	F
祝	4	F
常常	4	F
春	4	F
鴨	4	F
肉	4	F
烤	4	F
門	4	F
窗	4	F
看電影	4	F
看新聞	4	F
更喜歡	4	F

Note. ‘F’ refers to ‘Foundation Tier’, whilst ‘H’ refers to ‘Higher Tier’.

APPENDIX 5: Similar Vocabulary Items between YCT and GCSE Chinese

GCSE Chinese Vocabulary	YCT Vocabulary	YCT 等級	GCSE 程度
沒	沒有	1	F
你們，他們，她們	你、他、她+們	1	F
中國	中國人	1	F
人	中國人	1	F
燈	電燈	1	H
打	打電話	2	F
說	說話	2	F
電話	打電話	2	F
跳	跳舞	3	F
踢	踢足球	3	F
唱	唱歌	3	F
洗	洗澡	3	F
雞	雞蛋	3	F
蛋	雞蛋	3	F
歌	唱歌	3	F
看電視	看+電視	3	F
動物	動物園	3	F
對……有興趣	對……感興趣	4	F

忘	忘記	4	F
騎	騎馬	4	F
祝	祝賀	4	F
常常	經常	4	F
春	春季	4	F
鴨	烤鴨	4	F
肉	羊肉	4	F
烤	烤鴨	4	F
門	門口	4	F
窗	窗戶	4	F
看電影	看+電影	4	F
看新聞	看+新聞	4	F
更喜歡	更+喜歡	4	F

APPENDIX 6: The Number of GCSE Chinese Vocabulary

Not Covered by YCT

Theme	The number of relevant vocabulary
International and global dimension – bringing the world together, environmental issues	31
Future aspirations, study and work	38
School	33
Dealing with problems	5
Asking for directions	6
Phrases associated with weather	7
Local area, holiday and travel	78
Identity and culture – using social media	14
Identity and culture – cultural life	26
Identity and culture – what my friends and family are like; Words on relations, relationships, personal and physical characteristics	19
Identity and culture - what my friends and family are like Words relating to dress and style	6
Identity and culture - daily life, food and drink, including eating out	45
Countries, continents, nationalities	22
Others, including language used in dialogue and messages, prepositions, other useful expressions, quantities and measures and so forth	55

Note. Adapted from *Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Chinese (spoken*

Mandarin/spoken Cantonese) Specification, by Pearson, 2022b,

(<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/Chinese/2017/specification-and-sample-assessments/specification-gcse2017-112-chinese-issue5.pdf>).

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APPENDIX 7: Overlapping Grammar Items between YCT and GCSE Chinese

Grammar	YCT Level	GCSE Tier
all numbers up to 1 million	1-4	F
子	1	F
兒	1	F
個	1	F
歲	1	F
As predicate(謂語) positive negative	1	F
很	1	F
Modification(修飾) of nouns with or without 的	1	F
all personal pronouns, singular and plural	1	F
personal pronouns with 的	1	F
這	1	F
那	1	F
是	1	F
有	1	F

是 plus stative verb for emphasis	1	H
resultative verb complements	1	H
喜歡	1	F
愛	1	F
在	1	F
嗎	1	F
甚麼	1	F
誰	1	F
哪兒	1	F
幾	1	F
哪個	1	F
幾歲	1	F
在	1	F
是	1	F
Postional phrases using 的	1	F
……和……	1	F
和	1	F
stating quantities	1	F
giving the time and date	1	F
word order when using time expressions	1	F

年	2	F
隻	2	F
Stative verbs as adverbs	2	F
真……	2	F
比	2	F
Comparative sentences with quantities	2	H
也	2	F
imperatives(positive and negative)	2	H
會	2	F
要	2	F
可以	2	F
請	2	F
坐	2	F
怎麼	2	F
怎麼	2	F
怎麼樣	2	F
多少	2	F
呢	2	F
currencies and prices	2	F
giving the length of time	2	F
本	3	F

每	3	F
次	3	H
些	3	H
With 了 to imply limits have been passed	3	F
With 了 to imply a new situation	3	F
太……了	3	F
最	3	F
還	3	F
就	3	F
自己	3	H
use of 得 to describe how an action is carried out	3	H
給	3	H
reduplication of verbs	3	H
simple sentences with verb and object positive and negative verb-object type verbs	3	F
想	3	F
得	3	H
能	3	H
在	3	F

imminent action 即將發生的行動了	3	H
Completed actions 了	3	F
Experiential suffix 過	3	F
Complements of manner(情態補語，得字補語)	3	F
為甚麼	3	F
吧	3	F
都	3	F
因為……所以	3	F
ordinal numbers using 第	3	F
員	4	F
條	4	H
張	4	H
非常	4	F
跟/和一樣	4	F
非常	4	F
一定	4	F
經常	4	H
大家	4	F
Reported speech	4	H

Verbs of motion, methods of transport, purpose in coming and going	4	F
應該	4	F
必須	4	H
一定	4	H
打算	4	F
準備	4	H
正在	4	F
Complements of degree(程度補語)	4	F
極了	4	H
從	4	F
用	4	F
還是	4	F
use of 離 to state proximity of remoteness between two locations	4	H
雖然……但是	4	F
先……然後/再……	4	F
如果/要是……就……	4	F
一邊……一邊……	4	F
或/或者	4	H

不但……而且……	4	H
而且……	4	H
那麼……	4	H
為了……	4	H

APPENDIX 8: The Integration of the English Education System, YCT, CEFR, YCT Teaching Materials, and Learning Time

Age	Year	Key Stage	Assessment and Curriculum
11-12	7	3	YCT Foundation Course: Allocating approximately 70 learning hours to complete <i>YCT Standard Course 1</i> and <i>YCT Standard Course 2</i> , enabling students to achieve the CEFR A1 level and successfully complete YCT Level 1 and YCT Level 2 examinations
12-13	8	3	YCT Intermediate Course: Dedicating 100 learning hours to completing <i>YCT Standard Course 3</i> and <i>YCT Standard Course 4</i> , allowing students to reach the CEFR A2 level and successfully complete YCT Level 3 examination
13-14	9	3	YCT Advanced Course: Spending approximately 120 learning hours to complete <i>YCT Standard Course 5</i> and <i>YCT Standard Course 6</i> , guiding students to attain the CEFR B1 level and successfully complete YCT Level 4 examination
14-15	10	4	Some children take GCSEs
15-16	11	4	Most children take GCSEs or other national examinations

Note. Adapted from *YCT Standard Course 1*, by Y. X. Su, F. F. Jin, and L. Wang, 2015, Higher Education Press. Copyright 2015 by the Higher Education Press; *The National Curriculum in England: Framework Document*, by DfE, 2014a, (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/381344/Master_final_national_curriculum_28_Nov.pdf). Crown copyright 2013.

以 YCT 為基礎的課程作為英格蘭 GCSE 中文的預備課程

殷俊康* 陳天穎

摘要

摘要過去二十年，英格蘭學習中文人數愈來愈多，更有數千名學生參加中等教育普通證書（GCSE）中文考試。儘管中文教育在英格蘭已經從課外增潤活動發展成主流課程一部分，但與德語和法語等英國現代外語相比，仍然是一門相對小眾的學科。即使有些學校和機構開始支援中文教學，例如提供師資培訓及舉辦遊學團等，英格蘭的中文教師仍面臨諸多挑戰，包括缺乏發展成熟的教材和結構完善的課程。

本文以建構性配合（Constructive Alignment）、反向課程設計（Backward Curriculum Design）及螺旋式課程（Spiralling Curriculum）為基礎，回顧英格蘭的現代外語教學框架，並比較國家漢辦為母語為非漢語之青少年舉辦的中小學生漢語考試（YCT）和中等教育普通證書中文課程的主題、詞彙、語法和考試形式，探討中小學生漢語考試作為普通中等教育證書中文課程之過渡課程的可能性。此外，本文還提供結合中小學生漢語考試與中等教育普通證書的教學建議，幫助教師在第三學段（Key Stage 3）有效地教授中小學生漢語考試課程，從而促進學生順利過渡到第四學段（Key Stage 4）的中等教育普通證書中文課程。

關鍵詞：促進學習的評估 對外漢語 中等教育普通證書中文課程 現代外語課程 中小學生漢語考試

* 殷俊康，英國修咸頓大學博士生。（本文通訊作者）

陳天穎，英國 New Directions 持續進修學院。