

Teaching Chinese Pronunciation in Canadian Universities:

An analysis of a textbook and teachers' perspectives

by

Zhuangyuan Wang

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department of Pacific and Asian Studies

©Zhuangyuan Wang, 2021
University of Victoria

All rights reserved. This thesis may not be reproduced in whole or in part,
by photocopy or other means, without the permission of the author.

Teaching Chinese Pronunciation in Canadian Universities:

An analysis of a textbook and teachers' perspectives

by

Zhuangyuan Wang

Supervisory Committee

Dr. Jun Tian, co-supervisor
Department of Pacific and Asian Studies

Dr. Hossein Nassaji, co-supervisor
Department of Linguistics

Dr. Li-shih Huang, committee member
Department of Linguistics

Abstract

A long Canadian tradition has promoted the rise of multicultural education. In this multicultural society, ways to deal with the cultural differences in the teaching of Chinese to students with various backgrounds and needs have always been a challenging task. A review of the literature revealed that little research has focused on Chinese pronunciation teaching in Canada.

In order to understand the teaching of Chinese pronunciation in Canadian universities, this study examines *Integrated Chinese* (Liu, Yao, et al., 2016), a Chinese textbook widely used in Canada. The study also qualitatively analyses two teachers' self-evaluations and their teaching experiences, as gathered from surveys and interviews. The results of the study aim to inform both seasoned and novice teachers in their work in the Canadian post-secondary context and to offer practical pedagogical recommendations for consideration.

Keywords: Chinese Pronunciation Teaching in Canada, *Pinyin* Teaching, *Integrated Chinese*, Teaching Challenges.

Table of Contents

Supervisory Committee.....	ii
Abstract	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
List of Tables.....	vi
List of Figures	vii
Acknowledgments.....	viii
Chapter One.....	- 1 -
Introduction	- 1 -
1.1 Research Background	- 1 -
1.2 Significance of the Research	- 4 -
1.3 The Organization of Thesis.....	- 5 -
Chapter Two	- 6 -
Literature Review	- 6 -
2.1 Chinese Alphabetic System–Pinyin	- 7 -
2.1.1 Background of the Chinese Pinyin Scheme.....	- 7 -
2.1.2 The Pinyin System	- 10 -
2.1.3 The Role of Pinyin in Chinese as a Second Language Teaching	- 15 -
2.1.4 The Pinyin Scheme in Chinese as Second Language Teaching Practice	- 16 -
2.2 Backgrounds of Chinese Language Teaching	- 19 -
2.2.1 The History of Chinese Language Education.....	- 20 -
2.2.2 Teaching Chinese as Second Language (TCSL) Versus Teaching Chinese as Foreign Language (TCFL)	- 23 -
2.2.3 Chinese Programs in Canadian Universities and Colleges	- 26 -
2.2.4 Background of Chinese Language Teachers in 23 Universities	- 32 -
2.2.5 Widely used Teaching Materials in Canada	- 35 -
2.2.6 Learning Motivations of Canadian Students	- 38 -
2.3 Pronunciation Teaching of Chinese Language Teaching.....	- 40 -
2.3.1 Current Focus of Chinese Tones Teaching	- 40 -
2.3.2 Common Teaching Practices in Chinese Pronunciation Teaching.....	- 42 -
2.3.3 Challenges of Chinese Pronunciation Instruction	- 43 -
2.4 Summary	- 46 -
2.5 Research Focus and Study Expectation.....	- 47 -
Chapter Three.....	- 48 -
Methods	- 48 -
3.1 Research Design.....	- 48 -
3.2 Textbook Evaluation	- 49 -
3.2.1 Integrated Chinese (4 th Edition, Volume 1)	- 49 -

3.2.2 Textbook Evaluation Criteria	- 50 -
3.3 Participants	- 52 -
3.4 Data Collection and Analysis	- 54 -
3.4.1 Data Collection and Analysis of IC	- 54 -
3.4.2 Data Collection and Analysis of Questionnaire	- 54 -
3.4.3 Data Collection and Analysis of Interviews	- 56 -
Chapter Four	- 58 -
Findings and Discussion	- 58 -
4.1 Analysis and Findings of IC	- 58 -
4.1.1 The Curriculum, Supplementary Components, and Evaluation of IC	- 58 -
4.1.2 The Design of IC: Format, Organization and Culture Section	- 63 -
4.1.3 The Content of IC: Real-life Topics and Authenticity	- 67 -
4.1.4 Analysis of Language Part of IC: Pronunciation and Practices	- 71 -
4.2 Instructional Practices and Challenges in Teaching Pronunciation	- 81 -
4.2.1 Questionnaire Results	- 81 -
4.2.2 Interview Results	- 87 -
Chapter Five	- 99 -
Discussion and Recommendation	- 99 -
5.1 Teaching Suggestions for IC	- 99 -
5.2 Pinyin Teaching in the Canadian Context	- 101 -
5.3 The Challenges of a Canadian Pinyin Class	- 102 -
5.4 Conclusion and Limitations	- 104 -
References	- 106 -
Appendices	- 120 -
Appendix A Chinese Pinyin Scheme	- 120 -
Appendix B: Questionnaire	- 121 -
Appendix C: Interview Questions	- 124 -
Appendix D: NVivo Codes Examples	- 128 -

List of Tables

Table 1 The Chinese Pinyin Scheme	- 11 -
Table 2 The Chinese Classes in the University of British Columbia	- 29 -
Table 3 Chinese Text Evaluation Criteria	- 51 -
Table 4 Instructors Profile	- 52 -
Table 5 Perceived Teaching Challenges.....	- 82 -
Table 6 Reported Teaching Strategies	- 83 -
Table 7 Reported of Teaching Material.....	- 84 -
Table 8 Teachers' Self-evaluation on Teaching Pronunciation	- 86 -
Table 9 Major Themes and Sub-themes	- 88 -
Table 10 Sample code from NVivo	- 128 -

List of Figures

Figure 1 The Statistics of Top 5 Immigrant Languages Spoken at Home in Vancouver and Toronto ...	- 2 -
Figure 2 An Example of a Chinese Character with Various Pronunciations in Different Dialects.....	- 9 -
Figure 3 The Correspondence of Initials and Finals	- 13 -
Figure 4 The Types of Englishes Towards Different Speakers.....	- 25 -
Figure 5 The Provision of Chinese Programs in Canada in an Academic Year.....	- 28 -
Figure 6 Canadian Universities with/without Chinese Training Programs in China.....	- 31 -
Figure 7 Canadian Universities with/without Chinese Training Programs in China.....	- 32 -
Figure 8 Number of Chinese Teachers in Canadian Universities and Colleges.....	- 33 -
Figure 9 The Occupation of Instructors and Teaching assistants among 24 Universities and Colleges.....	- 34 -
Figure 10 Textbook Usage by Universities and Colleges in Canada	- 36 -
Figure 11 The Usage Rate of Textbooks for Beginners	- 37 -
Figure 12 Communication, Comparisons, Cultures, Communities, and Connections (5 Cs)	- 60 -
Figure 13 The Relationship of Three Modes and Four Language Skills	- 61 -
Figure 14 The Structure of Each Lesson	- 65 -
Figure 15 The Number of Topic Categories in IC Vol.1	- 69 -
Figure 16 The Percentages of the Three Modes (ACTFL World-Readiness Standards) in the IC's Language Practice Section	- 73 -
Figure 17 The Percentages of 21 Initials in FCCL and IC Vol.1 (Vocabulary Section)	- 76 -
Figure 18 Top-5 Initials in FCCL and IC Vol.1 (Vocabulary Section).....	- 78 -
Figure 19 The Percentages of 36 Finals in FCCL and IC Vol.1 (Vocabulary Section).....	- 79 -
Figure 20 Top-5 Finals in FCCL and IC Vol.1 (Vocabulary Section).....	- 80 -

Acknowledgments

I want to express my deep appreciation to my supervisors Dr. Jun Tian and Dr. Hossein Nassaji, Committee member Dr. Li-shih Huang, for providing me with the opportunity to study and invaluable guidance through my research. I also want to offer my sincere gratitude to professor Hiroko Noro. Her sincerity and motivation have deeply inspired me.

I extremely appreciate my parents' love, understanding, sacrifices for educating and preparing me for my future. You give me birth and lots of spiritual supports throughout my life. My special thank goes to my grandparents for their encouragement when the times got rough. I love you all forever.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Research Background

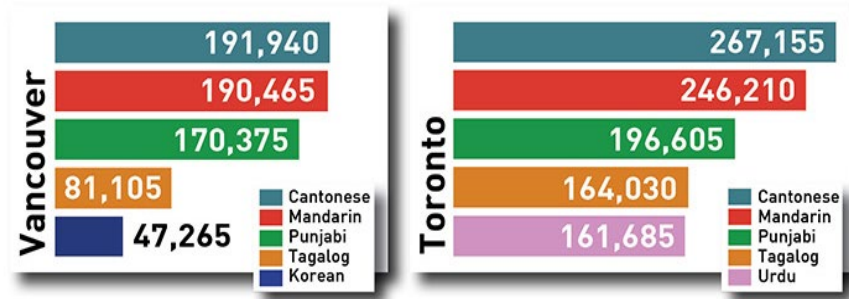
Canada is an immigration country, and its society is based on multiculturalism. In 1971, the first official *Canadian multiculturalism policy* was adopted by the Government of Canada, which began to recognize the minority cultures status officially. After a decade, the *Canadian Multiculturalism* was published in 1988, aiming to protect further the right of minority rights to retain their cultures and languages.

It is common to hear different languages spoken in Canada. The census of the Canadian population¹ conducted by Statistics Canada in 2016 reported that the number of Asian immigrants accounted for over 60%, a significant proportion of entire immigrant population from 2011 to 2016. The report also showed that nearly 900,000 immigrants speak Mandarin or Cantonese at home in Vancouver and Toronto (Figure 1).

¹ The census of population is surveyed every five years.

Figure 1

The Statistics of Top 5 Immigrant Languages Spoken at Home in Vancouver and Toronto



Note. This source from 2016 Census: Immigrant languages in Canada, by Statistics Canada², 2017(<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2017025-eng.htm>). In the public domain.

The history of Chinese teaching in Canada is not long. The first Chinese school in Canada, *Le Qun School*, was established in the 1970s by the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA) in Victoria, British Columbia. The CCBA raised money from various Chinese communities to operate the school to provide Chinese learning services for Chinese children. With the same purposes of promoting the Chinese language and helping students better adapt to Canada, the Edmonton Public School implemented the Chinese-English Bilingual Programs as an experimental program in 1982. Similarly, the Ministry of Education in BC has required students in Grades 5 to 8 to take a second language program since 1997³ (Government of British Columbia, 1997).

² <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2017025-eng.htm>

³ Language Education Policy (came into force in 1997 and revised in 2004)

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/language-education-policy>

The policy and the immigrant population have contributed to the growing demand for Chinese language teachers. By the end of September 2019, there were 12 Confucius Institutes in Canada, which ranked the tenth in the world. Considering the population in Canada, this ranking indicates the popularity and importance of Chinese language teaching in Canada.

At present, Chinese language teaching in Canada is mainly divided into four levels: 1) university and college Chinese courses, 2) Confucius Institutes courses, 3) public and private primary and secondary school courses, and 4) private Chinese school courses (Li, 2009). This study focused on Chinese teaching at the university and college levels.

In Chinese teaching, pronunciation teaching is usually emphasized in the initial stage of learning. However, different levels all have their required pronunciation goals learners need to achieve. As the *International Curriculum for Chinese Language Education*⁴ (ICCLE) and *Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi*⁵ (HSK) proposed, mastery of standard Mandarin pronunciation can provide Chinese as a Second Language (CSL) learners with the confidence to communicate and increase their motivation in learning and using the target language (Liang et al., 2017). In promoting the Chinese language globally, Pinyin⁶ is prerequisite as it is the first domain for beginners to learn. Pinyin has become an effective tool for learners in Chinese character learning, as it has changed

⁴ The curriculum takes into account the needs of learners with various ages and learning backgrounds. It is compiled on the basis of *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* to match with HSK. The ICCLLE grades language learning targets into five levels to fit the learners' needs at different-levels.

⁵ Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK) is an international standardized test to examine candidates' Chinese proficiency, which focuses on non-native Chinese candidates' Chinese communication ability in daily life, study, and work. The HSK is divided into six levels, with the highest level being the 6th.

⁶ Pinyin, a short name for Chinese Pinyin Scheme, is a scheme of annotating Chinese characters and the spelling of Mandarin/Putonghua pronunciation (Modern Chinese Dictionary, 2002, p. 496).

Canadian students' perception of unfamiliar Chinese written symbols into more familiar phonetic forms (Niu, 2012), encouraging students to start and continue learning Chinese.

1.2 Significance of the Research

Language is a necessary tool to spread education, and the culture behind the language also influences society (Yang, 2004). Multicultural context is a unique feature to Canadian students in learning Chinese pronunciation (the term Chinese pronunciation in this research refers to pronunciation in Mandarin). Chinese has become a common unofficial language in Canadian society as the number of immigrants who can speak Chinese increases.

In Chinese language teaching, pronunciation is the most complex and vital part of Chinese learning because the fundamental of language is pronunciation, and incorrect pronunciation can affect the learners mastering the vocabulary and even grammar (Zhao, 1980). In Canada, teaching CSL is less than 40 years. Teaching CSL only has 24 years (1997-2021) of history in British Columbia, which is too short to develop a standard teaching framework. Therefore, the problems that teachers face while teaching Chinese pronunciation are worthy of our attention. A search in the CNKI database⁷, a comprehensive database with a full-text of Chinese journals, has found only 35 papers related to Chinese education in Canada. Five studies focused on various teaching situations, and only two studies focused on Chinese pronunciation teaching. The present study used quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze a widely used textbook titled

⁷ www.cnki.net. The average number visits to CNKI reached nearly 4 million per day.

Integrated Chinese (4th edition volume 1)⁸ (2016) (Hereafter *IC* in short) and collected questionnaire and interviews data from teachers in order to examine the situation of teaching CSL in Canada.

1.3 The Organization of Thesis

After the Introduction, Chapter Two presents the historical background of Pinyin and the role of Pinyin in Chinese language teaching and provides an overview of Chinese language teaching in Canada. Chapter Two also surveys the use of Chinese textbooks in North America in order to examine the most popular-used textbook. The third chapter explains the design of the study and describes the data collection and analysis procedures. The fourth chapter presents the findings from the evaluation of the textbook *Integrated Chinese* and presents the results from the questionnaires and interviews. Before concluding, Chapter Five offers suggestions for *IC* improvement and summarizes the current challenges of Pinyin teaching in Canada.

⁸ Published by Chen & Tsui Company.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

This chapter reviews the literature in three areas: 1) Chinese Alphabetic System -Pinyin; 2) history of Chinese teaching; and 3) Chinese pronunciation teaching. The chapter concludes with the statement of purpose and the research questions for the current study.

Firstly, there will be an introduction to the widely used phonetic learning tool—the Chinese Pinyin system. It is important to note the historical background of Pinyin, which will be discussed in this section, as well as the content of the Chinese Pinyin Scheme (1958) and the functions and characteristics of Pinyin in Chinese teaching.

The second section covers the present situation and meaning of Teaching Chinese as a Second Language (TCSL) Chinese pronunciation teaching in Canada. The 2.2.1 describes the development of Western Chinese teaching. It also discusses two core concepts of Chinese teaching in Canada: TCSL and TCFL (Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language). This section, adopting 23 universities' information from Canadian TCSL Association database, also introduces the general setting of these 23 universities and colleges, Canadian Chinese curriculum, and the background of teachers, analyzes primary motivation of Chinese Language learners in Canada, and summarizes the commonly used textbooks based on Canadian Chinese teaching.

The third part presents the current pronunciation teaching of TCSL. First, this part discusses Chinese tone teaching in Chinese. Then, it introduces the commonly used methods in

pronunciation teaching, discusses their applications in Chinese oral class, and summarizes the challenges in TCSL pronunciation teaching.

2.1 Chinese Alphabetic System–Pinyin

The phonetic system of Chinese characters, Pinyin, is closely related to the spoken Chinese language (Niu, 2012). This section begins with the background of the Chinese Pinyin Scheme invention. It then introduces the details of the Pinyin system before describing the role Pinyin plays in TCSL and how the Pinyin Scheme is implemented in Chinese teaching practice.

2.1.1 Background of the Chinese Pinyin Scheme

The birth of the Pinyin Scheme has a strong correspondence with the historical and social background of China. In the early days of the People of the Republic of China (PRC), the literacy⁹ rate was extremely low, and it was common to see many shops for ghostwriting letters (Zhang, 2016). This phenomenon suggests that poor people had rare opportunities to learn to read and write Chinese characters. The first census data in the PRC from the National Bureau of Statistics of China shows that the illiteracy rate in China was as low as 33.6% in 1964.

To change the backwardness, upgrade China's soft power, and propel China to step into the stage of successful development, China attempted to reduce the illiteracy rate. Thus, making the official Chinese phonetic system that is easy enough to understand and remember was an urgent

⁹ In China, illiteracy generally refers to people who, aged 15 and over, could not recognize or could only recognize below 500 Chinese characters, or could not do easy reading and writing (Qi & Dong, 1993).

agenda item for China in the early 1950s (Li & Zhou, 2015).

The Chinese government published the Chinese Pinyin Scheme in 1958, which transcribed Chinese characters into the Latin alphabet for easier pronunciation learning. Article 18 of the *Law of the People's Republic of China on the Standard Spoken and Written Chinese Language* (Standing Committee of the National People's Congress [NPCSC], 2001) stipulates that the Chinese Pinyin Scheme is a phonetic spelling tool in the National Common Language. This document established the importance of the official status of the Chinese Pinyin Scheme.

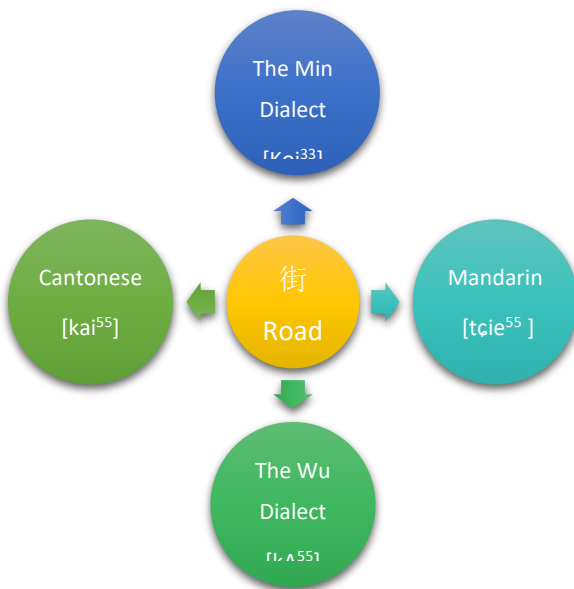
The birth of the Pinyin Scheme laid a foundation for pronunciation unification. To strengthen the international relationship and achieve sustainable development, the Chinese government started to prioritize the promotion of Mandarin as the official language¹⁰.

In addition to Han people, China has 55 ethnic minorities, most of whom have their own languages or dialects. Even people living close by may speak different dialects but their dialects are still intelligible to each other. However, the diversity and variety of languages and dialects caused communication barriers (Sun, 2006). The map below illustrates the different pronunciations of the same Chinese character in different dialects (Figure 2).

¹⁰ The pronunciation of standard Mandarin is based on Beijing dialect, its vocabulary is based on the Mandarin dialects, and its grammar is based on written vernacular Chinese.

Figure 2

An Example of a Chinese Character with Various Pronunciations in Different Dialects



Note. Adapted from HanDian 街 (Road) with pronunciations in different dialects.

<http://www.zdic.net/zd/yy/my/%E8%A1%97>.

As Figure 2 showed, one Chinese character can have various pronunciation. This social context indicates that Chinese characters need a standardized phonetic symbol system to facilitate communication, which is consistent with the general linguistic theory and directly represents characters' pronunciation (HanDian, n.d.). The Pinyin Scheme is a bridge to allow illiterate people to enter the world of the Chinese characters. It then became a tool for CSL learning. The birth of Pinyin consolidated the foundation of cultural diffusion and contributed to communication. Pinyin helped to promote Mandarin globally and achieve global uniform pronunciation (Li & Zhou, 2015). With the help of Pinyin, students can learn Chinese characters

by themselves, which significantly improves the efficiency of learning Chinese. Moreover, Pinyin also benefits our lives in many ways, such as sorting and retrieving information, telecommunications, typing on a Latin alphabet keyboard, and international communication (Zhang, 2016).

2.1.2 The Pinyin System

Chinese characters are square characters that are entirely different from the English alphabet (Niu, 2012). As Chinese characters are logograms, representing both the sound and meaning, it is important for learners to know the correspondences from grapheme to phoneme before they read the Chinese characters. For beginners, this encoding process could be more challenging than recognizing Pinyin alphabet. Pinyin literacy is more accessible for Chinese Second Language (L2) learners to read during the initial stages of learning (Ju, 2019).

*The Chinese Pinyin Scheme*¹¹ was adapted from 26 Latin alphabet letters, from A to Z, combined with four double-letter combinations zh[tʂ], ch[tʂʰ], sh[ʂ], and ng[ŋ], with the letter “v” (only used in borrowed words, ethnic minorities’ words, and particular dialects), and ü [y] added to form the spelling system of Mandarin pronunciation. The other parts of the Pinyin Scheme, as Table 1 shows, are one syllable-dividing mark, 21 initials, 35 finals, and four tone marks (Department of Language Information Management, 1958).

¹¹ Refer to Appendix A for Chinese Pinyin Scheme from Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China.

Table 1*The Chinese Pinyin Scheme*

Name	Content
Syllable-dividing mark	'
Initials	b, p, m f, d, t, n, l, g, k, h, j, q, x, zh, ch, sh, r, z, c, s
Finals	-a, -o, -e, -ai, -ei, -ao, -ou, -an, -en, -ang, -eng, -ong, -i, -ia, -ie, -iao, -iou, -ian, -in, -iang, -ing, -iong, -u, -ua, -uo, -uai, -uei, -uan, -uen, -uang, -ueng, -ü, -üe, -üan, -ün
Tones	first tone (¯), second tone (´), third tone (ˇ), four tones (`)

The initials in the Pinyin Scheme are composed of 21 initials: b, p, m f, d, t, n, l, g, k, h, j, q, x, zh, ch, sh, r, z, c, s. The initials are classified into five types based on the manner of articulation (nasal: m and n; plosive: b, p, d, t, g, and k; affricate: j, q, zh, ch, z and c; fricatives: f, h, x, sh, s and r; and lateral: l). The Pinyin Scheme directly uses the sonant Latin alphabet “b,” “d,” “g,” and “z” as the unaspirated occlusive sound in Mandarin, making it easier to write and identify, especially compared with using the symbol “ㄅ” in Wade system (Li & Zhou, 2015). The three letters “j,” “q,” and “x” represent the pronunciation [tɕ], [tɕʰ], [ɕ], respectively. It is bold to innovate the use of j[tɕ], q[tɕʰ], x[ɕ] as the unique pronunciation of the three Latin letters in the international pronunciation range, and it is entirely consistent with the “one letter for one initial” principle (Li & Zhou, 2015). Another special initial in Mandarin is the zero initial, which refers to a null initial followed by a final, as in ǒ (喔, which is an onomatopoeia).

The 35 finals are divided into four categories based on the openness of the mouth of the beginning vowel: a-, i-, u-, and ü- (Appendix A). In addition, the finals table (韵母表) in

Appendix A also lists four special finals, -i, -i, er, and ê, with the special spelling rules of some initials and finals at the end.

In terms of tones, there are four basic tones in Mandarin, and the tone marks are written as the first tone (¯), the second tone (´), the third tone (ˇ), and the fourth tone (`). The neutral tone is not the fifth tone. It is a phonetic phenomenon appearing in flow-related phonetic change so that every character could have a neutral tone in addition to their original tone(s). Although the neutral tone does not have a mark, it still has the function of distinguishing different meanings.

The function of a syllable-dividing mark is to mark a syllable boundary. When a, o, or e serves as the beginning of a syllable and follows closely behind another syllable, the combination could confuse the syllabic boundary. For example, xian (先) means first, while Xi'an (西安) refers to a city in China. This example illustrates the presence of a syllable-dividing mark as the abbreviation of zero initials.

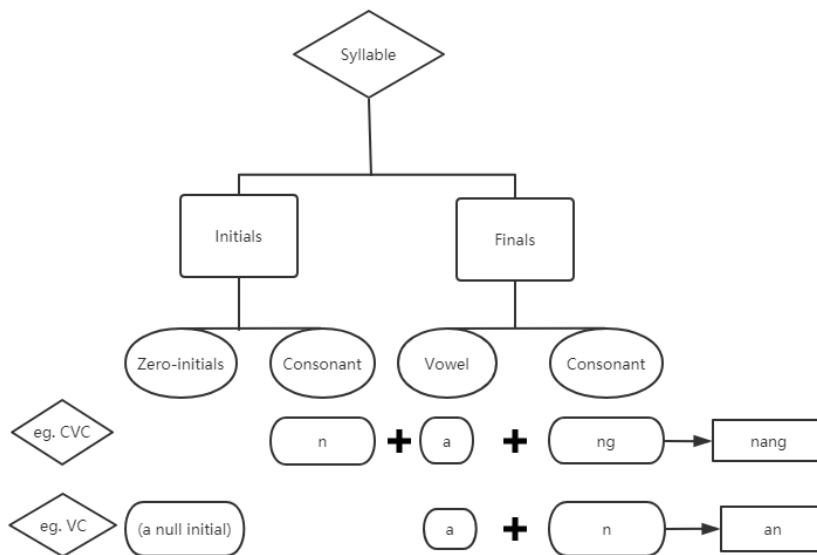
Finally, the convenience of writing and easy distinction, omitting the writing symbol in the Pinyin Scheme exists. The ü[y] is a special letter in the Chinese Pinyin system. The Chinese Pinyin Scheme stipulates that the finals beginning with the ü- vowels need to be omitted the top two-spots symbol, so that ü [y] looks like u [u] when they combine with the j [tɕ], q [tɕʰ], and x [ç] to form syllables, like ju [tɕy].

The structure of Mandarin syllables is relatively simple with regular rules. There are 22 consonants in the Pinyin system, including 21 initials and velar nasal -ng[ŋ] (Jin, 2008). The

syllabic structure can be summarized as V, CV, VC, CVC¹² (Hua & Dodd, 2000). Only two consonants (as n[n] and -ng[ŋ]) can function at the end of a syllable, and the rest of the 21 consonants can occur in the syllable initial position (“n” can appear either as the initial or in a coda position). Figure 3 illustrates how a Chinese syllable structure is formed. The finals can have as many as three components: medials, nuclei, and coda. The examples in Figure 3 also illustrate the CVC structure of a Chinese syllable, using the pinyin of “nang” and “an.” The pronunciation of “nang” has three phonemes, an order is “n” (consonant), “a” (vowels), and “ng” (consonant). Another example, “an” is a zero-initial syllable, and its structure is written as VC.

Figure 3

The Correspondence of Initials and Finals



¹² C refers to consonants, and V refers to vowels.

Note. The diagram is adapted from “The phonological acquisition of Putonghua (modern standard Chinese),” by Hua & Dodd, 2000, *Journal of child language*, 27(1), 3-42 (<https://doi.org/10.1017/S030500099900402X>).

As the Pinyin system is an alphabetic system that corresponds to spoken Chinese, the Chinese language terminology used in pinyin also affects Chinese pronunciation teaching. Chai (2005) argues that problems related to pronunciation stem from the misuse of terminologies in Chinese language teaching. Teachers often use English phonetic concepts to explain the Chinese phonetic system. For example, many teachers use “consonants” to replace “shengmu.”¹³ Chai pointed out that the term “shengmu” is not the same as the language used in teaching “consonants.” He advocated that the concept of consonants and vowels should not be introduced too much in the process of Chinese phonetic teaching, and the different phonological systems should be clearly defined.

There are differences between the concepts of “consonants and vowels” and “initials and finals.” Jin (2008) explained that the “consonants and vowels” as the terminology of phonetics, which categorized by the physical properties of speech sounds, and the “initials and finals” are recognized as Chinese phonology terms since they are divided according to the Chinese character pronunciation structure. This research uses the phonetic term “initials” and “finals” to describe the Chinese Pinyin system to maintain the consistency of terminology use.

¹³ The term is also known as the initial consonants in Chinese language, or initials.

2.1.3 The Role of Pinyin in Chinese as a Second Language Teaching

Pinyin plays a significant role in TCSL practice. Lü (1983) states that Pinyin could be a tool to practice Chinese pronunciation and speech, no matter what kind of teaching approach is adopted. Pinyin helps students to overcome the difficulty in reading unfamiliar Chinese characters and help teachers in teaching Chinese pronunciation (Lu, 2013). Moreover, results from Xu and Liu (2016) indicate that it is easier for English-as-a-first-language speakers to learn Chinese Pinyin alphabet than for those learners with other language backgrounds. Currently Pinyin is widely used in TCSL in North America, as evident in the textbooks adopted.

Pinyin could be more universally used in the English world due to its use of English alphabet. Lü (1983) explained that a student can learn to speak Chinese without learning Chinese characters; learning Pinyin alone is enough. Kupfer (2003) also stated that CSL learners can reach a higher level within a few months when teachers use Pinyin to teach them to read Chinese characters. Geng (2005) reported a practical Chinese teaching approach, as adopting the Pinyin at the beginning stage, which is useful for students whose first language uses alphabetic systems. In Geng's (2005) study, teachers only implemented Pinyin with minimal use of Chinese characters to teach Chinese in the first and second years because this approach effectively lowered students' anxiety over language difficulty towards learning Chinese. Some scholars have analyzed the influence of the Pinyin input method on Chinese character shapes and pronunciation. Their research supported the finding that the pinyin input method promoted Chinese pronunciation and the recognition of Chinese consonant and vowel pronunciation. (Zhu

et al., 2009). Wan (2012), however, argued that although Pinyin should go first in Chinese teaching, it still could not replace Chinese characters. The main reason is the fact that there are many homonyms in Chinese. She maintained that although the frequency of using mobile phones and computers has increased in the information age, and most people use pinyin to input Chinese characters when they send messages, Pinyin remains a tool for annotating the characters. It is not the Chinese writing system.

Pinyin has become an entry point for Chinese language learners (Niu, 2012). The use of Chinese characters and Pinyin in Chinese language teaching has been debated by teachers. However, it must be recognized that the Chinese phonetic alphabet has changed Chinese characters into connections between characters and sounds, reducing the difficulty of learning and reading Chinese characters. Pinyin has laid a foundation for computer input and has played an indispensable role in promoting the Chinese language to the world (Feng, 2018).

2.1.4 The Pinyin Scheme in Chinese as Second Language Teaching Practice

Zhou Youguang (1906-2017), the father of Pinyin, summed up three principles of Pinyin: Latinization, phonemicization, and colloquialism (Zhou, 1986). In other word, Pinyin has been Latinized, has phonemicized the spelling of Pinyin syllables, and has unified the colloquialism of the standard Chinese language. The three principles are discussed as follows.

2.1.4.1 Pinyin as the Latinized form of Chinese Characters. The Chinese Pinyin Scheme borrowed the Latin alphabet. It adopted the universal international pronunciation of the Latin alphabet, therefore achieving a similar pronunciation method. This rule has dramatically

popularized the Chinese Pinyin to be popular among the world exceptionally (Zhou, 1986).

2.1.4.2 Pinyin phonemicizing the spelling of Pinyin syllables. The Chinese Pinyin Scheme is based on phonology, which can enunciate but not record the pronunciation. Although Pinyin could phonemicize the Chinese characters and mark Chinese phonemes, the relationship between Pinyin and Mandarin pronunciation is not a one-to-one correspondence. One letter can represent multiple allophones of one phoneme, such as the single vowel “i” in the Pinyin Scheme. It is also an extraordinary letter in Pinyin. To ease memory and learning burdens, the Pinyin Scheme only uses the letter “i” to represent the phoneme, although it has three different allophones, including [i], [-ɿ], and[ɨ] (Xing, 2015; Zhao, 2013).

2.1.4.3 Pinyin unifying the colloquialism of Mandarin. Transliterating the Chinese characters and popularizing Mandarin are two essential functions of Pinyin (Zhou, 1980). Pinyin spells out the Mandarin pronunciation that is based on the Peking dialect. In China, there are various dialects from the North to the South. Chinese characters could only unify the writing form but hardly unify the pronunciation of the spoken dialects. The birth of Pinyin achieved pronunciation unification and made it convenient for teachers to teach the language. This development has contributed to the rise in the education level in China (Zhou, 1980).

Although the Pinyin Scheme has been widely used in everyday life, education, and international communication, there is still controversy over its practical applications. Some scholars believe that from the perspectives of L2 learners, some design provisions in the Pinyin Scheme may be poorly considered and need to be modified or adapted in practical teaching use

(Liu, 2010; Zhao, 2013). For example, the letter “u” in ju [tɕy] is pronounced as ü [y]; the same writing form makes it hard for L2 learners to distinguish the two finals in a syllable beginning with j [tɕ], q [tɕʰ], or x [ɕ] initials. In addition, when ü [y] has a zero initial in front, it needs to be written as yu [y]. Such spelling rules increase the challenge for L2 students to learn Chinese, especially in their discrimination of ü [y] and u[u] in syllables, which also makes them often mispronounce ü [y] as u[u] pronunciation. (Xing, 2015)

Another example of pronunciation that often puzzles students is which letter should be the coda of finals in 教¹⁴ jiāo [tɕiau⁵⁵]? Is it u, or o? Actually, there are only two vowel codas, [i] and [u] in Mandarin, but because it is easy to confuse u with n in Pinyin handwriting, the letter o takes the place of the letter u for the sake of distinction; thus, the compound finals au [au] and iau [iau] are written as ao [au] and iao [iau] correspondingly in Pinyin (Lu, 2013). However, it is worth noticing that this writing rule leads students to make pronunciation errors easily. For example, it is found that students tend to mispronounce “ao [au]” (Ye, 1997), as influenced by the spelling of the sound. Similarly, after analyzing many Chinese language learners' speech errors, Zhou (2005) found that the omission of semivowels or glides is one of the factors inducing pronunciation errors. Because iou [iou], uei [uei], and uen [uən] become iu [iou], ui [uei], and un [uən] in Pinyin, it is easy for students to omit the sound semivowels or glides. Students tend to pronounce these syllables stiffly, resulting in mispronunciation (Xing, 2015).

In summary, the Chinese Pinyin scheme standardized the Chinese phonetic system, which has significantly promoted the popularization of Mandarin, raised the literacy rate in China and

¹⁴ This character means teaching.

laid a foundation for the spread and circulation of Chinese in the world. Pinyin is transcribed in the form of Latin letters, which reduces the unfamiliarity of pronunciation for CSL learners.

Pinyin has become an excellent tool for teaching CSL. However, when applying Pinyin to second language teaching, teachers need to pay attention to some problems, as described in the preceding sections.

2.2 Backgrounds of Chinese Language Teaching

This section introduces the current development of TCSL globally in general and specifically in Canada. An examination of the history of TCSL worldwide could inform the field of TCSL, give an insight into the long-term trend of Chinese education, and promote the construction of Chinese courses (Zhang, 2008).

Section 2.2.1 focuses on the historical background of Chinese language education. Because Chinese language teaching materials are an essential part of Chinese teaching activities and an important factor in spreading the Chinese language, the history of Chinese language education, along with commonly used pedagogical materials, is analyzed to provide a comprehensive understanding.

In section 2.2.2, differences between TCSL and TCFL are introduced, and the reason of using TCSL in this thesis is clarified.

An overview of the current CSL teaching in Canadian universities and colleges is provided in the remaining sections. With the support of the data from the database of the Canadian Teaching Chinese as a Second Language Association (Canadian TCSL Association). This

chapter also introduces the situation of TCSL in Canada context from five aspects: school scale, current Chinese course set-up, teachers' background, students' learning motivations, and teaching materials.

2.2.1 The History of Chinese Language Education

Chinese is an ancient language, and Chinese language teaching, along with it, has gradually developed and flourished for centuries. Before the end of the Ming Dynasty (A.D.1368 to 1644), teaching materials specialized in Chinese language teaching were scarce. So the books that were used to teach foreigners in or out of China were the same books Chinese Confucian students used. Later, after the late Ming Dynasty (A.D.1573 to 1619), more Western missionaries came to China. They began using their first language to mark the Chinese pronunciation and to compile the Chinese language teaching materials. Thus, Chinese teaching to the world is roughly divided into two time periods: before and after the late Ming Dynasty (Shi, 2004).

Before the end of the Ming Dynasty, communication exchanges generally took place between neighbouring countries in Asia, such as the students from Japan, Koryo, and Siro (located in the Korean Peninsula). This was due to traffic restrictions. For example, during the Tang Dynasty (A.D.618-907), China and the neighbouring countries often exchanged learners to learn each other's cultures and languages (Shi, 2004). Emperor Xuanzong (A.D. 685-762) also sent the scholars of the Imperial College to Japan to teach Confucian classics. Since the enthusiasm about learning the Chinese language began to appear in the non-governmental environment, books, such as *Lao Qi Da* (老乞大) and *Pu Tong Shi* (朴通事), with contents

meeting the needs of ordinary people's language communication came into existence. These books were generally related to trade, the customs of the Tang people, and the habits of eating and drinking (Shi, 2004).

By the end of the Ming Dynasty, also known as the Great Navigation Age (i.e., the 15th to the 17th centuries), the events prompting the exchanges between Europe and China became more frequent. In the 16th century, the Portuguese arrived in Macau, and with the trade booming between China and Portugal, the role of missionaries began to land on the stage of cultural exchanges between China and the West. In the course of missionary work, the missionaries began to realize that the first thing they needed to master to succeed in their mission was the language of the Chinese people.

After the Ming Dynasty (A.D.1573-1679), the Qing government took over political power (A.D.1636-1912). In this period, the world began to explore Chinese as a second language teaching, and even stable teaching institutions and Chinese teaching materials appeared. Westerners attached great importance to the study of Chinese. For example, Robert Morrison (1782-1834) was sent to China by the church with a mission to translate the Bible and to write dictionaries (Zhang, 2001). After more than a decade of preparation, Morrison finally completed the world's first English-Chinese and Chinese-English bilingual dictionary – *A Dictionary of the Chinese Language, in Three Parts* (1823). The dictionary was divided into three parts, as its title suggested. The interpretation part was all written in Roman notation. In the preface of the second part, Morrison introduced the dictionary's spelling system which was adopted from *A Grammar of the Chinese Language* (Morrison, 1815), and this system became widely used among

Westerners (Zhang, 2001). Morrison also compiled a speaking textbook called *Dialogues and Detached Sentences in the Chinese Language* (1816), which used daily life themes as the outline and was written in dialogues and single sentences, and covered themes of food, clothing, housing and transportation, accompanied by a translation and Roman pronunciation (James, Yu, & Fang, 2011). Such a phonetic system greatly facilitated Westerners' learning Chinese and was key to the spread of Chinese among Westerners (Yue, 2020).

However, because missionaries' demands conflicted with the inherited Chinese customs of worship to heaven, ancestors, and Confucius, the missionaries were later asked by the Qing government (A.D.1636-1912) to leave and carry out missionary activities only in Macau. By then, the first Chinese learning upsurge had come to an end (Zhang, 2001).

Only after the Opium War (1840) did the Qing government (A.D.1636-1912) reopen its doors. Many foreigners returned to China, forming a second upsurge in Chinese language learning and teaching. It is worth mentioning that the depth and breadth of this time far exceeded the previous one (Yue, 2020). With the expansion of Westerners' activities in China in the early stage, the compiling of teaching materials showed a vigorous development of dialect teaching materials. For example, *First Lessons in the Tie-chiw Dialect* (Dean, 1841) and *Phrases in the Canton Colloquial Dialect* (Bonney, 1853) were published. Westerners used different phonetic marking systems in teaching materials and give much attention to the Chinese tones and the aspirated sounds (Yue, 2020). The content of the textbooks analyzed grammar of spoken Chinese more deeply than before, such as in Joseph Edkins's *A Grammar of the Chinese Colloquial Language* (1857).

After the Opium War (1840), the number of Chinese who went abroad to earn a living also increased. These overseas Chinese began to set up Chinese schools to help overseas Chinese master Chinese and maintain Chinese culture. With the development of cultural integration, the Chinese language classes were later incorporated into the local education system and allowed students from other language backgrounds to attend. Therefore, the broad sense of Chinese language education refers to overseas Chinese receiving Chinese language and culture education and includes non-Chinese learners learning Chinese in their own countries or in China (Ye, 2012). Nowadays, Chinese language education has become more localized. Until 2009, more than 3,000 universities and colleges in over one hundred countries offered Chinese language courses (Ye, 2012). By the end of 2019, *Hanban* had collaborated with other countries to open 541 Confucius Institutes and 1,170 Confucius classrooms. Since 1970s, Chinese language education has entered a rapid development period (Zhou,2009).

2.2.2 Teaching Chinese as Second Language (TCSL) Versus Teaching Chinese as Foreign Language (TCFL)

Canada is a multicultural nation. According to the 2016 Census of Population in Canada, the number of settled immigrants increased by over 1.2 million from 2011 to 2016. The data indicate that immigrants have significantly contributed the net population increase in Canada (Chavez, 2019). Moreover, the Census of 2016 listing the origin countries of the immigrant population in recent years showed that more and more people from Asia, Latin America, Middle East and

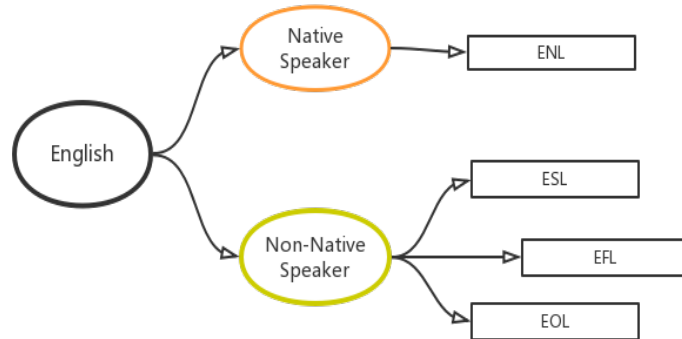
Africa have settled in Canada. Thus, the diversity of immigrants' ethnic and linguistic backgrounds has promoted linguistic diversification in Canada.

The first languages of the immigrants have changed the landscape of the languages in Canada and created a new controversy of the linguistic terminology: what should we call the programs teaching various languages other than English and French?

To better understand the role of Chinese teaching in Canada, two terminologies in language teaching are discussed: foreign languages teaching (FL) and second languages teaching (SL). The term "L2" can refer to second languages as well as foreign languages (Tomlinson, 2011). Does it mean a foreign language is equal to a second language? Granger (2002) took English as an example and outlined the structure of various English levels. He classified English into four types: English as a Native Language (ENL), English as a Second Language (ESL), English as a Foreign Language (EFL), and English as an Official Language (EOL), as seen in Figure 4. ESL and EFL are two different varieties in the non-native speaker context.

Figure 4

The Types of Englishes Towards Different Speakers



Note. Adapted from “*Computer learner corpora, second language acquisition and foreign language teaching.*”

by Granger, S., Hung, J., & Petch-Tyson, S. (Eds.), 2002, *John Benjamins Publishing*, p. 8(<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca>). Copyright 2002 by John Benjamins Publishing.

Granger (2002) identified that ESL “refers to English acquired in an English-speaking environment (such as Britain or the U.S.)” (p. 8) and EFL “covers English learned primarily in a classroom setting in a non-English-speaking country (Belgium, Germany, etc.)” (p. 8). Another perspective distinguishing foreign languages and second languages is based on the language learning environment. Tomlinson (2011) defined the foreign language and second language from the social context. He clarified that a foreign language is “a language which is not normally used for communication in a particular society” (p. xi), and a “second language is used to refer to a language that is not a mother tongue” (p. xv).

In Canada, using “second” or “foreign” as the name of Chinese language teaching is based on the *Act for the Preservation and Enhancement of Multiculturalism in Canada* (1988). This Act confirms the status of multiculturalism and recognizes of the diversity of any race within Canada. To ensure equality, the language programs across Canada use “second languages” instead of “foreign languages” to refer to languages other than the national languages of English and French. Factoring in the discussion in this section, the current research uses the term “Teaching Chinese as a Second Language (TCSL)” in this thesis.

2.2.3 Chinese Programs in Canadian Universities and Colleges

This section adopts the information from the National TCSL Database and the literatures related to the TCSL in Canada, aims to provide a general overview of the current Chinese language teaching in Canadian universities. First, Canadian universities and colleges which offer Chinese programs and courses are identified through the database of the Canadian TCSL Association (data retrieved in January? 2020), followed by searching these universities’ websites for the Chinese courses offered and teaching materials used in these universities.

The Canadian TCSL Association is a non-profit organization with a mission to facilitate the pedagogy and research of Chinese teaching and promote the academic Chinese language education in Canada. For Chinese language research within Canada and abroad and the collaboration among institutions in Canada, the Canadian TCSL Association has established the National TCSL Database by collecting the relevant information of Chinese programs from universities, colleges, and secondary schools across Canada.

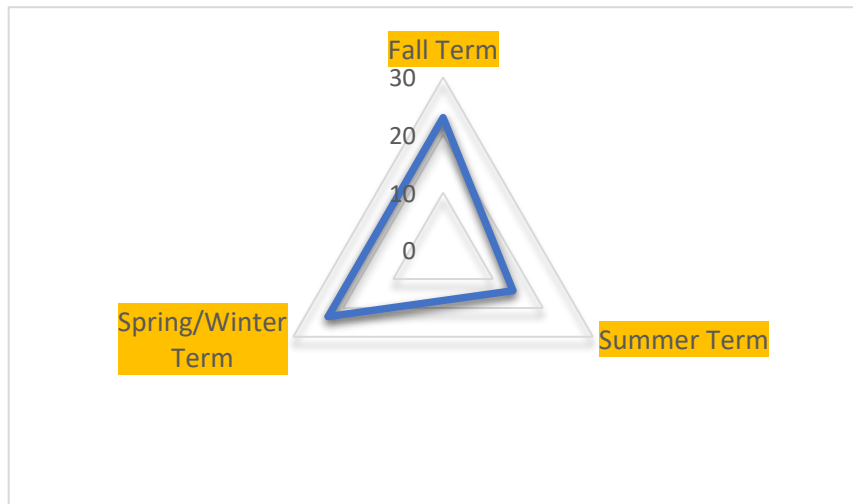
This section involves 23 universities and colleges¹⁵ listed on the National TCSL Database by examining the information available on their websites. The findings of the Chinese programs in Canadian universities are reported in the following areas: the curriculum set-up, Chinese language course offers in an academic year and out-bound study.

2.2.3.1 The Chinese Curriculum Set-up in Canada. An academic year in Canada consists of three terms: a fall term, a winter/spring term, and a summer term. However, not every university offers Chinese classes in each term. Figure 5 presents an overview of courses offered by the Chinese programs in three semesters in Canadian universities with data collected from the National TCSL Database. Figure 5 shows that 23 universities offer Chinese classes in the fall term and the spring/winter term, while only half of the Canadian universities have summer courses.

¹⁵ The 23 universities and colleges are in alphabetical order: Capilano University, Concordia University, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Queen's University, Simon Fraser University, Trinity Western University, University of Fraser Valley, University of Alberta, University of British Columbia, University of Calgary, University of Guelph, University of Manitoba, University of New Brunswick, University of Northern British Columbia, University of Regina, University of Toronto Scarborough campus, University of Victoria, University of Waterloo, Vancouver Island University, York University, Douglas College, Langara College, and Mount Royal College.

Figure 5

The Provision of Chinese Programs in Canada in an Academic Year



In Canada, students with prior knowledge of Chinese need to complete a placement process by filling an application questionnaire or taking a placement test before entering a Chinese language course. The placement requirement ensures that students could take suitable courses that fit their proficiency levels.

As one of the top universities in Canada, University of British Columbia (UBC) admits more than 2,000 students into Asian studies every year, making Chinese Studies the largest and most comprehensive program in North America (UBC, 2020a). Hereafter, UBC's program is presented based on the analysis of publicly accessible information.

UBC's courses could be broadly divided into three levels: an elementary level, an intermediate level, and an advanced level. Students need to complete a lower-level course before moving to a higher-level class unless the result of a placement test allows. The course content between these levels is connected, and the curriculum difficulty increases gradually.

The variety of Chinese language courses depends on students' learning goals and interests.

The students are generally categorized as heritage learners and non-heritage learners. The Chinese Language Program in the UBC (UBC, 2020b) defines heritage learners as students born in a Chinese-speaking country and speaking Chinese and those born in a non-Chinese speaking country but growing up in a Chinese-speaking family and speak Chinese at home. These heritage learners may have a good understanding of listening and speaking but may fail to master reading and writing skills. The non-heritage learners, per UBC Chinese Language Program criteria, refer to people who do not have any Chinese background before entering the program. The previous relevant language background is the primary evidence to distinguish these two types of learners.

Table 2 here shows the Chinese course types in UBC.

Table 2

The Chinese Classes in the University of British Columbia

Course	Heritage Learner	Non-heritage Learner
Basic	√	√
Intermediate	√	√
Advanced Chinese Reading and Writing	√	√
Advanced Chinese Speaking and Writing		√
Media Chinese	√	
Business Chinese	√	√
Early Classical Chinese Poetry	√	
Later Classical Chinese Poetry	√	
Modern Chinese Literature	√	
Classical Chinese	√	

Note. The course has “√” means it is offered to learners.

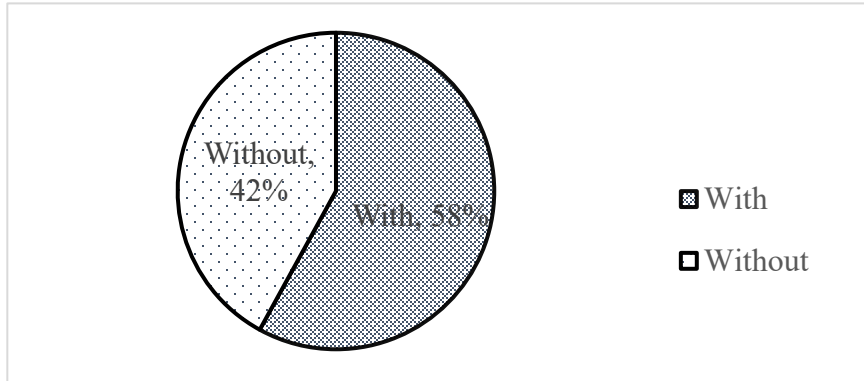
The UBC offers basic and intermediate Chinese courses to both heritage learners and non-heritage learners. At the advanced level, only advanced speaking and writing courses are provided to non-heritage learners because heritage learners often have a solid ability to understand spoken Chinese (UBC, 2020b). The Chinese business courses are open to both heritage and non-heritage learners, but students must achieve certain language proficiency before being accepted to these courses. The literature and classical Chinese courses are only opened to heritage learners.

2.2.3.2 Study Abroad Programs to China. An international educational experience could allow the students to connect what they are learning with the world directly. People use language as a tool to transfer and exchange thoughts and cultures, so communication is the primary purpose of language teaching (Ma, 2016).

The trend of the globalization of education has captured Chinese language teachers' attention to arranging experiential study in China. The information of the National TCSL Database and of universities' official websites indicates that most summer programs are implemented in China (Figure 6).

Figure 6

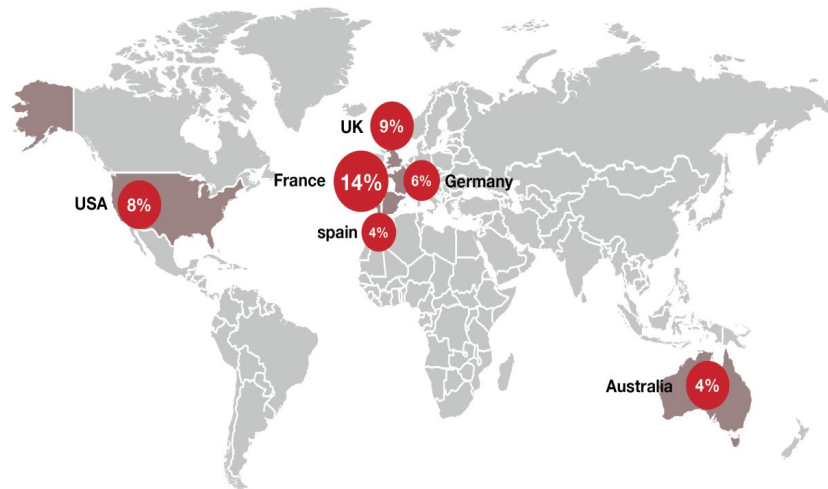
Canadian Universities with/without Chinese Training Programs in China



Nearly two-thirds of universities and colleges in Canada have offered an opportunity for language learners to study in China. The high percentage of the study abroad programs may suggest that many students can learn Chinese in an authentic environment, be immersed in the Chinese culture, and interact with Chinese people. However, this may not suggest the case. A report by the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) lists the most popular countries as the overseas study destination for Canadian students. A report of Study Group on Global Education (2017) indicated Canadian students prefer to study in Europe rather than in Asia (Figure 7). According to the report, four out of the six countries were European countries, and English or French is the common language shared by the top three countries (France, UK, and USA). Moreover, the report (2017) also reported that “The relatively few Canadian students who engage in international learning overwhelmingly travel to only a few places – the United States, Western Europe, and Australia – and study in their native language” (p. 8).

Figure 7

Top-six Study-abroad Destinations for Canadian Students



Note. The map adapted from *Global Education for Canadians: Equipping Young Canadians to Succeed at Home and Abroad*, by the Study Group on Global Education, 2017

(http://goglobalcanada.ca/media/2017/10/Global_Education_Nov2017.pdf). In the public domain.

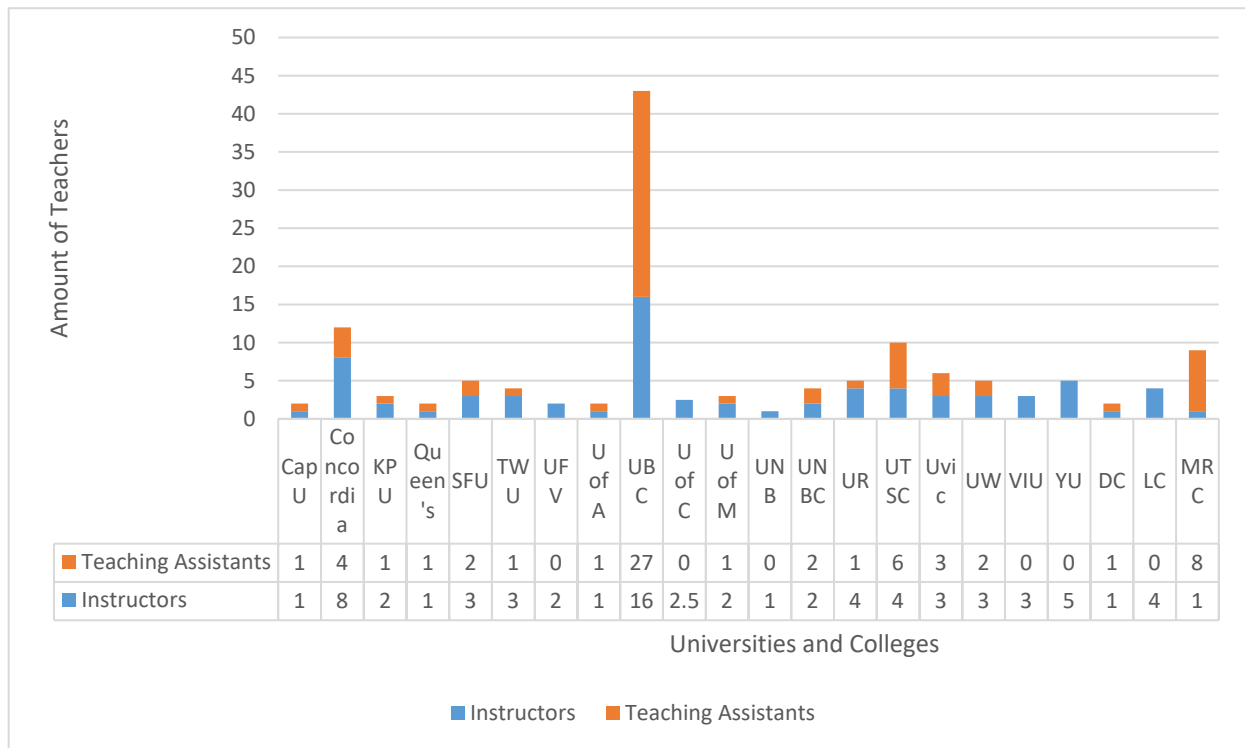
2.2.4 Background of Chinese Language Teachers in 23 Universities

This section introduces the background of Chinese language teachers in Canada including the number of teachers, their occupation and their education levels.

2.2.4.1 Number of Chinese Language Teachers in Canadian Universities. The number of Chinese teachers is closely related to the students' registration number. The universities with more students naturally tend to hire more teachers in their Chinese program than other universities with a lower enrolment.

Figure 8

Number of Chinese Teachers in Canadian Universities and Colleges



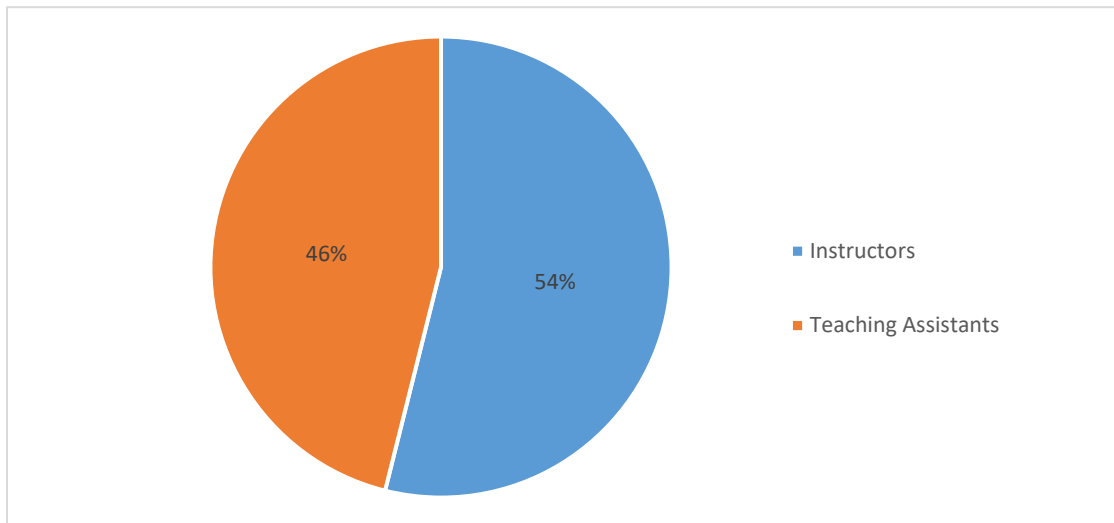
Note. CapU= Capilano University; Concordia= Concordia University; KPU= Kwantlen Polytechnic University; Queen's= Queen's University; SFU=Simon Fraser University; TWU= Trinity Western University; UFV= University of Fraser Valley; U of A= University of Alberta; UBC= University of British Columbia; U of C= University of Calgary; U of M= University of Manitoba; UNB= University of New Brunswick; UNBC= University of Northern British Columbia; U of R= University of Regina; U of T= University of Toronto; UTSC= University of Toronto Scarborough Campus; Uvic= University of Victoria; U of W= University of Waterloo; VIU= Vancouver Island University; YU= York University; DC= Douglas College; LC= Langara College; and MRC= Mount Royal College.

Figure 8 presents the number of Chinese teachers in 23 universities and colleges across Canada. As a whole, with the exception of Concordia University, UBC and University of Toronto Scarborough Campus, there are fewer than ten instructors and teaching assistants. Moreover, most universities have only one to three Chinese instructors, while UBC has the highest number, with 16 instructors.

2.2.4.2 Occupations of Chinese Language Teachers in Canadian University. The faculty information in the Nation TCSL Database has divided the composition of teachers into full-time instructors, full-time teaching assistants, part-time instructors, and part-time teaching assistants. The pie chart (Figure 9) reflects the current faculty composition in 23 universities and colleges.

Figure 9

The Occupation of Instructors and Teaching assistants among 23 Universities and Colleges



Based on Figure 9, it is found that the proportion of instructors' number (58%) is quite close to teaching assistants' number (46%). It looks like the occupation numbers of instructors and teaching assistants stay in a balanced status.

2.2.4.3 Professional Backgrounds of Chinese Language Teachers. The data in the Nation TCSL Database reveals that the composition of teachers is complex. The Chinese language teachers are mostly Chinese as the first-language speakers. Most of them have degrees in

linguistics, education, or Chinese literature. The variation of teacher backgrounds suggests that instructors may have different approaches and focus in their instruction.

As for their credentials, most professors and the senior instructors own a Ph.D. degree, such as the three professors in the Chinese language program of the University of British Columbia. A university instructor at the Simon Fraser University possesses a MA degree. Many instructors and lecturers have an MA degree, such as a part-time instructor at Kwantlen Polytechnic University. It shows the minimum requirement for being a Chinese language teacher in Canadian universities and colleges is an MA degree.

2.2.5 Widely used Teaching Materials in Canada

Teaching materials, teachers, and students are seen as the three critical teaching components (Gu, 1990). Few would argue against the need to adopt Chinese language teaching materials suitable for students in their own learning context. The National TCSL Database shows that the 23 universities use sixteen different textbooks as their teaching materials (Figure 10). These textbooks are for different levels:

Textbooks aiming for beginners include: 1) *Integrated Chinese*; 2) *Contemporary Chinese Book*; 3) *Meeting China*; 4) *Let's learn Chinese*; 5) *Developing Chinese Elementary*; 6) *Learning to Speak Mandarin*; 7) *New Practical Chinese Reader*; 8) *Intensive Spoken Chinese*; and, 9) *Chinese Link*.¹⁶

¹⁶ This book has both beginner and intermediate levels.

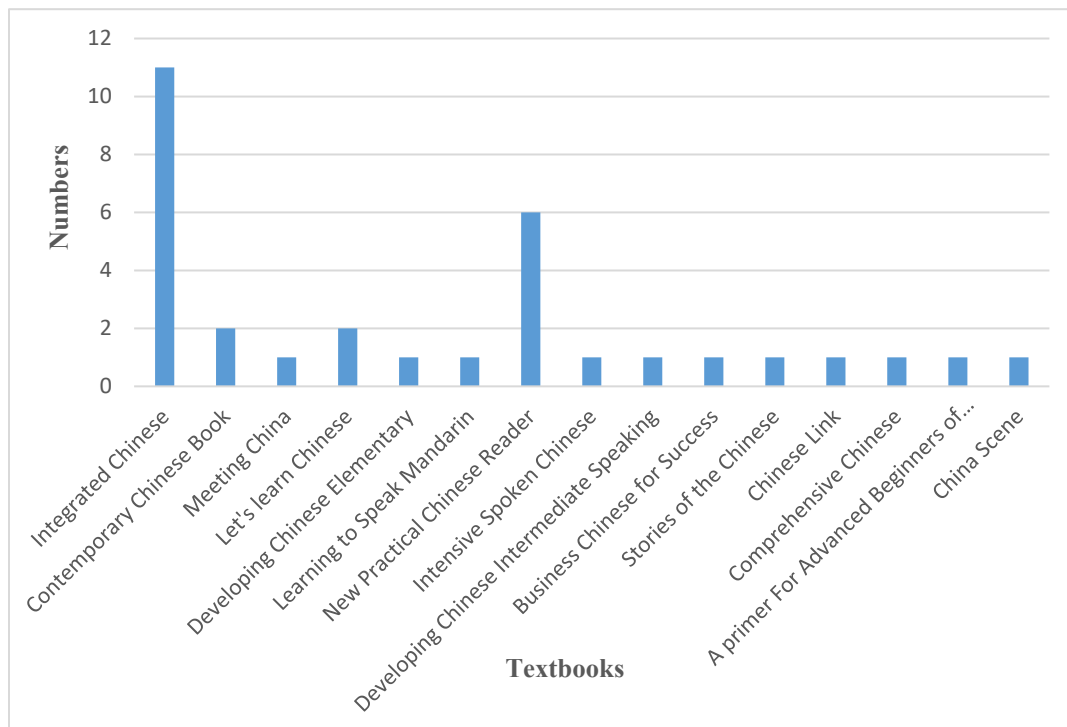
Textbooks usually aiming for intermediate levels include: 10) *Developing Chinese Intermediate Speaking*; 11) *Business Chinese for Success*; 12) *Stories of the Chinese*; and, 13) *Chinese Link*.

Textbooks aiming to advanced levels include: 14) *Comprehensive Chinese*; 15) *A Primer for Advanced Beginners of Chinese*; and, 16) *China Scene*.

Figure 10 summarizes the textbooks usage among 23 Canadian universities and colleges based on data collected from the National TCSL Database. The results revealed that the most widely used textbooks in Canada are *Integrated Chinese* and *New Practical Chinese Reader*, as 17 out of 23 universities adopted them in their Chinese courses.

Figure 10

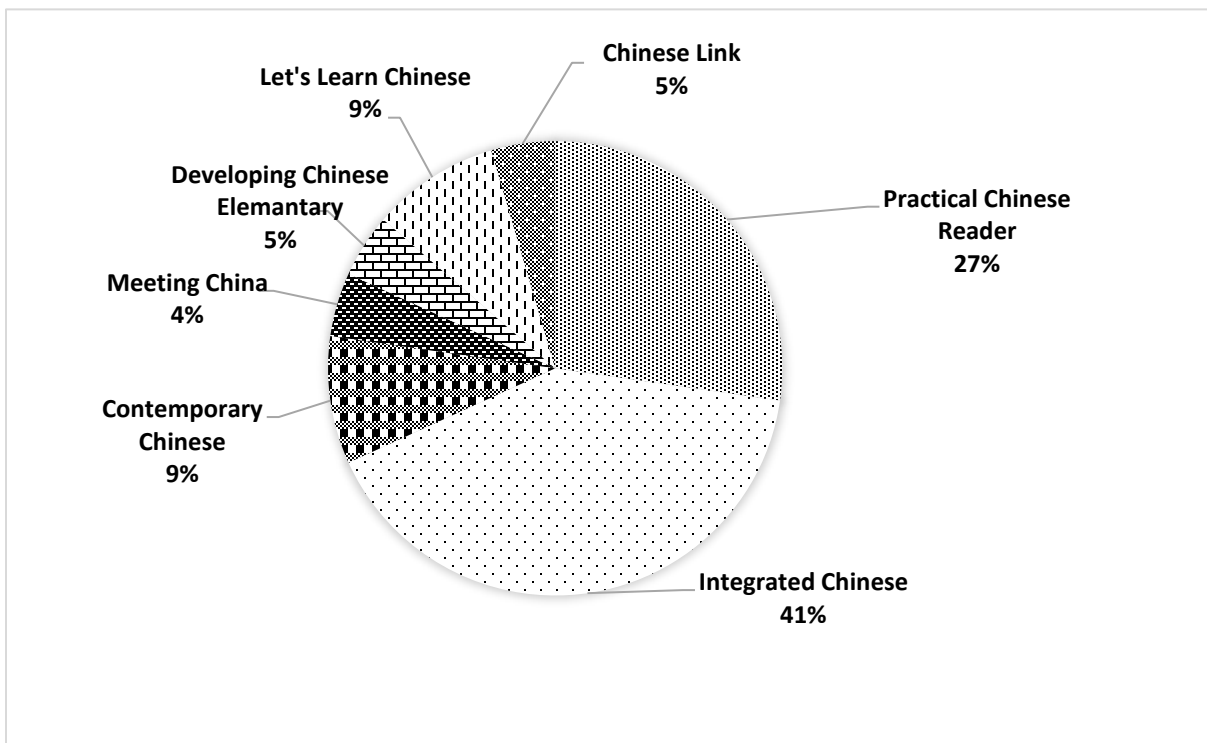
Textbook Usage by Universities and Colleges in Canada



The program-setting varies from university to university, but the beginner-level courses are most commonly offered in Chinese language programs in Canada. For example, the University of Waterloo, Capilano University, and Douglas College only offer beginner-level¹⁷ courses. Figure 11 shows the result of beginner-level textbooks usage among 23 universities and colleges in the National TCSL Database. *Integrated Chinese* is the most commonly used textbook for beginners.

Figure 11

The Usage Rate of Textbooks for Beginners



¹⁷ 100 and 200 levels

This section provides an overview of Canadian Chinese teaching. Through the analysis of the data from the National TCSL Database, the diversity of programs, teachers' backgrounds, and textbooks, may bring about different teaching approaches and challenges to teachers.

2.2.6 Learning Motivations of Canadian Students

In Canada, the multicultural backgrounds of students not only bring many challenges but also enrich Chinese language teaching. For example, Chinese is no longer a second language but a third or fourth language for many language learners. The language learning experiences and strategies they have developed in learning other languages may help speed up their efficiency of Chinese learning (He, 2013).

The motivation of Chinese learning in Canada mainly related to both personal and integrative oriented motivation. The population of Chinese immigrants is prominent in Canada, especially in large metropolitan cities. Many heritage learners grow up in Chinese-speaking families. One personal reason for these students to register in Chinese course is the requirement from their parents (Ye, 2012), because they believe that learning Chinese is an excellent way to maintain Chinese culture.

The awareness of global education may also promote the development of Chinese teaching and serve as a Chinese learning motivation. The Partnership for the 21st Century Skills (P21) and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages collaboratively designed the

21st Century Skills Map (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2011) of world languages¹⁸. This map also aims to provide educators, administrators, and policymakers with examples of how world language skills can be used in practice. The map emphasizes the importance of language education as it can contribute to students' research ability and interactive ability. During the global economic shift, China now plays an increasingly important role in the world. The P21 (2011) appeals to Americans to attend to learning other languages besides English because languages would allow them to learn other cultures and face demographic changes. The University of Ottawa and the University of Toronto jointly published a report¹⁹ aiming to raise people's attention to global education (The Study Group on Global Education, 2017). This report claims that the younger generation needs more knowledge and skills to become flexible when working with people from different cultural backgrounds. In a globalized environment, the skills that people need to have in the workplace to communicate with each other underscore the need for people to know other languages beyond their first languages. The data compiled by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, predicted that China will be the largest country, occupying nearly 28% of the global gross domestic product in 2030 (The Study Group on Global Education, 2017). Jacques Frémont, the University of Ottawa president, claims that "Canada has everything to gain by positioning itself as one of China's major scientific partners" (Frémont, 2017, Canada has everything to gain through research collaboration with China, para 2.). With the growing international exchange and strengthened cooperation, more

¹⁸ <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED519498.pdf>

¹⁹ *Global Education for Canadians: Equipping Young Canadians to Succeed at Home and Abroad*

and more non-Chinese students have begun to learn Chinese to seek broader opportunities worldwide for their future (The Study Group on Global Education, 2017).

2.3 Pronunciation Teaching of Chinese Language Teaching

Language is a system influenced by society, and every language has its linguistic features, and these features help people to distinguish the language from others. Canagarajah (2005) noted that pronunciation should be a prescriptive aspect of language teaching as pronunciation is perhaps easier to be judged by others. Therefore, the importance of mastering pronunciation is a key concern for learners and researches alike.

According to Zhao (2008), second language teaching aims to cultivate learners' communication skills, and the ultimate goal of TCSL is training L2 learners to use Chinese freely in communicative activities to produce meaningful communication (Zhao, 2008). Therefore, as a surface feature of a language that learners can directly notice, pronunciation in Chinese is also where learners start with when learning the language.

The following sections introduce pinyin and tone teaching and discuss the relationship between pronunciation perception and target-language exposure. Section 2.3.2 explores the common teaching practices in pinyin teaching. The last section in this chapter summarizes the challenges of pinyin teaching and their possible causes.

2.3.1 Current Focus of Chinese Tones Teaching

Tone teaching has always been an essential and challenging aspect of phonetic teaching for both

teachers and students. Non-tonal language speakers not only need to learn tone categories but also need to master the tones. In other words, if non-tonal speakers want to know the meaning of the words associated with the tones, it is not enough to only figure out the differences of tone-pitch patterns. They need to have the ability to associate the tones with the words' meanings. Pelzl (2019) observed that when beginners start learning Pinyin, they can often quickly write the Pinyin of words but can not produce the correct tone markings associated with the words.

The pitch perception abilities vary from person to person, and this ability may be affected by an individual's prior language experience. Pelzl (2019) suggests that learners with previous experience of learning an additional language tend to be able to more easily catch the tonal differences. Many Chinese language teachers believe that sensitivity to music can contribute to learning tones (Cooper & Wang, 2012; Lee & Hung, 2008; Li & DeKeyser, 2017). However, others (e.g., Bowles, Chang, & Karuzis, 2016) have argued it is a learner's natural aptitude of pitch perception that contributes to their tone learning. Based on Pezel's (2019) study, the aptitude of pitch perception positively correlates with their tone learning outcome and learning speed. Moreover, achieving a high proficiency in additional languages can also help learners to identify the tones more precisely.

Numerous studies (e.g., Kim, 2014; Hao, 2012; Yang, 2012; Sun, 1997) suggested that tone 2 is the most challenging tone for learners to identify, followed by tone 3. Tone 2 and tone 3 have very similar contours based on their pitch height and duration. The similarity confuses the learners when trying to differentiate them, especially for learners without prior exposure to Chinese.

In recent research, Hao (2017) investigated the perception of Mandarin tones among three groups of Mandarin learners at different levels (naïve learners, inexperienced learners, and experienced learners). Hao (2017) chose two pairs of tonal discriminations: “T1-T4” and “T2-T3” as the target stimuli of tonal perception. The experiment hypothesized that the discrimination of the T2-T3 is more complicated than that of the T1-T4 pair.

The result of “T2-T3” accuracy tests is the same as the Hao’s (2017) hypothesis. The result suggested that prior Chinese learning experience helped English speakers better perceive Chinese tones. English speakers who did not have previous Chinese training showed the lower accuracy scores of “T2-T3” tonal contrasts. But both experienced or inexperienced learners showed the highly discriminant accuracy rates in differentiating “T1-T4” (cf. Gottfried & Suiter, 1997).

2.3.2 Common Teaching Practices in Chinese Pronunciation Teaching

With the development of Chinese language teaching, developing Chinese teaching approaches have attracted the attention of TCSL educators. Meng (2003) used audio and video materials to teach Chinese, and he tried to bring learners into an authentic situation by using this approach. Du (2006) suggested that the communicative and interactive teaching practice is the most effective teaching approach for pronunciation teaching. A well-conceived interactive approach to task design and implementation can effectively connect various contexts inside and outside the classroom, minimizing students communicating only using the sentences in their Chinese textbooks. Mora and Levkina (2017) emphasized that task-based teaching in phonetic teaching

improves language accuracy. The task-based phonetic teaching approach can not only improve the language accuracy of L2 learners' accent but also minimize the communication barriers and offer L2 learners a better experience of dialogue in daily communication (Derwing & Munro, 2015; Levis, 2005; Mora & Levkina, 2017; Saito, 2011). Many teachers have tried using the shadowing practice technique in pronunciation teaching. They encourage their students to repeatedly imitate how their teachers pronounce the Chinese words on the board or screen. The downside of this teaching approach is its behavioural approach to learning (e.g., the audio-lingual method) and can reduce learners' learning motivation (Hao, 2014). Liu (2016) recommended to adopt the interactive communication activities in Chinese language teaching. He argues that the CSL teaching environment can limit students from sitting in the classroom and only learn the language points from textbooks. Students neither can explore the new knowledge with teachers nor have any time to practice their oral skills in an authentic situation (Liu, 2016).

2.3.3 Challenges of Chinese Pronunciation Instruction

Pronunciation in second language teaching plays a crucial role because pronunciation often determines the quality of communication. The non-standard pronunciation could affect the quality of expression and may convey the wrong information to others. Zhao (2016) conducted 59 preparatory international high school students' proficiency in spoken Chinese. Most participants were from Africa and Asia. The survey results demonstrated that most beginner-level students faced with challenges related to pronunciation. Zhao (2016) recommended that

teachers pay attention to the students' pronunciation at the beginning of Chinese language classes and encourage students to make a conscious effort to imitate the standard Chinese pronunciation and intonation.

Several scholars identified the difficulties in acquiring standard Chinese pronunciation to help learners acquire standard Chinese pronunciation and helped teachers to teach Chinese pronunciation more effectively. Based on Niu's (2012) research, he provided a list of consonants (i.e., zh [tʂ], ch [tʂʰ], zh [ʂ], r [ʐ], z [ts], c [tsʰ], and s [s]) that could be difficult for American high school language learners to pronounce. He (2013) argues that the objective of pronunciation teaching should be about increasing intelligibility²⁰ rather than pronouncing like a native speaker. She verified through her research that the Chinese affricate consonants like zh [tʂ], ch [tʂʰ], sh [ʂ] are the most challenging sounds for Canadian non-heritage L2 learners. Other scholars claimed that some letters tended to confuse learners because of their similarity in sounds between Chinese and English (He, 2013; Xu & Liu, 2016).

In a CSL context, most pronunciation practices occur during class time. After class, L2 learners may spend most of the time with their friends and use their first languages. This phenomenon speeds up the process of forgetting the correct pronunciation (Qian, 2010). Further, Canada's current Chinese language instruction tend to focus more on vocabulary and grammar but overlook pronunciation teaching (He, 2013). Meanwhile, in pronunciation teaching, more emphasis is placed on general communicative and interactive skills, rather than the instruction of

²⁰ Munro, Derwing, and Morton (2006) define "intelligibility" as "the extent to which a speakers' utterance is actually understood (p.76)".

standard Chinese pronunciation. For example, He (2013) observed that teachers often like to chat with students to test whether they could understand what the teachers have said and give a comprehensible response. She stated that teachers tend to pay more attention to the meaning and often takes a laissez-faire attitude towards pronunciation errors. The de-emphasis of pronunciation accuracy can reduce the comprehensibility²¹ of language communication (He, 2013). According to Zhang's survey (2018), most schools (from primary schools to universities across 14 countries) do not offer special Chinese pronunciation classes but rather intersperse pronunciation teaching in explaining vocabulary or text. Even if some schools offer phonetic courses, they tend to give only short-term intensive instruction to beginners. Therefore, the insufficient instructional time devoted to pronunciation teaching might be a possible reason why Canadian CSL learners have difficulties in acquiring such consonants as zh[tʂ], ch [tʂʰ], and sh [ʂʰ] (He, 2013).

Chinese oral classes generally aim to develop student's communication skills and improve their verbal abilities. Therefore, the selection of phonetic teaching material is worthy for teachers' attention. Cheng (1996) suggested that the main problem of teaching materials is that most conventional textbooks set a separate section for teaching pronunciation, with intensive instruction occurring only at the very beginning. This intensive pronunciation training may lead to an oversight of learners' pronunciation errors in the later teaching process. After this intensive

²¹ Munro, Derwing, and Morton (2006) define the "Comprehensibility" as "the listeners' estimation of difficulty in understanding an utterance" (p.291).

training period, the instruction tends to focus mainly on vocabulary and grammar. The practice types of Chinese oral classes are a bit mechanical for most courses.

Most Chinese oral textbooks are categorized by topics. The topics are presented in dialogues, and even some conversations are just created by the writer's imagination, lacking some daily oral expressions (Qian, 2010). This kind of dialogues in the textbooks may not offer authentic language for students. Likewise, Xu (2002) pointed out these conversations are too inflexible and can limit learners' need for developing flexible communication skills.

2.4 Summary

This chapter introduced Pinyin and the importance of pronunciation learning with a focus on current pronunciation teaching in Canada. First, the chapter described the birth of Pinyin, the Pinyin Scheme's content and the implementation of pinyin in Chinese L2 teaching. Then the second section summarized the history of Chinese teaching in the world during the Ming and Qing dynasties and clarified the difference between TCSL and TCFL by comparing the learners and the learning environment and provided an overview of the current state of Chinese language teaching in Canada. The third section introduced current pronunciation teaching methods and summarized some general instructional challenges encountered in Pinyin teaching.

The literature review found that the proportion of time and content devoted to pronunciation teaching is relatively small, showing insufficient attention to pronunciation training in Chinese teaching.

2.5 Research Focus and Study Expectation

The research aims to investigate the development and implementation of Chinese pronunciation teaching in Canada and offer pedagogical suggestions for more Canadian Chinese-language teachers, especially novice teachers, to facilitate their future Chinese pronunciation teaching.

Specifically, the research addressed on the following foci:

- 1) The strengths and limitations of the current widely used textbook, *IC*, in teaching pronunciation;
- 2) The teaching pedagogy adapted by instructors in their pronunciation teaching;
- 3) Teaching challenges instructors encounter and learning difficulties instructors perceive students may experience.

By investigating the current situation of Chinese language education in Canada and analyzing the textbooks widely used in Chinese courses at Canadian universities, this study hopes to explore the challenges faced by Canadian teachers working in a multicultural environment, to evaluate the design of the textbook, and to inform pronunciation and classroom teaching in the multicultural context in Canada.

Chapter Three

Methods

3.1 Research Design

The Chinese language teaching in Canada has its unique features. Mandarin teaching originated from British Columbia, with nearly fifty years of history since the first Chinese language school was founded. However, it has only been about 20 years since Mandarin was admitted by the Ministry of Education in British Columbia as a course. As the *Language Education Policy* (Government of British Columbia, 2004) states, the purpose of offering a second language course is to help students recognize the essential status of other spoken languages in Canada and to enable them to communicate by using their languages. Moreover, as a country of immigrants, the backgrounds of learners and their motivation for learning Chinese are naturally complex. Further, the availability of a wide range of textbooks added to the challenges in Chinese language teaching. This study evaluates Mandarin pronunciation teaching at the beginner level in Canada through questionnaires, interviews and the evaluation of a widely used textbook—*Integrated Chinese (IC)*.

The present study involved several data collection methods to provide an overview of Canada's current Mandarin pronunciation teaching. After surveying the usage of textbooks in Canada, this research analyzed *IC* and evaluated its design and theoretical basis. The research also explored the instructional practices in teaching pronunciation and the challenges teachers faced in teaching, using questionnaires and interviews. Specifically, this research addressed the following questions:

1) *Evaluation of a Textbook*: What are the strengths and limitations of the current widely used textbook (*IC*) in teaching pronunciation? How can the limitation be addressed?

2) *Teachers' Instructional Practices*: How do the two teachers teach pronunciation? What pedagogies are adopted by teachers?

3) *Teaching and Learning Challenges*: What challenges do teachers encounter in pronunciation teaching? What learning difficulties do instructors perceive students experience in Mandarin learning at the beginner level?

3.2 Textbook Evaluation

According to the National TCSL Database data, using integrated textbooks (cultivating the integrated skills of listening, reading, writing, and speaking) is the teaching trend in Canada.

Integrated textbooks occupy 79% of total textbook adoption, while textbooks for speaking and reading account for 9% and 12%, respectively.

3.2.1 Integrated Chinese (4th Edition, Volume 1)

As Figure 10 indicated, the popularity of *IC* in Canada is evident. *IC* is not only an integrated textbook, but is also widely used as teaching material in North America. It was developed by professors Yuehua Liu and Tao-chung Yao (2016). The first edition came out in 1997, and the fourth edition was published in 2016. The latest edition includes four volumes, ranging from the beginner to the advanced-intermediate level.

IC aims to cover the materials used from beginner to advanced-intermediate Chinese language learning in universities or colleges. These four volumes are divided into two learning phases -- volumes one and two are designed for the novice level, and volumes three and four are for the intermediate level. Each level consists of 20 lessons, and volume one includes ten lessons, and volume two covers the remaining ten lessons.

The theoretical basis of its design is based on the 21st Century Skill Map for the World Language of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (1999). The map focuses on completing the teaching goals in the five areas: communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities (i.e., the five Cs). In addition, to meet the students' individual learning needs, the 4th edition of *IC* offers two versions of Chinese characters -- simplified Chinese and traditional Chinese. Students can focus on one form in the novice stage and then acquire the other one at the higher level after becoming familiar with the Chinese language.

3.2.2 Textbook Evaluation Criteria

Due to the popularity of Chinese learning globally, the demand for Chinese teaching materials has also increased. Many types of Chinese language teaching materials have been developed, and the quantity of textbooks has also increased; thus, teachers have been afforded more freedom in choosing textbooks. However, the development of textbooks gave rise to a primary concern to communities of Chinese language teaching. What kind of textbook is “good”? How should a textbook be evaluated? To provide reference criteria for overseas Chinese textbook writers, Xu

(2005) spent two years surveying 300 students and 150 teachers in the U.S. and Canada by collecting their opinions to develop a set of multidimensional criteria for evaluating teaching materials. Xu and Feng (2005) analyzed the participants' answers, summarized the textbook evaluation categories, and proposed an evaluation system.

This evaluation tool contains ten categories: 1) content, 2) language, 3) culture, 4) communication, 5) curriculum, 6) evaluation, 7) organization, 8) format, 9) research, and 10) supplementary. Each category also has several criteria, with a total of 80 criteria. The evaluation criteria used in this study adapted nine categories and twenty criteria from Xu and Feng's work (2005), as presented in Table 3:

Table 3

Chinese Text Evaluation Criteria

Category	Criteria	Explanation
1.Communication	<i>Communicative competence</i>	Grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980)
2.Curriculum	<i>Detailed outcomes in the syllabus</i>	The expected learning outcomes are clearly stated
	<i>Curriculum fit</i>	Content, activities, and resources in the textbook help users to achieve the stated learning objectives
3.Supplementary Components	<i>Workbook</i>	The provision of additional practices for users
	<i>Technological components</i>	Charts, maps, videos, audios and apps
4.Evaluation	<i>Standardized tests</i>	Instruments for assessing learning outcomes
	<i>Learners' self-evaluation</i>	Instruments for learners to self-assess their learning
5.Format	<i>Size, font, and layout</i>	The size, font, and layout of the textbook are accessible to users
	<i>Diagrams, graphics, and illustrations</i>	Visual representations
	<i>Sequencing</i>	Principles for sequencing the learning content
6.Organization	<i>Well organized outline</i>	The provision of outlines that are clean and well organized
	<i>Introduction and summaries</i>	Sections for providing introductions clearing objectives and summaries

Category	Criteria	Explanation
	<i>Study guidelines</i>	The provision of guidelines for learning
7.Culture Section	<i>Culture awareness</i>	Culture of content integrated for enhancing understanding
8.Content	<i>Real-life topics</i>	Activities relating to real-life experiences
	<i>Authenticity</i>	Authenticity in the materials and tasks
9.Language	<i>Practice</i>	Practice activities for developing user's language skills
	<i>Pronunciation</i>	Tasks or content for achieving accuracy in pronunciation

3.3 Participants

In addition to textbook evaluation, the study also involved two Chinese language teachers at a university in Canada. Derived from questions 1-5 in the questionnaire, which elicited the backgrounds of the instructors, Table 4 presents the profiles of the instructors, Anna and Jane (pseudo names).

Table 4

Instructors Profile

Question Number	Question Purpose	Anna	Jane
1	Years of teaching	5+ years	1-3 years
2	Degree holder	Master	Doctoral
3	Major	Asian Studies (MA)	Linguistics (PhD) Applied Linguistics (MA)
4	Current research interests	Modern Chinese History	Teaching Chinese as an Additional Language, Translation studies, Chinese linguistics, Applied Linguistics, Second Language Acquisition
5	Accuracy of Mandarin pronunciation (self-assessment)	Basically correct	Accurate

According to the answers to the questionnaire, both Anna and Jane are proficient in Chinese and English. They have relevant Mandarin teaching experience in Canada, especially at the beginner level. Although Jane has fewer years of teaching experience in Canada, she has a higher degree in relevant field. They both self-reported having a standard pronunciation in Mandarin.

Both participants were informed of the research purpose, procedures, and rights prior to obtaining their consent to participate in this study. It was made clear to the participants that participation was voluntary, and they had the right to withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. Furthermore, the participants were informed that the data would not be used if they withdrew from the study.

In order to ensure confidentiality, the data gathered from the questionnaire and the interview sessions were stored safely in the researcher's password-protected computer. The procedures used in the study followed the institutional ethical guidelines (protocol number 19-0197).

3.4 Data Collection and Analysis

The data collection procedures followed three steps. First, after the analysis of *IC*, a set of questions related to pronunciation teaching was developed for the questionnaire. Second, two participants were asked to fill out the questionnaire to elicit their views on teaching Mandarin pronunciation. Third, the participating teachers were interviewed in order to give insights into their experiences of teaching Chinese pronunciation.

3.4.1 Data Collection and Analysis of IC

Based on the result of Figure 10 and the focus on beginner-level pronunciation teaching, this study selected the 4th edition of *IC* Volume 1 as the focus of the analysis.

The analysis of *IC* aimed to offer a critical understanding of *IC* content and design. In order to analyze the content, the study examined the *IC*'s format, theoretical basis, and the lessons' theme distribution. As the research focus was on the pronunciation, the study calculated the frequency of Chinese initials and finals in *IC*'s vocabulary, compared them with the frequency in the *First-level Chinese Character List* (Hereafter FCCL) (Hanban/Confucius Institute Headquarters, 2010), and finally summarized the types of pronunciation practice.

3.4.2 Data Collection and Analysis of Questionnaire

The questionnaire adapted the survey questions from Chen (2017), a study about Chinese Phonetic teaching in Thailand, to reflect the context of the study concerning the teaching of Chinese pronunciation in Canada.

The questionnaire in this study consists of 33 questions (see Appendix A). The design structure could be divided into three parts. Part 1 (questions 1-5) elicited responses about the participants' backgrounds; Part 2 (questions 6-21) gathered the information about pronunciation teaching and teaching materials; Part 3 (questions 22-33) examined teachers' teaching satisfaction level based on a five-point Likert Scale, where one point indicated "strongly disagree," and five points was "strongly agree."

Overall, the questionnaire covered five areas: personal background, Mandarin pronunciation teaching challenges and practices, teaching materials, and teachers' self-evaluation of pronunciation teaching. The categories of the whole thirty-three questions are as follows:

- Background information: questions 1-5
- Teaching challenges: questions 6-14
- Teaching practices: questions 15- 19
- Information about teaching materials currently in use: questions 20 and 21
- Self-evaluation of pronunciation teaching: questions 22- 33

The original questionnaire (in Chinese) was peer-reviewed twice to ensure its feasibility before being translated into English. The final version of the questionnaire was sent to the participants by email. The participants completed the questionnaire in two days and returned their answers by email. After receiving the completed questionnaire, the researcher developed the interview questions based on the participants' responses.

For analyzing the questionnaire results, responses to questions 6-21 results were presented to show participating instructors' viewpoints on teaching Chinese pronunciation. The results of

questions 22-33 were summarized, and the Likert Scale responses were calculated and presented to show two teachers' satisfaction levels.

3.4.3 Data Collection and Analysis of Interviews

The interview questions (see Appendix B) were also reviewed before they were implemented. The interviews were conducted via Zoom or face-to-face. Both interviews were conducted in Chinese by the researcher and lasted approximately three hours in total. Each interview was voice recorded and transcribed fully in NVivo Version 11 for coding analysis.

For coding the qualitative data, this study used Content Analysis (Harwood & Garry 2003; Neundorf, 2002) to examine the content and design of *IC*. Content Analysis is a data-coding method used to examine social phenomena across numerous fields, such as communication, journalism, sociology, and psychology (Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). NVivo Version 11 (QSR, 2017) was used to code the data from the interviews. NVivo is a qualitative data analysis software used widely in government, academic, medical, and business research. Data coding followed the three-step coding process in Huang (2019):

(1) Open coding: Before the open coding stage, the transcripts of the interviews were reread and notes taken to obtain worthy information. After the pre-coding phase, NVivo 11 was used to conduct open coding of meaningful passages. The results of the open coding were named first-level codes, and they were coded close to the original expression of the teachers.

(2) Developing themes: In this phase, NVivo 11 was used to organize the first-level codes according to common categories. These categories, which contained identified coherent first-

level codes, were named sub-themes.

(3) Post-coding phase: During the post-coding phase, NVivo 11 was used to support the gathering of the salient sub-themes and the development of the major themes emerging from the data. These themes were named major themes.

To ensure the intercoder validity and reliability, the data coding content went through the researcher's committee members, and a part of the coding themes was listed in the Appendix D for reference.

This chapter described the research design and data collection methods and procedures, and data analysis in order to address the research question.

Chapter Four

Findings and Discussion

This chapter analyzes data from *IC* and data from teachers. In Section 4.1, the study first introduces *IC*'s holistic design, including the language framework referenced and the curriculum design to provide a general understanding of *IC*. Then a lesson is selected to analyze the layout design of the textbook and the extensive readings in the cultures section. This analysis is followed by a summary of the pronunciation practices' type in *IC* and compares the distribution of the initials and finals in *IC* and First-level Chinese Characters List.

As for the collected data from teachers, the questionnaire data were analyzed and presented in tables. The interviews data were coded and analyzed by NVivo 11, and the pronunciation teaching was analyzed according to the following three stages of instruction: pre-teaching, while teaching, and post-teaching to understand teachers' teaching experiences.

4.1 Analysis and Findings of *IC*

The current study analyzed the design and theoretical basis of *IC* with the focus of phonetic teaching based on the nine categories and 20 criteria (Table 3) from Xu and Feng's work (2005).

4.1.1 The Curriculum, Supplementary Components, and Evaluation of IC

The textbook is an integral part of the teaching activities as it supports the achievement of the teaching goals and determines learners' learning methods and range (Zhai, 2010). The following four criteria in Table 3 were evaluated: (a) communication; (b) curriculum; (c) supplementary components; and (d) evaluation. in order to provide an overview of *IC*'s design.

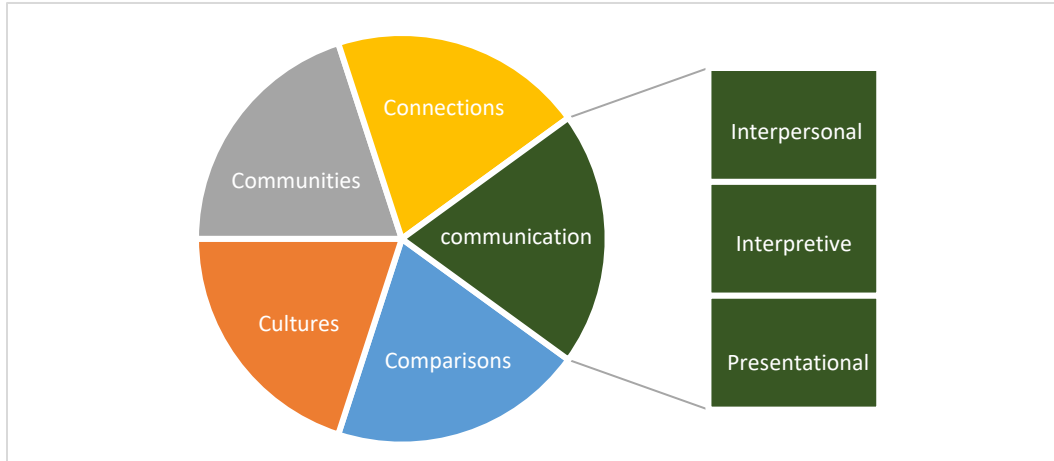
4.1.1.1 Communication: The alignment between *IC* and ACTFL’s 5Cs. The theoretical basis of a textbook determines its approach (Sheng, 2014). *IC*’s design was based on the five Cs standards in the 4th edition (2016) to meet the globalization trends and achieve the language learning goals of communicative competence.

As the *21st century skill map*²² (Partnership for 21st Century Skills [P21], 2011) reported, Americans have become aware of their lack of language capabilities in a globalization context. To help students gain access to the world, the P21 (2011) states that the nation’s world language education should provide various classes to improve students’ interactive ability with non-English speakers. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) sets the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* first in 1999. The standards have laid out the five goals of language learning: Comparisons, Communication, Cultures, Communities, and Connections, also known as the “five Cs” principles. As Figure 12 presents, communication has been further divided into interpersonal, interpretive, and presentation modes related to conveying and receiving information.

²² <https://www.actfl.org/search/node/P21> world language published in 2011

Figure 12

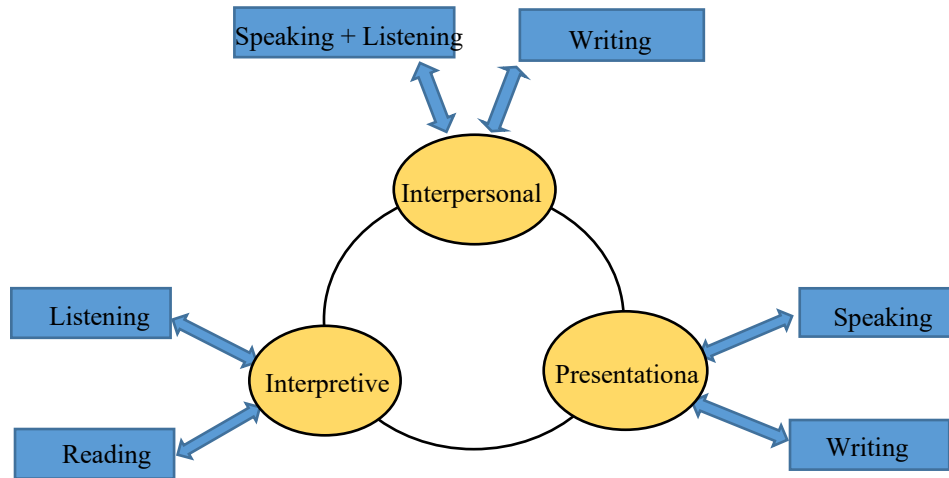
Communication, Comparisons, Cultures, Communities, and Connections (5 Cs)



Note. From *Five Cs: “Standards for foreign language learning in the 21st century,”* by American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 1999 (https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/apc/StandardsforFLLexecsumm_rev.pdf).

Figure 13

The Relationship of Three Modes and Four Language Skills



Note. From “Alignment of the World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages with the Common Core

State Standards,” by the American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2016

(<https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/resources/CCWRSbranded%20-%20CCSS%20and%20WRSLL%20Alignment%20-%20Aug%202016%20updated.pdf>). In the public domain.

Figure 13 demonstrates the relationship between the four language skills and the three modes. Compared with the *ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners* (2012), the four language skills (i.e., listening, speaking, reading and writing) are captured in the communication part and connected with these three communication modes (ACTFL, 2016). The language activities in *IC* have been consulted and compiled based on three modes to satisfy the globalization trends and achieve the language learning goals of communicative competencies.

4.1.1.2 Curriculum: The Sample Syllabus in IC. A syllabus could be seen as a contract

that binds teaching and learning, so a well-organized syllabus can improve the teaching quality and learning outcomes (Liu, Li, et al., 2014).

Teachers' handbook of *IC* provides a sample syllabus for teachers' reference. It lists the detailed goals and objectives that students should achieve in listening, speaking, reading, and writing after completing the course. Moreover, the curriculum in *IC* fits teaching expectation well, as its syllabus has a highly correlation with teaching objectives, clearly states students' learning requirements, and formulates the grades evaluation of students' learning performance.

Because the *IC* is published in the United States, its syllabus fits most of teaching contexts in North America. According to a study by Zang (2017), most American universities adopt a two-semester system in teaching, and each semester lasts 16 weeks. Since most American universities set the Chinese language courses as elective courses, the courses usually have 2 to 5 instructional hours per week, with 30 to 70 instructional hours per semester. So, the Basics part and ten lessons could be accomplished in a 15-week semester (five weekdays per week and each weekday have one instructional hour) as the *IC* syllabus suggested. Within the institutional context where this research was conducted, there are 11 to 12 instructional weeks during the Fall and Spring terms. Each week has a Chinese course for three weekdays, and each weekday contains two instructional hours. It seems that the suggested schedule in *IC* is tight, especially when the Chinese language courses are typically elective.

Although the reference teaching schedule in *IC* teachers' handbook is slightly intensive, the syllabus in *IC* teacher's handbook is a good roadmap for teachers to follow, as it clearly outlined the teaching objectives and learning outcomes.

4.1.1.3 Supplementary Components and Evaluation. As per evaluation criteria of Xu (2005), the supplementary components and evaluation are also critical parts of the teaching material.

The 4th edition *IC* has abundant supporting materials: abundance supplementary resources and tests, which are both helpful to teachers to administer tests and students' self-evaluation. In *IC*'s series, in addition to the textbook, there is also a workbook, a character workbook, audios, videos and teacher's resources. Further *IC* also provides an App - ChengTsui Web App. The App not only offers a digital textbook but also includes many exercises for students.

4.1.2 The Design of IC: Format, Organization and Culture Section

This section covers three criteria in evaluating the design of *IC*: format, organization, and culture (Table 3), through the analysis of a selective lesson's teaching procedures.

4.1.2.1 Format: Storytelling Text and Magazine-like Style. The 4th edition of *IC* uses 18k paper (with font size 18) to present the language content and offers simplified and traditional character versions in volumes one and two. In order to offer space for illustrations, each page in *IC* has a loosen layout which provides a comfortable reading experience. In order to enhance the user friendliness and learner engagement, the entire textbook is colour printed and includes a glossary index with both simplified and traditional characters for learners to consult.

Furthermore, there are around 25 pages in one lesson so students could accumulate pages so that students could feel a sense of accomplishment once they have finished.

The background of the most dialogues in *IC* has been set in the United States, and the topics

are centred around students' daily life. There are six main characters in *IC*, and the topics are connected by their stories. All the stories and dialogues in the texts happened among these six main characters, so these familiar narratives and authentic illustrations are more engaging to Canadian students.

4.1.2.2 Organization: One Lesson in *IC*. The textbook layout could refer to the order of the teaching content in a textbook or a teaching unit (Cui, 2010). A textbook with well-organized lessons can provide a good guidance to teachers, as it not only can potentially affect the teaching sequence of a language content but can also influence the model. In *IC* volume 1, for example, the core part of every class could be viewed as two similar learning loops as illustrated in Figure 14.

Figure 14

The Structure of Each Lesson.

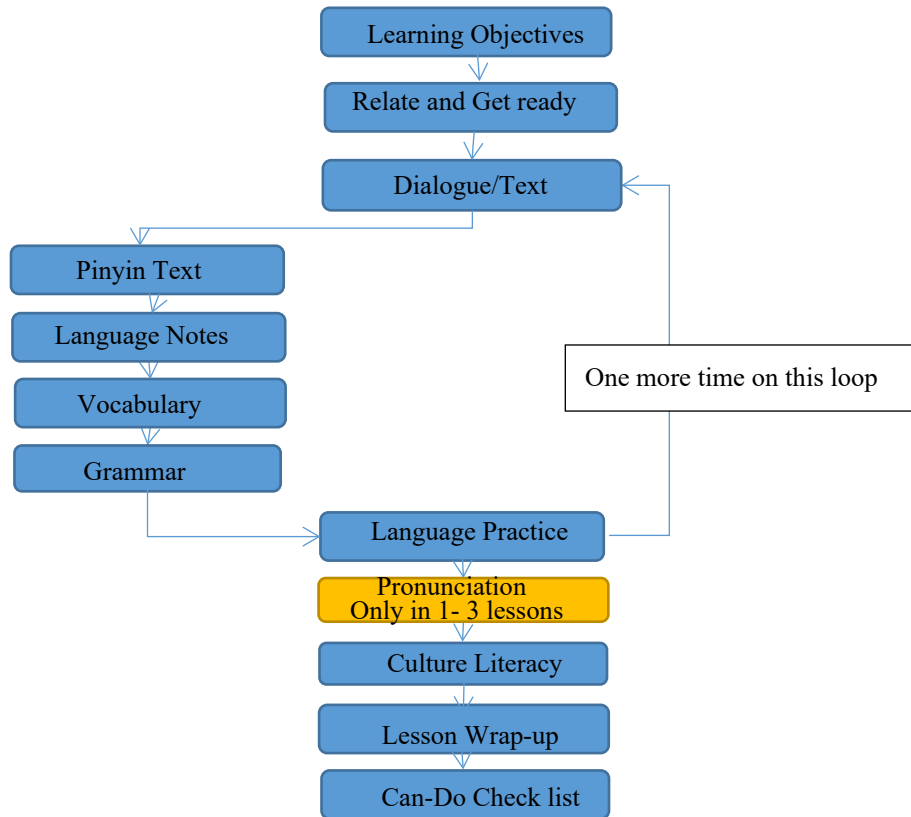


Figure 14 shows that the main learning content involves the two dialogues or texts and the practices or language points centred around them. As *IC* has adopted the learner-centred teaching approach, it includes several sections to assist students learning. The lessons typically start with two introduction sections: *Learning Objectives* and *Relate & Get Ready*. The *Learning Objectives* list the language communication requirements that students need to meet, and the questions in the *Relate and Get Ready* section facilitate students' prediction of the learning content. After each lesson, there is a summary section called *Lesson Wrap-up*, which aims to help students review the lesson's content, consolidate their Chinese knowledge, and practice

their communicate skills learned in the lesson. In the end, there is a self-evaluation form, titled the “*Can-Do List*” named as Can-Do List. This form facilitates students to self-evaluate their learning outcomes.

In *IC*, there are ten lessons, and each lesson contains two texts with a total of 20 texts. There are 16 texts in the form of a dialogue; these dialogues account for 80% of the entire learning textbook. The themes of these dialogues have a close connection to students’ daily life. The rest of the texts include a narrative, a diary, a letter and an email, which only account for 20%. The dialogues can stimulate students’ desire to express and can increase language acquisition by utilizing the question-and-response format of dialogues (Wu, 2011).

IC emphasizes Chinese characters in Chinese language learning by putting the character text first and the Pinyin text later as a pronunciation assistant. As its learning text is separated into Chinese characters and Pinyin form, it could also reduce the students’ dependence on Pinyin. Before every text, there is a narrative of a few sentences to offer the context of the dialogue. From Lesson one to Lesson five, the narrative is in English, but starting Lesson six, Chinese characters are used to describe the background information.

It is worth noting that Lessons one to three have an extra section named *Pronunciation*. This additional section is connected with former section, *Basics*, a bridge that enables students to build on what they have learned. to transition from their source language to the target language. Overall, the proportion of Pinyin content in *IC* is gradually decreasing.

4.1.2.3 Culture Section. In second language teaching, language is regarded as the carrier of culture because the generally aims to cultivate the ability of intercultural communication

(Guerrera, 2014). As culture is closely linked to language teaching, the Five Cs (ACTFL, 1999) standards describe the goals of cultures cultivation as gaining the knowledge and understanding the perspectives of Chinese-as-a-first-language-speakers. In *IC*, there is a custom and lifestyle cultural section named Culture Literacy; it has blended language learning with culture knowledge— a window into Chinese culture.

The *Culture Literacy* section is written in English, and each cultural section has a close relationship with the topic of each lesson. Most topics are common knowledge of Chinese culture (family names, kinship terms, family structure, age, etc). Culture Literacy is also printed in colour pages and uses real photos to present the learning information. With reference to the Five Cs (1999), the goal of Comparisons, the 4th edition *IC* has added the “Compare & Contrast” part in the *Culture* section. The “Compare & Contrast” part contains two critical thinking questions; the section facilitates students’ reflection on their cultures and understanding the Chinese way of thinking. In addition to the English introduction to the Chinese culture, some relevant vocabulary is translated into Chinese as supplementary knowledge. These features could potentially arouse students’ learning interests and engage their learning of the Chinese language.

4.1.3 The Content of IC: Real-life Topics and Authenticity

The textbook’s content is seen as applying language materials in teaching, and these materials could contain different topics (Sheng, 2014). As the language topics reflect the learning content, it is conducive for teachers to arrange language teaching under a specific language scene (Su et al., 2011). Referring to the table textbook evaluation criteria (Table 3), the real-world content

and authenticity are included in the content category. Thus, this subsection presents the quantitative analysis of *IC*'s topics and evaluates the arrangement of the authentic materials of the *IC*.

4.1.3.1 Real-life Topics: Topics Categories in *IC*. A lesson topic could be seen as a blueprint of the learning content. These topics aim to create a language scenario centred on specific teaching objectives and requirements so that the language points and skills could be integrated into the learning process. (Su et al., 2011).

The *International Curriculum for Chinese Language Education* (China national Chinese international promotion leading group [CNCIPLG], 2008) presents suggestions for Chinese teaching topics and content. It lists 22 topics, including person, emotion, daily life, family, festival, travel, school life, education, technology, society, nature, globalization, and environment, covering almost all Chinese daily conversations.

Su (2011) reviewed the suggested topic categories in the *International Curriculum for Chinese Language Education* (CNCIPLG, 2008), and reorganized the selected topics for Chinese language teaching and learning. He summarized the five main categories for the Chinese language textbook: person, life, society, study and work, and world.

In *IC*, there are ten lessons, and each lesson contains two texts with the same topic. Based on Su's (2011) five topic categories, the classification of *IC* topics is presented below (Figure 15):

Figure 15

The Number of Topic Categories in IC Vol.1



The result shows that topics in *IC* are broad, and the topic categories related to life-experience are well-distributed except for the missing “World” category. The “Society” category is a more prevalent theme in *IC*, which occupies nearly half of the lesson. The low language proficiency level of learners could explain why life-related topics have a high number. Since adult second language learners have accumulated much social experience in their first language, it is easier for them to start learning with typical social interactions (e.g., invitations and making appointments)—topics that are close to students’ real-life, and arouse their desire to express and share using the target language. Comparatively, the World topics are more suitable for intermediate level as it often talks about more critical issues. By learning these life-related topics, students could have more chances to engage in speaking practices and develop communicative

abilities. The topics included in *IC* may help students cope with various real-life scenarios they may encounter in life.

4.1.3.2 Authenticity: Authentic Materials and Activities. As covered in the method section, authenticity involves two aspects, the materials and the tasks. According to various researchers, authentic materials involve materials intended to fulfill the communicative purpose in the target language community (e.g., Cañado & Esteban, 2005; Crossley et al., 2007). During the language learning process, the communicative approach aims to create learning opportunities for using authentic materials to practice. The authentic language-learning tasks facilitate students' involvement in real-life communication as tasks "can act as a link between CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) and second language acquisition (SLA) by encouraging a use-to-learn approach to language learning" (Esfandiari & Gawhary, 2019, p. 37).

Aiming to bringing students into an immersion environment, *IC* pays attention to the choice of pictures and language materials. Unlike the 3rd edition, the new edition has changed the illustrations from comics into real photos. Next to the dialogue in each lesson, there is an icon of a video camera, which indicates that the dialogue has a video to present the conversation in a scenario. Compared with the 3rd edition of *IC*, the 4th edition presents the language contents with more visuals beyond audio files. Further, the 4th edition has added two new sections: "Get Real with Chinese" and "Chinese Chat," as a mini-section of real-world communication to provide an authentic Chinese context, which aims to increasing students' learning interests and developing their communication abilities in real lives. Most non-heritage, beginner-level Chinese learners have no background in Chinese cultures. By providing samples of real-world content, *Get Real*

with *Chinese* section connected the language learning content with students' real-world experience, reducing students' unfamiliarity about Chinese culture, and increasing their learning interests (Johnson, 2017). The communication scenarios, where language contents are presented, can convey an authentic context for learning the Chinese language and culture. For example, the graphic design of the Chinese Chat section adopts the WeChat (a popular social media among Chinese) interface; it also informs students of the language used by the younger Chinese generation.

The dialogue context in *IC* is set in America, and all the six main characters in *IC* have the relationship with America society. So the most of content are talking about America, for example: “你喜欢吃中国菜还是美国菜? (Do you like Chinese dishes or American dishes?)” (Liu, Yao, et al., 2016, p. 71). Another thing that teaching materials can be easily ignored is the spelling style in Canada. Canadian English spelling combines the British and American English spelling, so words ending in an unstressed “-our” in Canadian spelling are usually spelled without “u” in American English. The spelling in *IC* is adopted the American spelling, for example: 颜色 use the “color” to explain the meaning (Liu, Yao, et al., 2016, p. 236). Although this the textbook is broadly used in Canada, the content pays little attention on Canada content.

4.1.4 Analysis of Language Part of IC: Pronunciation and Practices

As per the criteria (i.e., pronunciation and practice) of the Language category (Table 3), this section discusses the pronunciation teaching of *Basics* section in *IC*. It summarizes the features of the pronunciation content and the types of the pronunciation exercises in *IC*. In addition, this section also calculates the distribution of the initials and finals in the *IC Vocabulary* section.

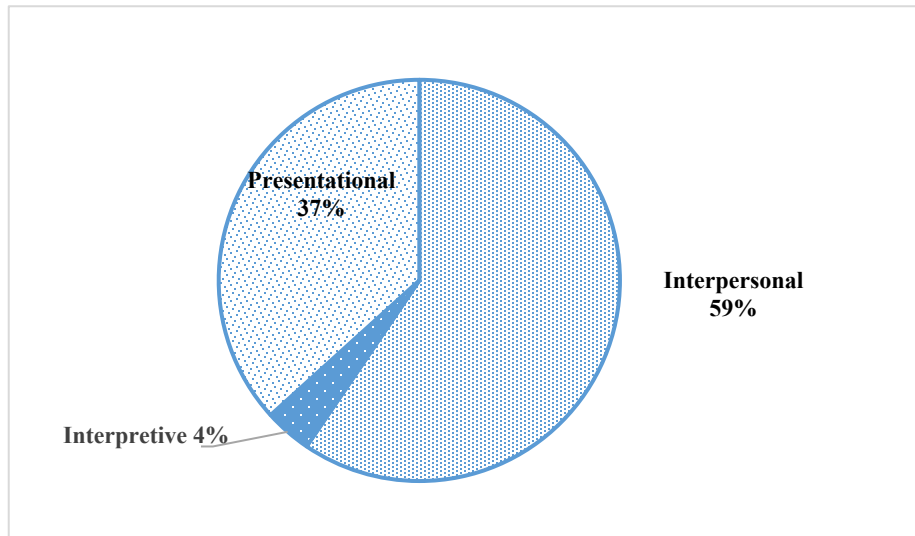
Further, it compares the distribution of the initials and finals with the *First-level Chinese Character List (FCCL)* (Hanban/Confucius Institute Headquarters, 2010) to consider the alignment between Pinyin teaching in *IC* and in FCCL.

4.1.4.1 Practice: The Types of Pronunciation Practice in *IC*. Practice is a significant part of textbooks. It could provide students with an opportunity to review the content and help students apply linguistic knowledge of language in practical communication (Ding, 2017). In addition to the practice section, titled *Language Practice*, in the textbook, the workbook also includes ample practice to develop learners' integrated language skills. Generally, the practice involves three modes of practices—i.e., interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational (P21, 2011). In the *Language Practice* section of *IC*, the three communication modes were labelled on every subheading to classify the goals for the practice. By looking up the modes labeled in *IC*, it is counted that there are 47 pages labelled as the interpersonal modes, which is more than half of the entire practice component. As Figure 21 shows, the presentational practice is the second highest mode (37%). The interpretive mode represents as little as 4%.

Figure 16

The Percentages of the Three Modes (ACTFL World-Readiness Standards) in the IC's

Language Practice Section



In *IC's Vol. 1*, the interpersonal mode dominates the practice modes as volume one is designed for students with zero knowledge of Chinese. Given the fact that the Chinese characters are unfamiliar to students at the beginner level, the three modes in the *Language Practice* section in *IC* facilitate teachers in giving instructions as the descriptions of the exercises are in English. So, teachers can save time explaining the practices and pay more attention to students' communicative performance. Adhering to the learner-centred educational principles, most practice tasks in *IC* aim to provide real communication scenarios for students. In these tasks, students are often required to work in pairs or interview their classmates for task completion. For example, Lesson two requires students to discuss their families using family photos. The task requires students to engage in question-and-answer practice with their partners to convey and

receive information. This process simulates dialogues in real life and aims to reduce students' pressure when practicing the target language.

Moreover, there is section in the textbook called *Pronunciation*, which exists only in the first three lessons. This section before the *Culture Literacy* section lists a few groups of initials, finals, and tones for students to practice their pronunciation with audio clips.

4.1.4.2 Pronunciation: The Analysis of the Pronunciation Section (Basic). In the 4th edition of *IC*, there is an extra lesson named *Basics* before ten main lessons. The lesson takes up 19 pages and is divided into four sections:

- 1) Mandarin and Dialects;
- 2) Syllabic Structure, Pinyin, and Pronunciation;
- 3) Writing System; and
- 4) Important Grammatical Features.

These sections use English to introduce the features of Mandarin and offer students a fundamental knowledge and general understanding of Mandarin. The *Mandarin and Dialects* section lays out the categories of Chinese dialects and explains different names of Mandarin. The *Syllabic Structure, Pinyin, and Pronunciation* section explains the concept of Pinyin and the pronunciation of initials, simple finals and compound finals in detail. The section also introduces Mandarin tones and the spelling rules of Pinyin. The *Writing System* section introduces the basic knowledge of Chinese characters, including essential radicals and character structures. The *Important Grammatical Features* section compares the Chinese sentence structures with the English ones, aiming to help students notice the grammatical similarities and differences

between the two languages. In summary, the *Basics* lesson has laid a solid foundation in Pinyin for students to help them enter the later stages of Mandarin learning.

4.1.4.3 Pronunciation: The Features of Pronunciation in *IC*. Pinyin is an intensive component in the *Basics* lesson. By taking up eleven pages to explain Pinyin, *IC* provides students an overview of Pinyin and introduces fundamental pronunciation rules of Mandarin. In order to help learners master Pinyin, *IC* uses a contrastive method to teach pronunciation. For example, it contrasts Pinyin d[t] sound with the “t” sound in an English word such as in “stand.” By comparing the Pinyin pronunciation with a similar sound in English, *IC* hopes to reduce the difficulty in pronunciation learning.

4.1.4.4 Pronunciation: The Analysis of the Initials and Finals in *IC Vocabulary* section. The lexical profile (e.g., lexical richness, size, and diversity) of a learner can reflect their language ability (Wu, 2011). In 2010, the *Graded Chinese Syllables, Characters and Words for the Application of Teaching Chinese to the Speakers of Other Languages* (GCSCW for ATCSOL, or GCSCW in short) graded the learning difficulty of Chinese syllables, characters, and words as First-level (beginner-level), Second-level (immediate level) and Third-level (advanced level). The *First-level Chinese Characters List* (FCCL) contains 900 most commonly used syllables in Chinese daily life, while the vocabulary of *IC Vol.1* contains 816 syllables. The syllables in *IC's Vol. 1* and *FCCL* are separated as the initials and finals, and then the initials and finals are calculated and compared. For example, the occurrences of 21 initials and 36 finals in *IC Vol. 1* are counted first; then the percentage of their occurrences in proportion to the total number of syllables for each initial and final is calculated.

Figure 17

The Percentages of 21 Initials in FCCL and IC Vol.1 (Vocabulary Section)

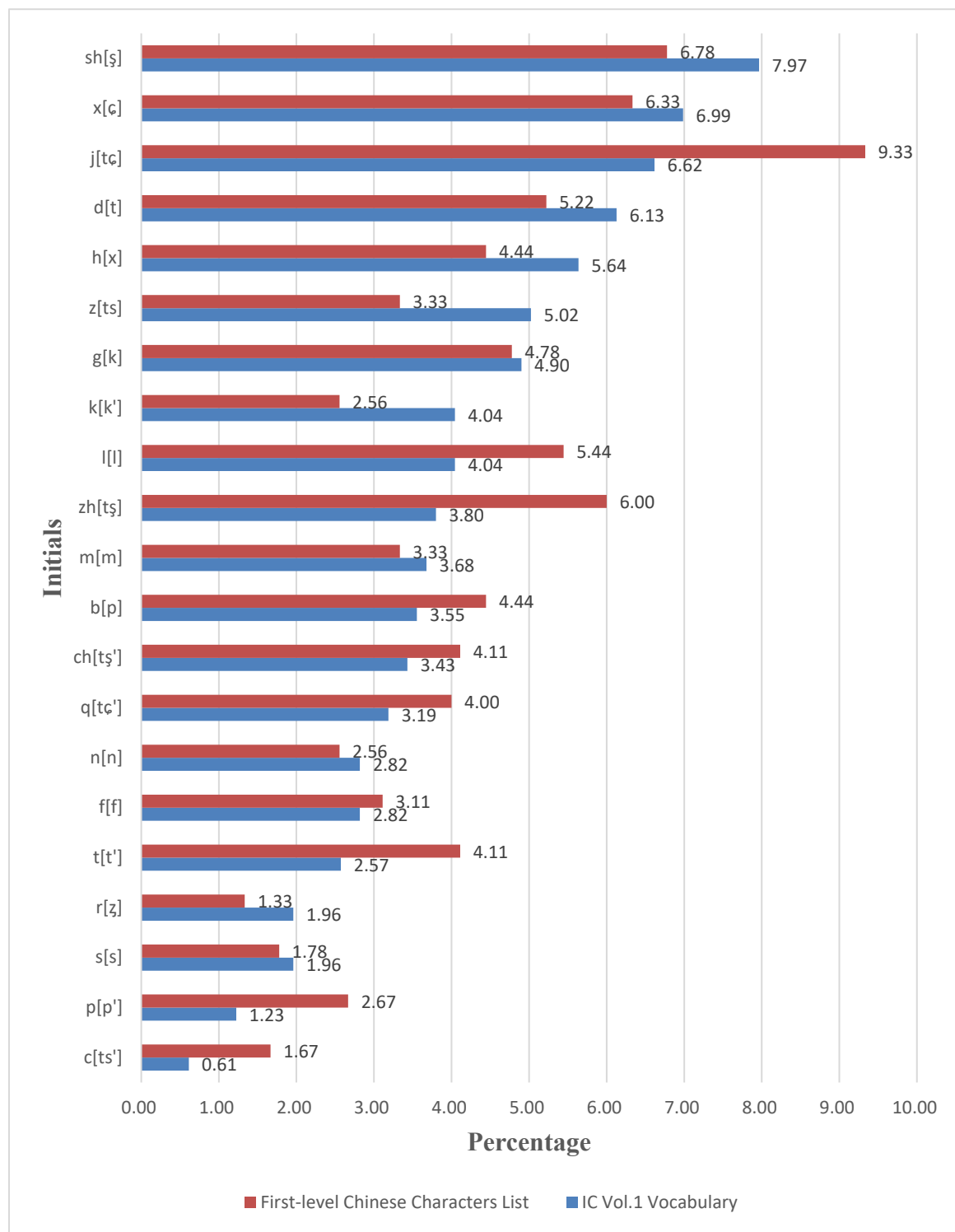


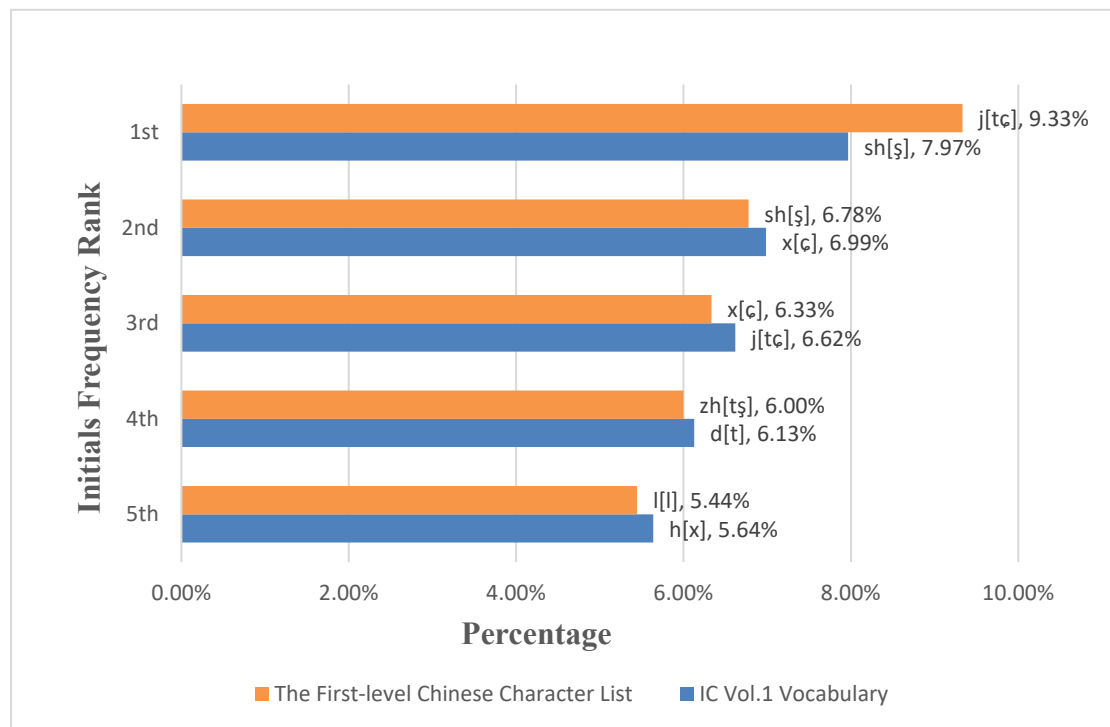
Figure 17 shows the percentages of 21 initials' occurrences in proportion to the total number

of syllables in *FCCL* and *IC* Vol.1. Almost all percentages are over 1.23%, which means that the initials have appeared more than ten times in *FCCL* or *IC* Vol.1, except for the initial c[ts'], which only appears five times.

To compare the distribution of initials in *FCCL* and *IC*'s *Vocabulary* section, the top-five most frequently used initials of the two materials are selected for comparison. Figure 18 shows that all percentages are above 5%, but there are also differences. In *FCCL*, j[tɕ] is the most frequently used (9%), while j[tɕ] takes up 7%, ranking the third in *IC*. The initial sh[ʃ] ranks the second in *FCCL* but the first in *IC*. The initial x[ɕ] frequency is calculated at 6.5%, ranking second and third in *IC* and *FCCL*, respectively.

Figure 18

Top-5 Initials in FCCL and IC Vol.1 (Vocabulary Section)



The initials of zh[tʂ] and l[l] occupy the fourth and fifth places in *FCCL*. However, these two initials, along with d[t] and h[x], do not appear in *IC*.

According to Schmitt (2007), “even a rich program of vocabulary instruction can require seven or more encounters with a word” (p. 749), if learners want to remember a word. For both materials, almost all initials appear more than seven times, except c[tsʰ] in *IC*, which only appears five times.

Figure 19 presents the percentages of finals in both of *FCCL* and *IC*, using the same method as that of calculating initials.

Figure 19

The Percentages of 36 Finals in FCCL and IC Vol.1 (Vocabulary Section)

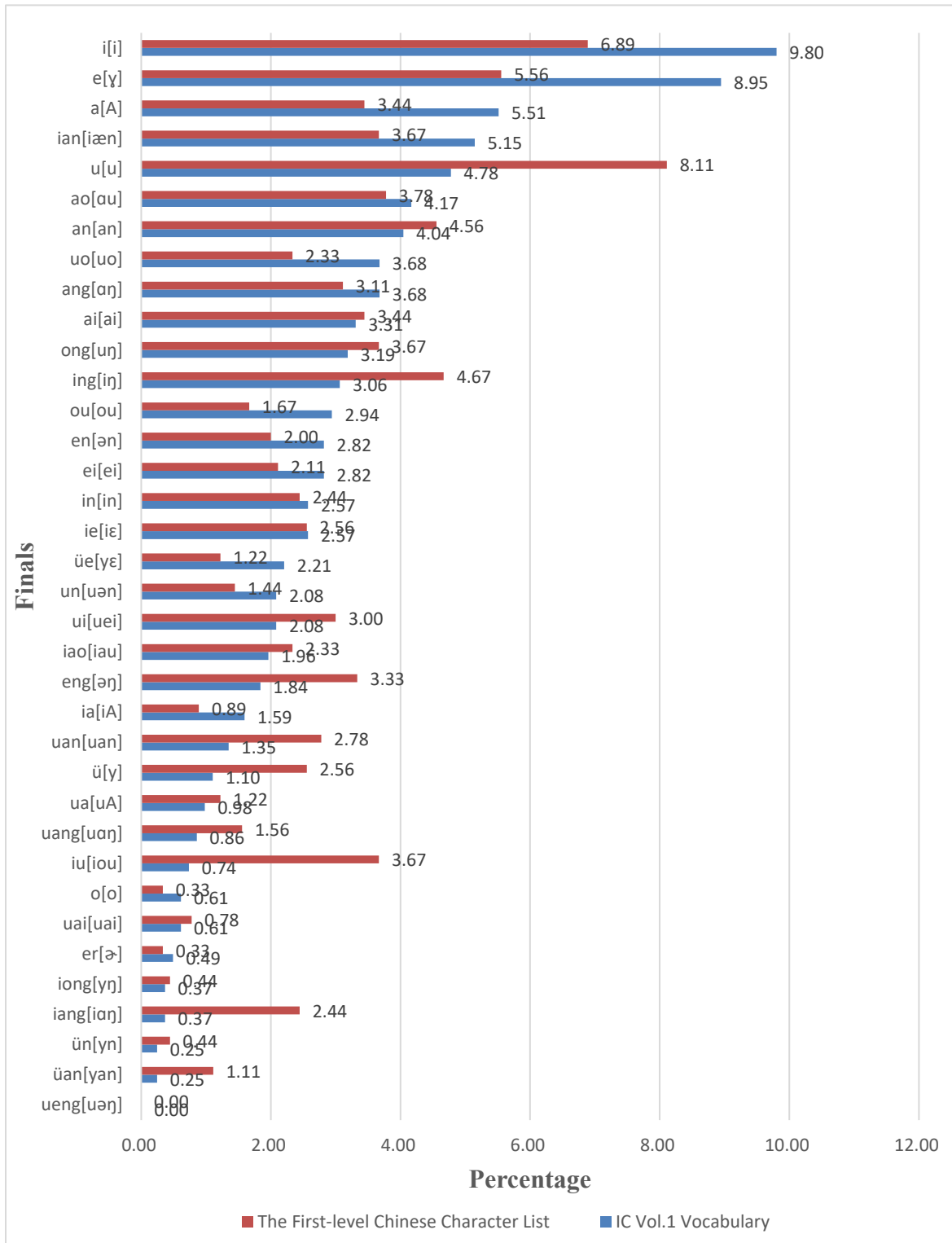
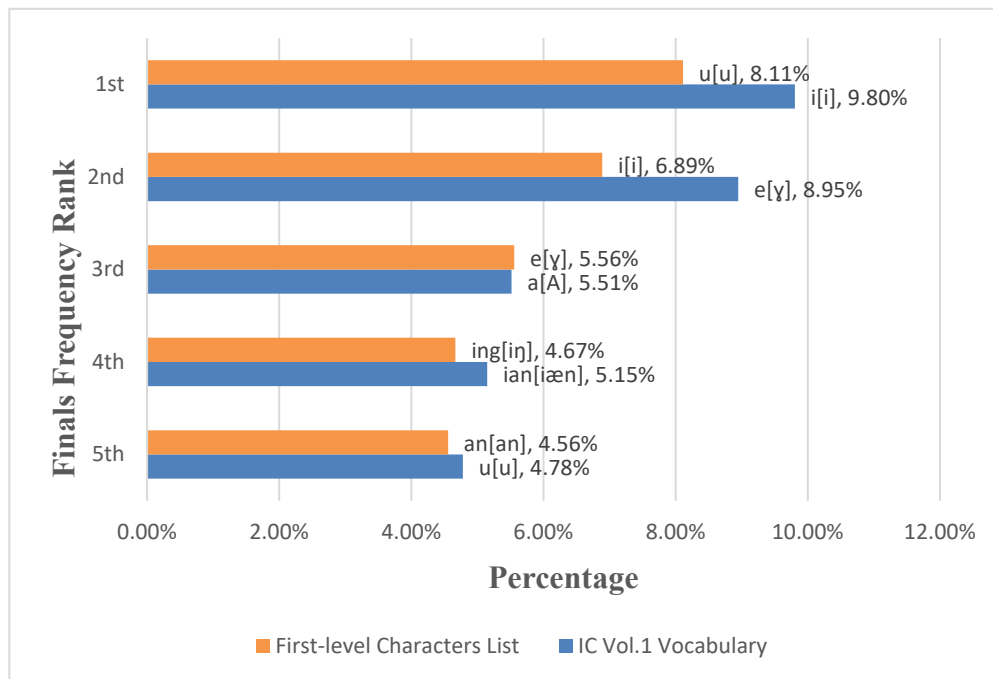


Figure 19 presents the percentages of 36 finals' occurrences in proportion to the total

number of syllables in the two materials. Notably, the percentage of ueng[uəŋ] is zero in both materials, and many compound finals, as ün[yn], üan[yan], iong[yŋ], uai[uai], and iang[iaŋ], appear less than seven times in at least one material.

Figure 20

Top-5 Finals in FCCL and IC Vol.1 (Vocabulary Section)



Based on Figure 20 which compares the top five finals between *FCCL* and *IC Vol.1*, the finals of u[u], i[i] and e[ɤ] are the most frequently used finals. The percentage of i[i] and e[ɤ] is relatively high in two materials, as i[i] is 7% and e[ɤ] is 6% in *FCCL*, while i[i] is 10% and e[ɤ] is 9% in *IC Vol.1*. However, the percentage of u[u] shows quite the opposite positions in the two materials. The u[u] in *FCCL* has the highest percentage as 8%, while its frequency ranks the last

one as 5% in *IC Vol.1*. In addition, the ing[iŋ] and an[an] finals rank in the top-five of *FCCL*, but are not shown in *IC Vol.1*.

4.2 Instructional Practices and Challenges in Teaching Pronunciation

This section presents the results from the questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaires examined two teachers' instructional practice and explored the challenges teachers face in pronunciation teaching.

4.2.1 Questionnaire Results

This section presents the views and experiences of two Chinese language teachers in Canada. The questionnaire gathered teachers' (Anna and Jane) information about their teaching experiences. This information, in turn, provided the basis for the developed interview questions.

The questionnaire covered five categories: (1) teachers' background information; (2) teaching challenges; (3) teaching practices; (4) teaching materials; and (5) self-evaluation of pronunciation teaching. The Instructor Profile table summarized the results from questions 1 to 5 (see Table 4, Chapter Three), and the results from questions 6 to 33 are presented in the following section.

Questions 6 to 14 (Table 5) elicited the challenges of teaching related to the length of Pinyin sessions, the composition of the students in class, Pinyin levels of students, students' learning interests, students' learning strategies, factors that affect students' learning outcomes, and challenges in teaching initials, finals, and tones.

Table 5*Perceived Teaching Challenges*

Question Number	Question Purpose	Anna	Jane
6	Hours into introducing Pinyin	20	Roughly 10-14
7	Student background	Heritage and non-heritage learners	Heritage and non-heritage learners
8	Intendent learning outcomes of Pinyin	Spell and read	Spell and read
9	Learning motivation	Personal interest Job requirement Degree requirement	Personal interests
10	Learning strategies	Metacognitive	Metacognitive Cognitive Social Affective
11	Factors influencing teaching outcomes	Teacher's instruction Student's attitudes Teaching materials Learning environment	Teacher's instruction Student's attitudes Teaching materials Learning environment
12	Challenging initials	j, q, x, z, c, s, zh, ch, sh, r	j, q, x, z, c, zh, ch, r, h
13	Challenging finals	ü, ie	ü, er
14	Challenging tones	Tone 1 and 3	Tone 3; Distinguish tones 1 and 4, tones 3 and 4

The sample syllabus in *IC* suggests that the *Basics* section should be completed in four hours, but both Anna and Jane spent more than ten hours on Pinyin instruction to ensure that students can read and spell Pinyin. In Canada, students are from various cultures, so classes tend to be mixed, with both heritage and non-heritage learners. Their learning motivation is mainly driven by personal interests. In terms of learner strategies, both teachers observed students use of metacognitive strategies, and they further reported that many factors can affect teaching effectiveness (e.g., teachers, students, teaching materials, and the learning environment). The learning challenges of the initials and finals are similar. Both teachers mentioned j[tɕ], q[tɕʰ],

x[ɛ], z[ts], c[tsʰ], zh[tʂ], ch[tʂʰ], r[z], and ü[y]. In addition, Jane also mentioned that some students have difficulties distinguishing tone one (T1) and tone three (T3), and tone 3 (T3) and tone 4 (T4).

Questions 15-19 mainly elicited teachers' instructional strategies, such as teaching tools, language used in instruction, pronunciation teaching strategies, teaching methods, and methods for handling pronunciation errors.

Table 6

Reported Teaching Strategies

<i>Question Number</i>	<i>Question Purpose</i>	<i>Anna</i>	<i>Jane</i>
15	Teaching Tools	Pinyin board; Pinyin chart	Slides; Authentic sound recording
16	Terminology use	Initials and finals; Consonants and Vowels	Initials and finals
17	Teaching strategies	Providing as many opportunities to practice and listen as possible	A combination of both listen and repeat
18	Teaching methods	Teaching sequence: from easy to difficult	Minimal pair drills, perception and production drills, phonetic descriptions, listen and repeat
19	Methods of errors correction in pronunciation	Correct it when appropriate	Correct it when appropriate

Anna preferred using traditional Pinyin wallcharts, while Jane favoured teaching mediated by presentation slides. As for Pinyin terminology, Anna tended to inconsistently vary the description and used terms familiar to students in her explanation, whereas Jane consistently used the proper linguistic terms in Pinyin teaching. The instructional strategies of the two

teachers are mainly combination of presentation and practice; that is, they generally have their students first listen to the pronunciation before practicing pronunciation by repeating what they have heard. Anna believed that students should start Pinyin learning from the easiest (e.g., sounds similar to English pronunciation) to the hardest and that this learning sequence can reduce the cognitive burden of students. Jane was accustomed to using minimal-pair exercises and supplementing them with the pronunciation descriptions and demonstrations to help students learn. Both teachers believed that pronunciation errors should be corrected timely to avoid the forming of bad pronunciation habits.

Questions 20 and 21 asked the teaching materials currently used by teachers; namely, the Pinyin part of the teaching materials and any additional teaching tools and resources used.

Table 7

Reported of Teaching Material

<i>Question Number</i>	<i>Question Purpose</i>	<i>Anna</i>	<i>Jane</i>
20	Pinyin curriculum in <i>IC</i>	A section focused solely on Pinyin	A section focused solely on Pinyin
21	Supplementary materials	Workbooks Pinyin wallchart	Workbooks Teaching videos

IC adopts an intensive approach to Pinyin instruction, with the *Basics* lesson as the introduction to the Chinese language before the ten main lessons, aiming to help students quickly get started with learning Chinese. As for supplementary materials, both teachers liked to use some visual learning tools, such as Pinyin wallcharts and videos, to help students learn Pinyin.

Questions 22 to 33 in the teachers' self-evaluation category in the questionnaire used the five-point Likert scale (Preedy & Watson, 2010), to measure and teachers' teaching satisfaction level. This category included twelve statements, asking teachers to rate their level of agreement in response to each statement, with 1 indicating "strongly disagree" and 5 indicating "strongly agree." The total score of each teachers' attitude is the sum of the scores obtained by their answers to the questions. This total score showed the respondent's satisfaction with their pronunciation teaching.

Table 8*Teachers' Self-evaluation on Teaching Pronunciation*

<i>Statements</i>	<i>Anna</i>	<i>Jane</i>
22. My Classes have a high rate of attendance.	5	5
23. My Classes are engaging.	2	3
24. I am satisfied with my teaching in pronunciation.	5	4
25. Heritage learners tend to produce better learning outcomes than non-heritage learners in my class.	1	2
26. Pinyin is important.	5	4
27. Pronunciation teaching should be introduced and focused on at the beginning.	2	2
28. Pronunciation teaching should be introduced gradually.	2	2
29. The use of authentic materials are valuable for improving pronunciation.	2	3
30. It is necessary to arrange after-class pronunciation practices.	5	5
31. <i>IC</i> attaches great importance to teaching pronunciation.	4	4
32. I follow <i>IC</i> 's pronunciation curriculum completely.	1	3
33. I am satisfied with the pronunciation part of the teaching materials in <i>IC</i> .	3	2
Total Score	37	39
<i>M</i>	3.08	3.25
<i>SD</i>	1.55	1.13

Note. 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = somewhat disagree; 3 = neutral; 4 = somewhat agree; and 5 = strongly agree; *M* = Mean; *SD* = Standard Deviation. The $SD = \sqrt{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N X_i - \bar{X}}$ (\bar{X} is the average score of each teacher).

The average self-assessment scores of the two teachers were similar as the average scores both

fell within the “neutral” category, which suggests that both teachers have ratings that were neutral or slightly above neutral. When comparing the ratings by the two teachers, it is found that Jane’s ratings were more clustered in the middle (i.e., “neutral”) than Anna’s (Jane: $SD = 1.55$ vs. Anna: $SD = 1.13$). The difference between the two teachers’ overall ratings is only 2 points (Jane: 39 vs. Anna: 37), with Anna having more ratings in the “strongly agree.”

4.2.2 Interview Results

This section summarizes the results of interviews with the two teachers. The interviews were audio-recorded, and then the audio transcripts were analyzed.

During the open coding phase, a total of 210 codes were generated from the coding of the transcript. Table 9 presents six major themes (i.e., learning characteristics, teaching materials, classroom teaching, teaching abilities, after-class tasks, and assessment) and 24 sub-themes developed and identified through the coding cycles.

Table 9*Major Themes and Sub-themes*

Major Themes	Ref.	Sub-themes	Ref.
Learner characteristics	29	Learner motivation	19
		Learning efficiency of students	10
Teaching materials	40	Features of <i>IC</i>	2
		Popularity of <i>IC</i>	3
		Students' feedback on <i>IC</i>	1
		Suggestions of <i>IC</i>	15
		Teachers' views of <i>IC</i>	13
		The adaption of <i>IC</i>	6
Classroom teaching	45	Challenges related to class composition	10
		Using terminology in class	7
		Pinyin pronunciation teaching	17
		Instructional hours	5
		Suggestions related to class composition	6
Teaching abilities	71	Teaching approaches	23
		Teaching challenges	16
		Teaching suggestions	7
		Teachers' roles	25
After-class tasks	15	Benefits of homework	3
		Factors affecting homework completion	4
		Incentive for improving final grades	1
		Implementation of speaking practice	7
Assessment	10	Presentation tasks	1
		Interpersonal and interpretive tasks	6
		Teachers' expectations and students' performances	3

4.2.2.1 Learner Characteristics. The analysis of learner characteristics plays a vital role in teaching; teachers need to understand students' backgrounds in order to design activities that meet learners' needs and teach more effectively (Cao, 2010).

Both teachers pointed out that their students' primary motivation for learning Chinese is related to personal interests, and other factors may be related personal needs, such as job

prospects and degree requirements. Moreover, learning interests are also different for heritage and non-heritage learners. Some non-heritage learners think Chinese is easier to learn than other languages. For example, Jane mentioned that most Japanese speakers choose to learn Chinese due to “他们觉得跟中文有更多的语言渊源，所以学起来可能会比较容易一些” (Translation: They believe that their language may have linguistic roots with Chinese.), and so they can learn Chinese more quickly. Generally, heritage learners, who choose to learn Chinese, are influenced by family or culture-related factors. According to Jane, heritage students usually grow up in a family where “自己的父母会说普通话或者是粤语” (Translation: Their parents can speak Mandarin or Cantonese.), and they believe that “汉语是身份认同的一部分，觉得自己应该去学习自己父辈的语言或者文化” (Translation: The Chinese language is a part of their ethnic identity, and that they should learn their parents’ language or culture). For the same reasons, heritage learners tend not to invest much time in learning Chinese, since “他们略懂一些皮毛，总觉得自己有很大的优势 [在中文学习上]” (Translation: As they have some basic knowledges, they believe that they have a certain advantage in Chinese.).

Besides factors related to personal interest, teachers’ encouragement also plays an important role in sustaining students’ interests. As Jane put it, “学生一开始是在摸索的阶段，所以这个时候我觉得 encouragement 可能对他更重要一些，对他的学习的积极性，嗯，对他的这个 motivation 的保持方面应该是非常重要的” (Translation: When students begin to explore a new language, encouragement is a key point to keep students motivated.). Further, as Anna commented, “加入了一些比较有趣的文化内容以及合适语料难度的短句...让学生更愿意参与课堂，保持学习的积极性” (Translation: ...add[ing] some more interesting cultural content or

sentences from appropriate learning level corpora... will engage student more in language learning process.). Also, achievements in language learning are good boosters for students to sustain their language learning. Students can quickly master some simple Chinese sentences quickly, which, as Anna shared, “能激发他们学习的成就感，激励他们继续学习” (Translation: [Master some simple Chinese sentences] could increase their sense of achievement in learning and encourage them to continue their study.).

Stress is the main factor that may hidden students' interests in learning. As Anna mentioned in the interview, “长时间地重复发音练习” (Translation: Repeated pronunciation practices for a lengthy duration) and “简单的语音介绍” (Translation: Simple introduction to pronunciation) can negatively impact students' affect in learning and even diminish their enthusiasm for learning. At this point, students may feel a little discouraged. The loopholes before have not been filled up, but there is new knowledge to be absorbed. Further, Jane reported that “[在快速且集中的中文学习过程中]学生会觉得自己有一种连滚带爬的，很难追平老师的感觉” (Translation: The fast pace of Chinese learning can often overwhelm students and make them feel that they have difficulty catching up with the pace pf instruction.).

Students' learning efficiency can also be affected by their language backgrounds and learning attitudes. For example, heritage students tend to speak better initially than non-heritage students, because they may have relevant language backgrounds. The starting point of Mandarin learning is not equal for all beginners, and learning can be easier for students with additional language learning background. For example, as Jane mentioned, “比如说墨西哥，日本，韩国等其他非英语背景的学生来说，他们自身本身已经有一种，一种二语学习的经历，那么在汉语学习

的时候，相对来说不管是听课方面还是在自我学习方面他们的策略运用上应该还是比较适合自己的” (Translation: For example, Mexican, Japanese, and Korean students, and other non-English-speaking students already have some other second language learning experiences. Thus, the learning strategies used by those students during the classroom learning or self-study are more suitable for their learning.). Students’ learning attitude is another factor that can affect learning efficiency and self-practice frequency. As Jane put it “有一些比较刻苦勤奋的学生可能还会去看一些教学录像之类的来学习语音” (Translation: Some students who are more hard-working may also watch teaching videos voluntarily to learn pronunciation.). Another interesting observation by Jane is that heritage students tend to be less productive in practicing Chinese character writing than non-heritage students, because heritage students believe that they have an advantage over non-heritage students in having Chinese roots. As such, they do not invest much time in Mandarin learning.

4.2.2.2 Teaching Materials. In North America, *IC* is widely used in most Chinese teaching schools or institutions. Anna commented that “[中文听说读写]更能吸引学生, [它]选取的材料内容跟其他的教材比较更适合北美学习者” (Translation: It [the 4th edition of *IC*] is more attractive for Canadian students” because the layout and the imagines are more real-world and engaging than those in former editions and other textbooks in the market. Jane also reported that her students enjoy using the textbook because “因为就像是在看一个电影或电视一样，让他们有继续学下去的兴趣” (Translation: Because it’s like watching a movie or TV show that sustains their interest in learning). Both Anna and Jane thought that the layout of *IC* offers them a positive user experience, and the level of difficulty is appropriate for the beginner-level

learners. The interview results revealed teachers' evaluation of the arrangement of lessons and sections in *IC* in that the textbook starts with an introduction to Pinyin in the *Basic* lesson that places a primary focus on pronunciation teaching with some exercises to meet students' learning needs. However, the *Basics* lesson does not have sufficient examples for Pinyin instruction for teachers to refer to, so as Jane shared “它更像是一个概述，把拼音的内容全部总结在一起,...需要教师自己去找相近的示例” (Translation: It is more like an introduction,...teachers need to find relevant examples by themselves).

4.2.2.3 Classroom Teaching. As Pinyin is a key that could help students start Mandarin learning, teachers usually spend nearly three to four weeks of instructional time on intensive Pinyin teaching at the beginning, and the time allocated for practicing, imitating, and correction pronunciation is over twice the time of introducing Pinyin. Nevertheless, it does not mean that students can stop learning Pinyin after the initial stage of intensive learning. Even if students have a solid Pinyin foundation, it is still an ongoing learning process and can be distributed throughout the later stages of learning. Especially when students do not know Chinese character writing, Pinyin can help students obtain a strong sense of achievement. For example, they can type Pinyin to conduct internet searches rather than using Chinese characters. As Anna said, “掌握拼音的学生就可以[在电脑上]打汉字，这对学生的读和写都是有帮助的” (Translation: Pinyin is helpful for students' reading and writing during the Chinese learning..., and students could type it [Pinyin] easily on a laptop.).

It is also worth noting the terminology usage in Chinese language class. Generally, teachers use “initials” and “finals” when describing Pinyin, which are the same as the terminology of

Chinese linguistics. Jane believed that the use of terminology could help students conduct research when they need to read academic papers related to Chinese linguistics. Both teachers mentioned that in their teaching, they could borrow, when needed, the concepts of “consonants” and “vowels” to explain the terms (i.e., initials and finals) that students could not fully understand. As Jane explained, “initials 和 finals 在汉语和英语中的范围是不一样的” (Translation: The concept of consonants and vowels in English is not the same in Chinese.). Both teachers believed that consistency in terminology use is vital in reducing students’ confusion and helping them grasp the new language system.

The teachers reported difficulties in completing ten lessons in a double-credit course in one term. In an intensive double-credit course, the amount of teaching tasks is naturally heavy. As Jane shared, “学习时间很紧张，很难有时间停下来进行回顾学习，甚至连总结的时间都没有” (Translation: The amount of time for learning is tight, and it is difficult to have time to review the content, let alone the time needed for wrapping up the course.). For Jane, completing all required learning tasks within a limited timeframe can be too intense and stressful for beginners.

4.2.2.4 Teaching Abilities. During classroom teaching, teachers could assume several roles, and they are the one who control the teaching process. As a Mandarin teacher, one of the primary roles is being a pronunciation model. Achieving accuracy in pronunciation is essential, because it can negatively affect students’ learning especially in the early stages. According to Anna, “当然老师汉语发音能准确是最理想的” (Translation: It would surely be ideal that teachers have accurate pronunciation in Mandarin), and “教师有严重的方言口音是不可以被认

可的” (Translation: It is unacceptable if teachers speak with a heavy accent). In Canada, it is common to have Chinese teachers who do not have Chinese linguistics background; their educational background can influence their perceptions of the importance of achieving pronunciation accuracy. As Anna pointed out, “不一定每位老师都有通过汉办统一的普通话标准考试” (Translation: Not all teachers have been trained by *Hanban* in order to pass the Mandarin Proficiency Test held by the Ministry of Education in China). So, in general, teachers measure their Mandarin pronunciation accuracy on their own.

The ability to motivate learners is an important quality in teachers. As Anna mentioned, “教师所采用的适合的教学方法可以带动学生学习的积极性” (Translation: Using appropriate teaching methods can increase students’ enthusiasm in learning).” For example, teachers could use videos or audio recordings to support students in learning Chinese pronunciation. Another essential teacher ability is related to the correction of students’ pronunciation. Jane reported that, if a student imitates Pinyin pronunciation several times but still can not pronounce the correct Pinyin, she would introduce the mouth and tongue positions to clarify the pronunciation. During practice in pairs, Jane described that teachers are “像一个’floater’一样,走走停停, 观察整个班级” (Translation: like a floater... They walk around and observe students’ learning.), and “我也会注意要不时的让他们交换 partner, 或者增加一同练习或讨论的人数...以此减少固定[伙伴]本身的互相影响” (Translation: I will also pay attention to the need to switching partners from time to time, or increase the number of students in a group practicing and discussing in order to reduce the influence of unaltered partners.).

An interesting phenomenon observed by Anna is that some students record the Chinese pronunciation using their own notation system by taking notes at the early stage of learning Pinyin. For instance, Anna observed that “尤其像日本学生会用日文发音来做笔记” (Translation: Japanese students will use Kana to take pronunciation notes).

Pinyin writing also adds additional challenges to students. Students’ first language influences their Pinyin spelling. They could do well with some spelling combinations if they are pronounced differently in Chinese and English. However, when the spelling combinations are the same in English and Chinese (e.g., he[xe]喝(drink) in Chinese and he[hi] in English), Jane explained that “学生可能不能立刻反应过来，但让学生再想想，他们就会想起来” (Translation: Students may not been able to connect with the intended word immediately, but if given them some time to think, they can recall it.). The challenges of initials are the most relevant with the Pinyin “i” sound. As Anna reported, “对于 zh[tʂ], ch[tʂ’], sh[ʂ]z[ts], c[ts’], s[s] 来说,就是 ‘i’ 主要是学生发音问题的关键，有时候是 silent 有时候是 i[-i]的发音，学生需要去分辨记忆” (Translation: Sometimes it is silent ‘when [-ʅ] is placed behind zh[tʂ], ch[tʂ’], sh[ʂ] or [-ʅ] is placed behind z[ts], c[ts’], s[s],’ but sometimes it is the i[-i] pronunciation. Students need to be able to differentiate the sound and memorize the sound.). For these language points, Jane suggested that teachers could start with the high frequency words. For example, the use of the term Lǎoshī (which means teachers) is a high frequency word in the learning context. Start with teaching sh[ʂ] first and then compare the pronunciation positions of the zh[tʂ] ch[tʂ] in the mouth to help students quickly locate the correct pronunciation positions of the two initials.

Another confusion of Pinyin writing is caused by the inconsistencies in Pinyin pronunciation and writing. *IC* mentions that some finals do not conform to the rules of the Pinyin writing system. For example, “un[uən]” should be pronounced as “uen[uən]” in Pinyin teaching and students may choose “uen” as a wrong answer during a Chinese test since uen[uən] is the actual pronunciation. This instruction may confuse students in their Pinyin spelling and possibly lead to a written error. As such, teachers need to emphasize these exceptional writing cases and spelling rules when teach Chinese Pinyin.

The individual finals in Pinyin make Pinyin learning difficult for students. Erhua is a major problem for students at all stages of learning because it usually appears in Northern Chinese dialects. Erhua refers to 儿[r] sound added at the end of a word or a sentence. In addition, Anna and Jane agreed that the sound of ü[y] is also challenging for students to perceive as it does not exist in English and is hard to imitate.

A teaching method involving gestures is commonly used in tone teaching as it is intuitive and clear to illustrate the tone features. For example, Jane used to draw a check-like shape in the air to represent tone 3. Jane also put up some suggestions of adopting gestures to imitate the shape of the tone, as “[教师]一定要注意，你站在讲台上，对面的学生看到的手势走势跟你自己看到的是相反的，需要注意自己是使用的左手还是右手，手势的方向是否正确，不要给学生造成一个误导” (Translation: [Teachers need to] be aware that when standing at the podium, the gesture tends to be the opposite to what students see. You may need to pay attention to whether you use the left hand or the right hand, whether the direction of the gesture is correct; do not present a misleading gesture and make ensure that students can see the correct gesture

tone). A common feature of students' pronunciation production is about reaching specific pitch for certain tones. For example, the first tone has a high pitch frequency, but many students have difficulties starting a syllable with a high-pitched tone. Most of the time, they pronounce a lower pitched sound instead. In this case, gestures combine with sound discrimination practices could help with this pronunciation challenge. For example, Anna used to compare the pitch of mā (mom) and mǎ (horse) by giving the gestures with different heights to help students recognize and adjust the differences between the two tones.

4.2.2.5 After-class Tasks. Assigning homework is a way to ensure that students receive additional practices. It enhances the effectiveness of teaching and enables teachers to evaluate students' learning. For Jane, managing students' homework load is crucial in teaching double-credits courses. Too much content or homework naturally increases the workload for both teachers and students and can undermine the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

According to the interviews, both teachers do not pay much attention to after-class pronunciation practice. They tend to choose the homework exercises relevant to grammar and listening, rather than speaking. Both teachers reported that the speaking practice after class is somewhat challenging to assign. As Chinese learning in Canada is elective for most students, the amount of time students devote to practice is self-determined. So, to ensure that students have a certain amount of practice after class, both teachers reported linking the completion of homework to their final grades. The approach has motivated students to learn Chinese to some extent.

4.2.2.6 Assessment. The training and examination of Pinyin can require students to pay

attention to pronunciation accuracy and ensure students have the language ability to enter the next stages of learning. Jane mentioned that students' pronunciation accounted for about 20% or 30% of the oral assessment score. For students' oral assessment, they are usually required to read an article and answer some associate questions. In addition, students need to deliver a speech in Chinese for a few minutes as a form of functional speaking assessment. The topics of the speech have been announced to students in order for them to prepare in advance. The purpose of this evaluation is to encourage students to speak Chinese.

In summary, pronunciation teaching is acknowledged as an essential part of Chinese language teaching. Through this research, it has been revealed that both teachers paid great attention to pronunciation teaching. Although the participating teachers reported that they are satisfied with their pronunciation teaching, they also raised some issues that should not be ignored in Mandarin teaching in Canadian. For example, students' language backgrounds are complex, and the pronunciation part in *IC* is intensive. The difficulties of Pinyin teaching are mainly centred on the high- pitched first tone, as previously mentioned, and the pronunciation of initials and finals that do not exist in English. In addition, the results from the interviews also revealed a commonly overlooked aspect of Chinese language learning—pronunciation learning after school. As homework, both teachers used to assign written exercises as part of the final grades and were expect to monitor students' after-class learning through their homework completion. Most teachers assign pronunciation practices taken from the *IC* workbook as a self-practice assignment to students without assessment feedback.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Recommendation

This study has offered a snapshot of beginner-level Chinese teaching in Canada by analyzing *IC* and two teachers' survey responses. This research used quantitative analysis and content analysis to examine *IC*'s features and explore pronunciation teaching challenges. This chapter gives recommendations related to pronunciation teaching to inform future textbook writing and Chinese pronunciation teaching.

5.1 Teaching Suggestions for *IC*

Pinyin is the first step in Chinese language teaching. For beginners, the teaching goal should aim to help students master Pinyin because the essence of language learning is to communicate with others (Canagarajah, 2005; Ma, 2016; Zhao, 2008). Pinyin transliterates the Chinese characters into Latin letters, effectively helping students to reduce their cognitive burden during the learning process (Geng, 2005; Niu, 2012; Xu & Liu, 2016) and facilitating students to spell Chinese characters over electronics by using Pinyin (Feng, 2018). The *IC*'s pronunciation part is rational, but there is some room for improvement.

Quite Intensive Pronunciation Teaching As Pinyin introduction is arranged as a focused section, teachers are expected to introduce Pinyin in a short period and then use a long time to slowly refine students' learning (Cheng, 1996; Zhang, 2018). In this case, there might be some dullness in early Pinyin teaching, for repeated exercises are often inevitable (Wang, 1999). It is

easy for students to feel the lack of variation when practicing pronunciation because they are just beginning to explore the Chinese language (Hao, 2014).

Teachers could use a short week or one to two classes to give students a basic concept of Pinyin and break Pinyin teaching down into units focus on Pinyin. Jane indicated that daily conversations, like greetings, could be integrated in the Pinyin teaching part in advance, letting students have a sense of excitement to strengthening their learning motivation (personal communication, February 21, 2020).

Insufficient Teaching Examples for Teachers The sequence arrangement of *IC* is quite logical, but it does not have many examples of Pinyin practices for teachers as references, and teachers need to find relevant examples by themselves. As mentioned in the result of teachers' interviews, Chinese teachers in Canada may not have much linguistic knowledge since they have not studied in this major. Thus, the Pinyin section of *IC* needs to explain the linguistic terminology clearly and give more examples of pronunciation teaching (Qian, 2010). For example, when teaching annotated Pinyin, teachers need to pay attention to the u[u] sound for Japanese students to help them distinguish it with their native language pronunciation of u[u] (Anna, personal communication, February 7, 2020).

The Choice of Authentic Materials in IC The choice of authentic materials should be noted for beginners. Teachers usually adopted the authentic materials in language teaching to draw students' attention to the Chinese dialogue variations. But, referring to the interviews results, teachers rarely prefer to use the authentic materials to teach students pronunciation (i.e., Pinyin teaching). This is because that the primary learning objective for the beginner student is to

complete the dialogue learning task in the textbook, teachers should not use authentic conversation materials in pronunciation teaching. In addition, casual daily conversation often does not conform to the rules of Chinese grammar. Chinese people may use descriptive grammar inaccurate expressions or popular internet slang in daily communication.

In subsequent revisions, the pinyin teaching tasks can be distributed in *IC* to reduce students' learning load. It can also provide a certain number of pinyin teaching examples in the teacher's handbook and carefully select authentic materials to provide students with accurate speech samples.

5.2 Pinyin Teaching in the Canadian Context

Through interviews with teachers, this section examines the pedagogies commonly used in pronunciation teaching by the two Canadian teachers and provides recommendations.

Integrating Pair-practice Teachers could be more cautious when assigning students to practice pronunciation and Pinyin in pairs. Teachers choose to implement more group work as students' pairs practice in order to complete the communicative tasks. However, pair-practice also has a potential impact on students' pronunciation learning, since it is difficult for beginners to reach the level of fluency required for two people to communicate (Qian, 2010). Students may also feel embarrassed in the initial stages since they cannot express themselves in Chinese yet.

Hiring Teaching Assistants Who Have Standard Pronunciation Pronunciation teaching requires patience. If a teacher's Mandarin pronunciation is influenced by the dialect they speak, they may need to find a teaching assistant who can heavily assist with the pronunciation

instruction (Anna, personal communication, February 7, 2020; National TCSL Database, 2018).

Giving Students More Encouragement at the Beginning It is commonly agreed that pronunciation problems should be corrected in the early stages to help students set a good foundation for later pronunciation accuracy (Liang et al., 2017; Zhao, 2016). However, as long as beginner students' pronunciation is relatively close to the target language and does not have major intelligible issues, teachers do not need to overcorrect the students' pronunciation. The provision of encouragement in the initial stages is critical to keep students motivated (Zhao, 2016; Jane, personal communication, February 21, 2020).

Maintaining the Consistency of Teaching Terminology Use The languages used in teaching pronunciation should be accessible (Chai, 2005). The use of technical terms, such as “tongue root” or “palate”, should be avoided during Pinyin teaching, because most of the students have no linguistic background, and using too much jargon can confuse them.

5.3 The Challenges of a Canadian Pinyin Class

At present, the challenges faced by Canadian Chinese language teachers in pronunciation teaching can be divided into three categories: student backgrounds, teacher-student ratios, and excessive teaching tasks.

Students' complex cultural background Since students' language backgrounds are complicated, Chinese teaching can be a considerable challenge to teachers (Ye, 2012). The first class may not be easy to arrange. Some heritage students have a certain foundation, but others do not (He, 2013). Some students have tonal language background, while others do not. Thus, teachers may

be concerned that the Pinyin teaching following the guidance in the textbook content could not arouse students' interests in Chinese language.

Unbalanced Teacher-student Ratio Although it is ideal to put the students with different background into different classes, the students' numbers were not large enough to form additional classes. The teacher-student ratio is also out of balance. Teachers play an indispensable role during teaching since they influence students' quality of learning (Nizamettin & Bekir, 2015). It has been acknowledged that teachers' effectiveness has a positive influence with students' performance (Miles, 2011). Since high-quality education requires successful interactions between teachers and students, the class size is believed to affect teacher-student interactions (Hamre et al., 2007). The benefits of smaller class have been well-recognized, and many countries consider adding it when making relevant education policies (Blatchford & Lai, 2012). The American Council of Learned Societies and the Army Specialized Training Program announced that, based on empirical observations, the ideal class size for intensive language learning is ten students, that is, the maximum number to gain more practice time (Horne, 1970). The class size is usually more than 30 students in North American. This practice has caused a teacher-student ratio imbalance. The problem has become more severe during the expansion of class enrollment.

The Learning Load Imposed by Double-credit Courses Chinese language teachers in Canada are under tremendous pressure. As the teachers interviewed experienced, teachers and students are in a dilemma. Some universities have doubled the credits in order to attract students to Chinese courses. Since the students' enrolments have become more prominent, teachers need to

ensure the progress of teaching and complete heavy teaching loads within the specified time. However, students are not Chinese majors, and most of them are in other major fields. They choose Chinese only for personal interests. It is common that students do not have sufficient Chinese learning time to guarantee that they can pass the course (Guerrera, 2014; Zhang, 2018).

Canada's multicultural environment makes teaching situations more complicated. The diversity of students' backgrounds and the shortage of teachers warrant the Chinese teaching communities' attention. In addition, teachers also hold different views on offering double-credit courses. Based on this study, teaching double-credit courses is another issue that concerns teachers.

5.4 Conclusion and Limitations

Chinese education in Canada has been developing for nearly 30 years and has been integrated into the national education system. Nowadays, with the increasing number of Chinese immigrants, Chinese education in Canada is thriving.

Language learners' multicultural backgrounds also have enriched Chinese education in Canada. This thesis explored the current state of Chinese pronunciation teaching in Canada by examining two experienced teachers' perceptions and experiences, along with the analysis of a popular teaching material, *IC*. The thesis further offers some suggestions in teaching materials, curriculum, teaching objectives, and teaching methods, aiming to inform both researchers and practitioners in Canada pronunciation teaching. However, this research is not without limitations. First, the study involved only two participants, and further study with more participants is needed

to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of pronunciation teaching in Canada. Second, the data from questionnaires and interviews are all self-report data, so future research needs to incorporate other data collection methods (e.g., classroom observation) and different sources of data (e.g., students and administrators perspectives). Given the growing interest in learning the Chinese language, further research on Chinese pronunciation teaching in the Canadian context deserves both researchers' attention to inform practices that are applicable with and beyond the Canadian context of instructors and material developers working with Chinese language learners.

References

- American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. (1999). Five Cs: Standards for foreign language learning in the 21st century. https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/apc/StandardsforFLLexecsumm_rev.pdf
- American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. (2012). Performance Descriptors for Language Learners. <https://cwlp.stanford.edu/sites/g/files/sbiybj871/f/performance-descriptors-language-learners.pdf>
- American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. (2016). Alignment of the World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages with the Common Core State Standards. <https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/resources/CCWRSbranded%20-%20CCSS%20and%20WRSL%20Alignment%20-%20Aug%202016%20updated.pdf>
- Bonney, S. W. (1853). *Phrases in the Canton colloquial dialect*. Canton: The Chinese Repository.
- Blatchford, P., & Lai, K. C. (2012). Class size: arguments and evidence. In B. McGraw, E. Baker, & P. P. Peterson (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of education* (3rd ed.). Oxford, UK: Elsevier.
- Bowles, A. R., Chang, C. B., & Karuzis, V. P. (2016). Pitch ability as an aptitude for tone learning. *Language Learning*, 66(4), 774–808. <https://doi.org/10.1111/lang.12159>
- Canagarajah, S. (2005). Editor's Note. *TESOL Quarterly*, 39(3), 365-366.
- Canadian Bureau for International Education. (2016). *Canada's Performance and Potential in*

International Education: Canadian Students Abroad. <https://cbie.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Infographic-abroad-EN.pdf>

Canada, Canadian National TCSL Database. (2018). Standard Program Information Chart. Retrieved from http://www.canadiantcslassociation.ca/database_infochart.html

Canada: *Canadian Multiculturalism Act 1985*, c 24 (4th Supp.). <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-18.7/page-2.html#docCont>

Cañado, M. L. P., & Esteban, A. A. (2015). Authenticity in the teaching of ESP: An evaluation proposal. *Scripta Manent*, 01(01), 35-43.

Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1, 1-47. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/applin/I.1.1>

Cao, J. Y. (2010). Enlightenment of Learner Characteristics Analysis on Educational Game Design. *Journal of Tianshui University*, 30(6), 132-134. <https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1671-1351.2010.06.030>

Cooper, A., & Wang, Y. (2012). The influence of linguistic and musical experience on Cantonese word learning. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, 131(6), 4756-4769

Crossley, S. A., Louwse, M. M., McCarthy, P. M. and McNamara, D. S. (2007), A Linguistic Analysis of Simplified and Authentic Texts. *The Modern Language Journal*, 91(01), 15-30. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2007.00507.x>

Cui, Y. H. (2010). *The classroom instruction in teaching Chinese as a foreign language*. Beijing Language and Culture University Press.

- Chai, J. (2005). Methods of teaching Chinese phonetics for foreigners. *Applied Linguistics*, (3), 130-134.
- Chavez, B. (2019). *Immigration and language in Canada, 2011 and 2016*. (Paper No. 89-657-X2019001). <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-657-x/89-657-x2019001-eng.htm>
- Chen, Y. (2017). *The investigation research of Chinese phonetic teaching about Chiangmuan-wittayakhom school in Phayao Thailand* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Yunnan.
- Cheng, T. (1996). Some problems in phonetics teaching of Chinese as a foreign language. *Language Teaching and Research*, 3(4), pp. 17.
- China national Chinese international promotion leading group. (2008). *International Curriculum for Chinese Language Education*. Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- Dean, W. (1841). *First lessons in the Tie-chiw dialect*. Bangkok: Siam.
- Department of Language Information Management. (1958). The Chinese Pinyin Scheme. http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_sjzl/ziliao/A19/195802/t19580201_186000.html
- Ding, D. (2017). *An analysis of the integrated textbook for elementary Chinese - "Integrated Chinese"* (Unpublished Master's thesis.) Tianjin Normal University, Tianjin, China. <https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbname=CMFD201801&filename=1017287873.nh>
- Dictionary Room, Institute of Linguistic Institute of Linguistics, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. (2002). Chinese Pinyin Scheme. In *Modern Chinese Dictionary* (3rd ed., p. 496). The Commercial Press.

- Du, X. (2006). Various aspects of teaching Model of spoken Chinese as a foreign language. *Applied Linguistics*, (S2),152-154.
- Derwing, T. M., & Munro, M. J. (2015). *Pronunciation fundamentals: Evidence-based perspectives for L2 teaching and research* (Vol. 42). John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Edkins, J. (1857). *Grammar of colloquial Chinese: as exhibited in the Shanghai dialect*. London Mission Press.
- Esfandiari, M. & Gawhary, M. W. (2019). From Genuineness to Finder Authenticity in Communicative Language Teaching. *International Journal of English and Cultural Studies*, 02(01), 36-42.
- An example of a Chinese character 街 (Road) with various pronunciations in different dialects. (n.d.). <http://www.zdic.net/zd/yy/my/%E8%A1%97>
- Feng, Z. W. (2018). Chinese Pinyin walking abroad: Success and shortcoming: Commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the Scheme for Chinese Alphabet. *Journal of Beihua University (Social Science)*,19(02), 5-9.
- Preedy V.R., & Watson R.R. (2010). 5-Point Likert Scale. In: (eds) *Handbook of Disease Burdens and Quality of Life Measures*. Springer New York. 4288-4288.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-78665-0_6363
- Frémont, J. (2017). *Canada has everything to gain through research collaboration with China*.
<https://www.univcan.ca/media-room/media-releases/canada-everything-gain-research-collaboration-china/>
- Geng, Y. Q. (2005). Sinology research and Chinese teaching at Frankfurt University. *World*

Chinese Teaching, (04), 98-101.

Government of British Columbia. (1997). *Language Education Policy. Revised 2004.*

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/language-education-policy>

Gottfried, T. L., & Suiter, T. L. (1997). Effect of linguistic experience on the identification of Mandarin Chinese vowels and tones. *Journal of Phonetics*, 25(2), 207–231.

Granger, S., Hung, J., & Petch-Tyson, S. (Eds.). (2002). *Computer learner corpora, second language acquisition and foreign language teaching*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Gu, M. Y. (1990). *Dictionary of Education* (Vol. 1). Shanghai Education Publishing House.

Guerrera, M. (2014). Reducing the burden of learning Chinese through cognitive processing—a case study of American high school. *Journal of Longyan University*, 32(03), 41-47.

Hanban/Confucius Institute Headquarters. (2010). *The Graded Chinese Syllables, Characters and Words for the Application of Teaching Chinese to the Speakers of Other Languages (National Standard: Application and Interpretation)*. Beijing Language and Culture University Press.

Hao, Y. (2012). Second language acquisition of Mandarin Chinese tones by tonal and non-tonal language speakers. *Journal of Phonetics*, 40(2), 269–279.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wocn.2011.11.001>

Hao, Y. (2018). Second language perception of mandarin vowels and tones. *Language & Speech*, 61(6), 135-152. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0023830917717759>

Hao, Y. L. (2014). The current situation and teaching strategy of teaching Chinese as a second

- language oral class. *Journal of Capital Normal University (Social Sciences Edition)*, (S1), 90-94.
- Harwood, T. G., & Garry, T. (2003). An overview of content analysis. *The Marketing Review*, 3(4), 479-498. <https://doi.org/10.1362/146934703771910080>
- He, L. F. (2013). *Phonological acquisition and teaching of Chinese for Canadian students* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation] Shaanxi Normal University.
- Horne, K. (1970). Optimum Class Size for Intensive Language Instruction. *The Modern Language Journal*, 54(3), 189-195. <https://doi.org/10.2307/321979>
- Huang, L. (2019). Analysing open-ended survey questions and semi-structured interviews on language-learning needs of Syrian refugees. In *SAGE Research Methods Datasets Part 2*. SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://www.doi.org/10.4135/9781526483843>
- Hua, Z., & Dodd, B. (2000). The phonological acquisition of Putonghua (modern standard Chinese). *Journal of child language*, 27(1), 3-42. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S030500099900402X>
- Hamre, B. K., Pianta, R. C., Mashburn, A. J., & Downer, J. T. (2007). *Building a science of classrooms: Application of the CLASS framework in over 4,000 U.S. early childhood and elementary classrooms*. Foundation for Childhood.
- Jin, Y. J. (2008). *The phonetics of Putonghua*. The Commercial Press.
- Johnson, D. (2017). The Role of Teachers in Motivating Students to Learn. *BU Journal of Graduate studies in education*, 9(1), 46-49.
- Ju, Z. (2019). *Elementary Mandarin Immersion Students Learning Alphabetic Pinyin and Using*

- Pinyin to Learn Chinese Characters* (Publication No. 22621578). [Doctoral dissertation, University of Minnesota]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/dissertations-theses/elementary-mandarin-immersion-students-learning/docview/2307785110/se-2?accountid=14846>
- Kim, S. J. (2014). *South Korean Students Learning Chinese Tone Biased Error Analysis and Teaching Suggestions* [Unpublished Master's thesis]. Jinlin University.
- Kupfer, P. (2003). The Chinese alphabet: its role and application in Chinese teaching in the world. *World Chinese teaching*, (03), 67-72. <https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1002-5804.2003.03.010>
- Levis, J. M. (2005). Changing contexts and shifting paradigms in pronunciation teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, 39(3), 369–377. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3588485>
- Li, Y. (2009). Study on Teaching of Chinese as a Foreign Language in Modern Canada. *Shandong Foreign Language Teaching Journal*, 30(1), 58-61
- Library and Archives Canada. (1971). *Multicultural 1971, Debates, 28th Parliament, 3rd Session, Volume 8 (8 October 1971): 8545-8548, Appendix, 8580-8585*. Canada: Parliament, House of Commons.
- Liu, Z. P. (2010). The Spelling Rules Innovation of Chinese Phonetics Based on Chinese Background of Global Promotion. *Chinese Language Learning*, 12(06), 82-89.
- Liu, Y. (2016). The problems and teaching strategies of oral Chinese as a foreign language. *Modern communication*, (21), 203-204.
- Lu, J. M. (2013). Re-discussion on Chinese Pinyin and the Teaching of Chinese. *Application of*

language and characters, (04), 11-14.

Lü, B. S. (1983). The application of the Chinese Pinyin Scheme in the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language. *Chinese construction*, (06), 2-5.

Lee, C. Y., & Huang, T. H. (2008). Identification of Mandarin tones by English-speaking musicians and non-musicians. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, 124(5), 3235-3248.

Li, M., & DeKeyser, R. (2017). Perception practice, production practice, and musical ability in L2 Mandarin tone-word learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 39(4), 593–620. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263116000358>

Li, Y. N., & Zhou, X. B. (2015). A historical account of the scheme for the Chinese phonetic alphabet and TCSL. *Journal of Yunnan Normal University (Teaching and Research on Chinese as a Foreign Language)*, 13(6), 30-37.

Liu, X. Z., Li, C. K., & Chen, X. B. (2014). Contract spirit of interactive syllabus and its implications in universities. *Higher Education Forum*, (06), 25-27.
<https://www.doc88.com/p-00373099863973.html?r=1>

Liang, X., Qin, Z., & Tan, Y. (2017). The process and regularity of Chinese learning from the perspective of successful learners. *Research on International Chinese Language Teaching*, (2), 90-96.

Liu, Y. H., Yao, T., Bi, N. P., Ge, L. Y., & Shi, Y. H. (2016). *Integrated Chinese textbook (4th Ed Volume 1)*. Cheng & Tsui Co.

Ma, X. C. (2016). An analysis on the strategy of cultivating intercultural communication ability

- in college English teaching. *Kao Shi Zhou Kan*, (40), 80-81.
- Meng, G. (2003). Thoughts on live Chinese teaching. *Language Teaching and Research*, (4), 64-68.
- Miles, K. (2011). Transformation or decline? Using tough times to create higher-performing schools. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 93(2), 42-46
- Morrison, R. (1815). *A grammar of the Chinese language*. Mission-press.
- Morrison, R. (1816). *Dialogues and Detached Sentences in the Chinese Language*. The honorable east India company' press.
- Mora, J. C., & Levkina, M. (2017). Task-based pronunciation teaching and research: Key issues and future directions. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 39(2), 381-399.
- Munro, M., Derwing, T., & Morton, S. (2006). The mutual intelligibility of L2 speech. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 28(1), 111-131.
- Neundorf K. (2002) *The content analysis guidebook*. Sage Publications Inc.
- Niu, L. Q. (2012). Error analysis and teaching countermeasures in the process of Chinese Pinyin learning for American high school students. *Overseas English*, 03(06), 103-105.
- Nizamettin, K., & Bekir, C. (2015). The impact of the number of students per teacher on student achievement. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 177(1), 65-70.
- NVivo (2017). *NVivo Version 11 (Update 4)*. <https://www.qsrinternational.com/nvivo-qualitative-data-analysis-software/home/>
- Pelzl, E. (2019). What makes second language perception of Mandarin tones hard?. Chinese as a second language. *The Chinese Language Teachers Association Journal*, 54(1), 51-78.

- Partnership for 21st Century Skills. (2011). *21st century skills map: world languages* (ED519498). ERIC. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED519498.pdf>
- Qian, J. (2010). Some problems in the teaching of oral Chinese as a foreign language. *Science and education literature (mid-term Journal)*, (08), 77-79.
- Saito, K. (2011). Examining the role of explicit phonetic instruction in native-like and comprehensible pronunciation development: An instructed SLA approach to L2 phonology. *Language Awareness*, 20(1), 45-59.
- Shi, G. H. (2004). The Chinese language teaching in history: The first step towards the second language teaching. *Overseas Chinese Education*, (04), 1-9.
- Sheng, Y. Y. (2014). *A study of Chinese teaching materials in American universities*. China Minzu University Press.
- Standing Committee of the National People's Congress [NPCSC]. (2001). *Law of the People's Republic of China on the Standard Spoken and Written Chinese Language*.
http://www.gov.cn/ziliao/flfg/2005-08/31/content_27920.htm
- The Study Group on Global Education. (2017). *Global education for Canadians: Equipping young Canadians to succeed at home & abroad*. Retrieved November 2017 from http://goglobalcanada.ca/media/2017/10/Global_Education_Nov2017.pdf
- Schmitt, N. (2007) Current Perspectives on Vocabulary Teaching and Learning. In: Cummins J., Davison C. (Eds), *International Handbook of English Language Teaching* (pp.745-759). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-46301-8_55
- Summers, J. (1863). A handbook of the Chinese language. *Oxford University Press*.

- Summers, J. (2011). *A Study of Chinese Teaching in Europe in the 18th and 19th Centuries: Preface to the Chinese Handbook (1863)* (H. Yu, & H. Fang, trans.). *Overseas Chinese education*, 58, 97-103.
- Sun, S. H. (1997). *The development of lexical tone phonology in American learners of standard Mandarin Chinese*. University of Hawai'i Press.
- Sun, H. N. (2006). *National lingua franca in China* [Unpublished Master's thesis]. Beijing Normal University.
- Su, X. C., Tang, S. Y., Zhou, J. & Wang, Y. G. (2011). The topic analysis template and the topic analysis of seven overseas Chinese textbooks. *Journal of Jiangxi Science & Technology Normal University*, 12(06), 58-65
- Tomlinson, B. (2011). *Materials development in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- UBC Chinese Language Program. (2020). Overview of Chinese Courses. Retrieved, 2020, from <https://chinese.arts.ubc.ca/course-description/>
- UBC Chinese Language Program. (2020). Program Information. Retrieved, 2020, from <https://chinese.arts.ubc.ca/about-2/>
- Vaismoradi, M., Turunen, H., & Bondas, T. (2013). Content analysis and thematic analysis: Implications for conducting a qualitative descriptive study. *Nursing and Sciences*, 15, 398-405.
- Wan, Y. X. (2012). The role of Pinyin transcription and Chinese characters and their relationship in teaching Chinese as a foreign language. *Chinese Teaching in The World*, (3), 409-418.

- Woolfolk, A.E., Winne, P.H., Perry, N.E., & Shapka, J. (2010). *Educational Psychology (4th ed)*. Pearson Canada.
- Wu, X. Y. (2011). *A discussion of the compiling ideas and teaching strategies of overseas Chinese textbooks*. (Unpublished Master's thesis). Nanjing Normal University, Nanjing, China.
- Xing, S. (2015, May 9). *The problems and solutions of phonetic teaching in teaching Chinese as a foreign language* [Paper presentation]. The 8th Convention for Beijing Graduate in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, Beijing, China.
- Xu, Z. (2002). A study of teaching spoken Chinese as a foreign language. *Chinese Teaching in The World*, (4), 96-103.
- Xu, H., & Feng, R. (2005). The use of Chinese textbooks in North America: Criteria for teachers and students to choose textbooks. *Selected Papers of the Eighth International Seminar on Teaching Chinese*, 709-727. http://www.hanban.org/resources/article/2010-06/19/content_145360.htm
- Xu, C. H., & Liu, J. Z. (2016). A preliminary study of the role of the Chinese Pinyin in the teaching of Chinese to overseas children. *Journal of Yunnan Normal University (Teaching and Research of Chinese as a Foreign language)*, 14(5), 1-6.
- Yang, B. (2012). The gap between the perception and production of tones by American learners of Mandarin – An intralingual perspective. *Chinese as a Second Language Research*, 1(1), pp. 33–53. <https://doi.org/10.1515/caslar-2012-0003>
- Yang, L. X. (2004). A discussion on multicultural education in Canada. *Studies of Modern World*

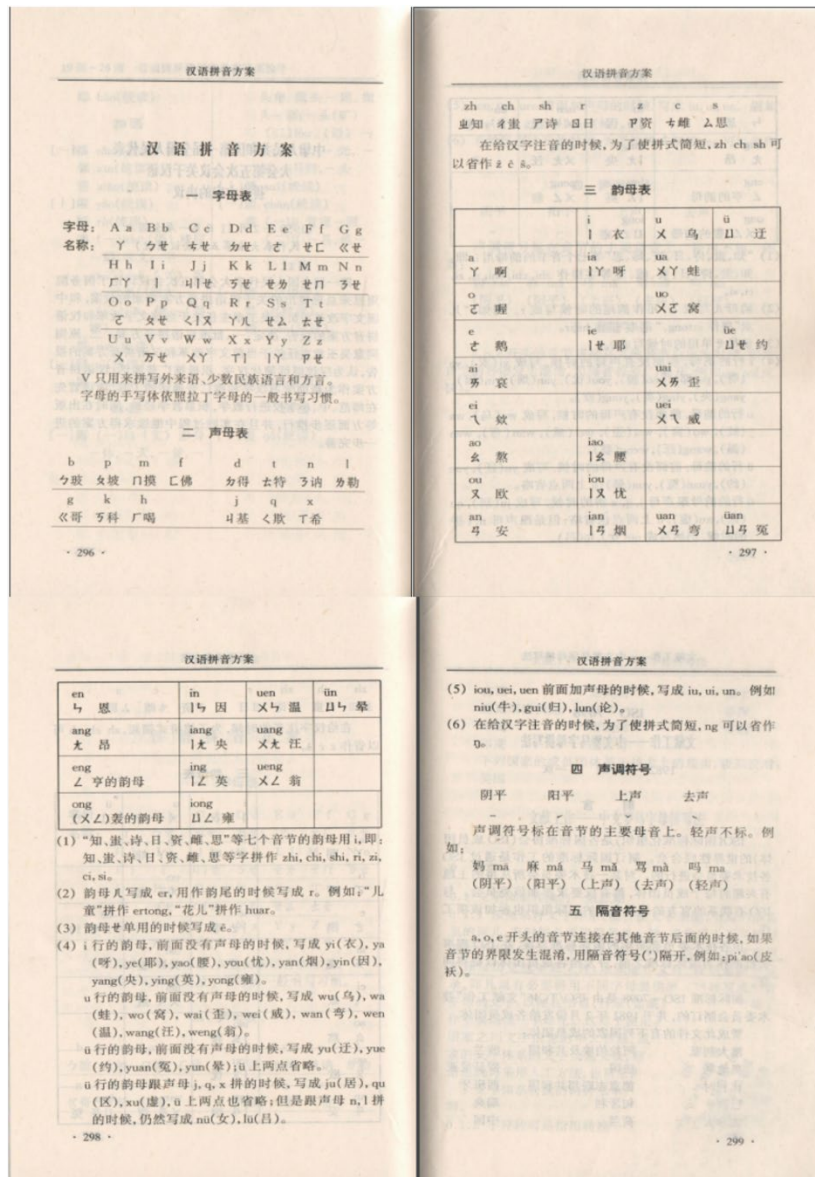
- History*, 01, 119-133.
- Ye, J. (1997). Some problems of the Pinyin Scheme in teaching Chinese as a foreign language. *Language Planning*, (08), 36-37.
- Ye, J. (2012). History and current situation of overseas Chinese education. *Journal of Jiamusi Educational Institute*, (11), 15-18.
- Yue, L. (2020). A study of Chinese teaching materials edited by Westerners during the late Qing dynasty. *The Commercial Press*.
- Zang, Y. X. (2017). A study on Integrated Chinese (Unpublished Master's thesis). Suzhou University, Suzhou, China.
- Zhai, X. (2010). New textbooks of teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language Required by Chinese Teaching Resource System. *Yangtze River Academic*, (01), 120-123.
- Zhang, X. P. (2001). Earlier studies on the history of Chinese learning by Westerners. *Overseas Chinese Education*, 21, 12-22.
- Zhang, X. P. (2008). On the subject and methodology in the history of worldwide Chinese language education. *Chinese Teaching in The World*, (01), 122-132.
- Zhang, T. T. (2016). *A research spell of "Chinese Phonetic Alphabet" for Chinese learners* (Unpublished Master's thesis dissertation.) Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Guangzhou, China.
- Zhang, Y. (2018, May 5). *A preliminary study of phonetic teaching from the perspective of linguistics* [Paper presentation]. The 2018 Forum of doctoral students in Chinese as a Foreign language, Beijing, China.

- Zhao, J. M. (2005). Research on discipline construction of Chinese as a foreign language during “the 10th five-years.” *Research on Chinese as a Second Language*, 01, 98-110.
- Zhao, J. M. (2008). Concept and mode of teaching Chinese as a second language. *Chinese Teaching in The World*, 01, 93-107.
- Zhao, J. M. (2009). The Chinese Pinyin System Scheme: The cornerstone of teaching Chinese as a second language. *Applied Linguistics*, 04, 99-105.
- Zhao, Q. (2016). A survey of oral Chinese proficiency of preparatory students studying in China and its implications for Teaching. *Chinese Teaching in The World*, 30(3), 368-378.
- Zhao, Y. R. (1980). *Yu Yan Wen Ti (2003 ed)*. The commercial press.
- Zhou, Y. G. (1980). Several problems of current writing system reform. *Language Teaching and Linguistic Studies*, 04, 28-37.
- Zhou, Y. G. (1986). *The modernization of the Chinese language*. Shanghai Educational Publishing House.
- Zhou, X. B. (2009). *The guidance of teaching Chinese to speakers of other languages*. Sun Yat-sen University press.
- Zhou, Y. (2005). Induction mechanism and teaching countermeasures of Chinese Pinyin in teaching Chinese as a second language. *Applied Linguistics*, (S1), 30-32.
- Zhu, Z. X., Liu, L., Ding, G. S., & Peng, D. L. (2009). The influence of Pinyin input method experience on Chinese character shape and phonetic processing. *Journal of Psychology*, 41(09), 785-792.

Appendices

Appendix A Chinese Pinyin Scheme

These four pictures form the Chinese Pinyin Scheme, which the Department of Language Information Management published in 1985. From left to right, it was 1) table of alphabet, 2) table of initials (21 initials) and 3) table of finals (35 finals). 4 and 5 sections introduce the four Chinese tones and are one syllable-dividing mark²³.



²³ Write as “ ’ ”.

Appendix B: Questionnaire

1. How long have you been teaching Chinese?

- A. Within one year
- B. 1-3 years
- C. 3-5 years
- D. More than five years

2. What are your highest educational attainment?

- A. Bachelor degree
- B. Master degree
- C. Doctoral degree

3. What were your majors in BA, MA and PhD.?

4. What are your current research interests now?

5. How would you evaluate your Chinese pronunciation?

- A. Very accurate
- B. Basically correct
- C. Not very accurate
- D. Have an accent

6. How many hours does Pinyin teaching need in each semester at the beginner levels?

7. What is the Chinese language background of learners in your class?

- A. Heritage Learners
- B. Non-heritage Learners
- C. Mixture of both, please specify what language backgrounds students have:

8. How well do your students master Pinyin in your classes? (could choose more than one)

- A. They can spell it
- B. They can read it
- C. They could not spell it
- D. They could not read it
- E. Other _____

9. What are the learners' learning motivations in your classes?

- A. Personal interesting
- B. Job requirement
- C. Degree requirement
- D. Other _____

10. What do you know about the students' learning strategies in the class?

11. Which factors do you think have a great influence on the teaching outcome of Chinese

pronunciation classes? (You can choose more than one choice)

- A. Teacher's instructions
- B. Students' attitudes
- C. Teaching materials
- D. Learning environment
- E. Other _____

12. Which initials are difficult for students to learn based on your teaching experience?

13. Which finals are difficult for students to learn based on your teaching experience?

14. Which tones are difficult for students to learn based on your teaching experience?

15. Which teaching media do you generally choose in pronunciation class? (You may choose more than one option)

- A. PowerPoint
- B. Video
- C. Authentic sound recording
- D. Blackboard-writing
- E. Other _____

16. Which pair of terminology do you use in Pinyin teaching?

- A. Initials/ Finals
- B. Consonants/ Vowels
- C. Others _____

17. What teaching strategies do you use in Chinese pronunciation teaching?

18. What kind of teaching methods do you use in Chinese pronunciation teaching?

19. How do you deal with the difficult pronunciations in Chinese pronunciation teaching?

- A. Rarely correct it, just let it go
- B. Correct it whenever I see appropriate
- C. Correct it whenever I spot an error and help a student acquire an accurate pronunciation
- D. Other _____

20. What kind of curriculum design of pinyin teaching is adopted in the textbook you are using?

- A. By intensive chapters
- B. By scattered chapters
- C. Other _____

21. What teaching materials do you use in Chinese pronunciation teaching in addition to the textbook?

- A. Workbook
- B. Pinyin alphabet wallchart
- C. Teaching video
- D. Not usually used

Do you agree with the following statement? (Please complete by using ①, ②, ③, ④, ⑤)

① Strongly disagree ② Somewhat disagree

③ Neutral

④ Somewhat agree ⑤ Strongly agree

22. My Classes have a high rate of attendance.

23. My Classes are engaging.

24. I am satisfied with my teaching in pronunciation.

25. Heritage learners tend to produce better learning outcomes than non-heritage learners in my class.

26. Pinyin is important.

27. Pronunciation teaching should be introduced and focused on at the beginning.

28. Pronunciation teaching should be introduced gradually.

29. The use of authentic materials are valuable for improving pronunciation.

30. It is necessary to arrange after-class pronunciation practices.

31. *IC* attaches great importance to teaching pronunciation.

32. I follow *IC*'s pronunciation curriculum completely.

33. I am satisfied with the pronunciation part of the teaching materials in *IC*.

Appendix C: Interview Questions

1. Do you think the teachers' accuracy of Chinese pronunciation is important during mandarin teaching? Why? What may be caused by teachers' imprecise pronunciation?
2. Heritage students and non-heritage students mix the students' language backgrounds in your class. Could you please clarify the study motivation for different background learners? Whether their different language backgrounds make different instructional challenges to you? Do you have any suggestions about learning strategies for L2 learners in their study?
3. According to the National TCSL Database data, *Integrated Chinese* is the most popular teaching material that many universities and colleges use. What do you think the reason is for this? Could you have a bit of a relaxed schedule to complete the learning arrangements of Integrate Chinese according to your university's curriculum time?
4. The first part of Chinese pronunciation teaching starts with the Pinyin, so that terminology usage could also be necessary. Initials/ Finals and Consonants/ Vowels are two pair terms that are frequently used in Pinyin teaching. Could you please explain your terminology preference between these two pairs and why? In your opinion, do the consonants/vowels confuse students because this pair of terms is quite similar to the English terminology in the phonological system?
5. Based on your answer to the questionnaire, why did you identify that Pinyin teaching does have importance? What degree can students master after the intensive Pinyin teaching? In addition, could you please clarify the teaching content of intro and drills of Pinyin in your class? How much time do you spend on each of these two parts? Why?
6. Pinyin is a phonetic symbol of Chinese, so the actual pronunciation may not be the same as

written. Does students' spelling competency highly match their written ability? During the Pinyin teaching period, which ability should we focus on first: pronunciation or spelling? Among the students' spelling mistakes, whether the students are disturbed by their first language?

7. In the questionnaire, you mention some factors that you think greatly influence the teaching result of Chinese pronunciation (teaching instruction, student's attitude, learning environment)?

Can you put them in order of influence from high to low and give us a reason?

8. Based on your self-estimate, your Chinese pronunciation class is quite popular with a high attendance rate. How you made this class attractive?

9. Based on your teaching experience, j[tɕ], q[tɕʰ], x[ç], zh[tʂ], ch[tʂʰ], sh[ʂʰ], r[ʐ], z[ts], c[tsʰ], s[ç] could be the learning difficulties, how do you help students to overcome these pronunciation challenges?

10. When talking about the students' learning of Chinese finals, you mention some challenges: ü[y], er[ə] and ie[iɛ]? What are the problems of pronouncing them? How to solve them?

11. For what you think is a difficult tone, how do you teach this tone?

12. Do you think that the difficulty of text in *Integrated Chinese* takes good care of the actual phonetic learning of beginners? Are you satisfied with the text's difficulty in this textbook?

13. In the textbook, there are a large number of student-paired practice activities. During this time, the quality of students' pronunciation becomes a problem that teachers need to pay attention to. In classroom training, because the number of teachers and students is not a one-to-one correspondence, how should teachers supervise students' pronunciation? Correcting Chinese

pronunciation is a teacher's necessity, but when will you correct students' mistakes? What is the right time, you think?

14. In the questionnaire, you mention that authentic phonological material is not very important to students. Could you explain?

15. Do you think the pronunciation part is enough in *Integrated Chinese*? Why? As you said, you are not following the textbook's pronunciation curriculum completely. How do you teach this part with this textbook?

16. *Integrated Chinese* gives a more concentrated intensive training of pronunciation courses initially, and after each lesson, it has a certain amount of pronunciation training. Do you think this pronunciation teaching arrangement is reasonable?

17. After-class practice is conducive to the consolidation of students' learning results. In the *Integrated Chinese* exercise book, each class has a speaking exercise part. About this part of the exercise, how do we check the students' degrees of completion? In addition to that, will you arrange other forms of after-school pronunciation exercises?

18. How long should students spend in after-class practicing? As teachers, how do you ensure they have enough practice after class? How to control their practice time?

19. What are your assessment methods and standards for students' pronunciation? As you expected, what level should students have after your Chinese pronunciation teaching? Have you met your expectations?

20. What are the advantages of this textbook in pronunciation teaching? What are the disadvantages? What aspects can be improved in the teaching of Pinyin? Such as teaching materials, teaching methods, classroom activities, etc., Give some suggestions.

Appendix D: NVivo Codes Examples

Table 10

Sample code from NVivo

Major themes	Sub-themes	Example
Learner characteristics	Learner motivation	<p>我认为是有一些寻根的想法吧，自己认为汉语是身份认同的一部分，觉得自己应该去学习自己父辈的语言或者文化。</p> <p>I think [learning Chinese] is some sort of root-seeking idea. They think that the Chinese language is a part of their ethnic identity, and that they should learn their parents' language or culture.</p>
	Learning efficiency of students	<p>对于完全没有语言学习经验的学生来说，可能需要很长的一段摸索的时间。</p> <p>For students without language-learning experience, exploration may take a long time.</p>
Teaching materials	Features of IC	<p>这本教材，我觉得它更注重交际，注重在现实中语言的使用，也很符合学生的需求。</p> <p>I think this textbook pays more attention to communication, and to the use of language in the real world. It is also in line with the needs of students.</p>
	Popularity of IC	<p>而且在北美地区，在大部分的汉语教学单位里面使用范围也是比较广的。</p> <p>Also in North America, it [IC] is widely used in institutions or units offering Chinese language teaching/learning.</p>
	Students' feedback on IC	<p>学生觉得这本书很好，课文像是一个故事系列一样的，这本教材里的主人公一直是同一群人贯穿始终，这些主人公同样是彼此逐渐从陌生变到熟悉，一起就餐，购物，分享他们的大学活。学生可能对每一个部分的学习内容都比较有期待，因为就像是在看一个电影或电视一样，让他们有继续学下去的兴趣。</p> <p>The user experience is positive among students because the text is like a series of stories, with the main characters present throughout the book. The characters gradually develop familiarity with each other through activities like dining, shopping, and sharing university life. Students perhaps grew to look forward to each part of the content because it's like watching a movie or TV show that sustains their interest in learning.</p>
	Suggestions of IC	<p>我觉得他没有太多可供教师参考的示例，需要教师自己去找相近的示例。</p> <p>It [IC] doesn't have many examples for teachers to reference. Teachers need to find relevant examples by themselves.</p>

Major themes	Sub-themes	Example
	Teachers' views of IC	<p>这本书的优点就是一开始对语音的集中的介绍和训练，让教师有集中的一段时间来进行语音教学</p> <p>The advantage of this book is the focus on pronunciation and teaching from the start, thus enabling teachers to devote a period of time to pronunciation teaching.</p>
	The adaption of IC	<p>在教材课件的使用上，我没有完全按照教材上建议的方式去讲，而是根据自己的理解和教学经验，按照自己的方式对拼音进行分类，然后设计教学大纲进行教学，并每周进行测验。</p> <p>In terms of the use of the teaching material, I adapted the materials, drawing on my own understanding and teaching experiences and using my own method to teach pronunciation, following the instructional outline I have developed and conducting weekly assessments.</p>
Classroom teaching	Challenges related to class composition	<p>传统学习者 有些会有一些的基础，所以最开始的课堂可能没那么容易得去安排，另一个我可能也会担心这些非常简单的教学内容可能不能引起他们的兴趣。</p> <p>The first class may not be so easy to arrange because some heritage students will have a certain foundation but others may not. The simple content, which may not arouse their interest in learning, also concerns me.</p>
	Using terminology in class	<p>但对于那些就算反复解释强调还不能明白这个概念的学生，我可能会简单的用 consonant 来对比理解一下，但我在之后的教学里是不会使用 consonant 和 vowels。</p> <p>However, for those students who couldn't grasp the meaning of initials and finals in Pinyin after repeated clarification, I may borrow the concepts of "consonants" and "vowels" to increase their understanding, but I would not use these terms in subsequent Pinyin teaching.</p>
	The importance of Pinyin pronunciation teaching	<p>首先，拼音的学习，对学生日后的（例如：语音和语调）的语音面貌是很重要的。</p> <p>First, the Pinyin study (e.g., pronunciation and tones) is important for students' pronunciation in their learning at later stages.</p>
	Instructional hours	<p>在语音教学上我会在最开始学生接触汉语的那一个学期，花费 10-14 个小时进行语音拼音的学习。</p> <p>I devote 10-14 contact hours to teaching Pinyin intensively in the first semester.</p>
	Suggestions related to class composition	<p>语言学习最佳的配比应该是一个教师对应大概 6-10 个学生，这是一种最佳的状态。</p> <p>The ideal student-teacher ratio should be one teacher to about six to ten students.</p>

Major themes	Sub-themes	Example
Teaching abilities	Teaching approaches	<p>我在声调的教学里会用到 gesture。一开始, 我会给他们看这个 symbol 是怎么写的, 为什么是这个样子的。我觉得 gesture 的教学方法对学生来说还是比较直观清晰的。</p> <p>I would use gestures in teaching tones. At first, I'll show them how tone symbols are written and why. I think that teaching tones with involvement of gestures is more intuitive and clearer.</p>
	Teaching challenges	<p>比如 un[uen]和 uen[uen]本质上发音是一样的, 但可能有些学生在听写的时候会有疑惑, 不知道写哪个。</p> <p>Because the pronunciation of "un" is the same as "uen" in Pinyin, some students may be confused, and not know which answer to choose during dictation.</p>
	Teaching suggestions	<p>虽然说老师的耳朵的辨音工作需要细心耐心一些, 但是对于初学者还是要以鼓励为主, 不能太纠正他们的发音, 除了问题存在很大。</p> <p>Although teachers need to be more patient in discerning pronunciation production, for beginners, encouragement is the key. Avoid overcorrecting unless the issues are major.</p>
	Teachers' roles	<p>一般我会通过巡回的办法在课堂上监督学生的发音情况, 这样我可以比较快的了解各个学生的掌握情况。</p> <p>I usually monitor students' pronunciation production in class by moving around the classroom so that I can quickly evaluate each student's learning status.</p>
After-class tasks	Benefits of homework	<p>但是只有通过这样的形式[布置和修改作业], 教师才能掌握学生到底花没花时间去这一部分的练习。</p> <p>Through homework assignment and corrections, teachers can assess whether students have spent time doing the exercises for a particular section.</p>
	Factors affecting homework completion	<p>但是作业量的把控其实也是一个关键。你的教学内容过多, 学生的作业量肯定就会上升。</p> <p>Controlling the amount of work is actually key. If your teaching content is too much, your students' homework will definitely increase.</p>
	Incentive for improving final grades	<p>作业的完成程度和考分挂钩, 而且一定程度上也会督促学生学习汉语。学生练习投入的时间基本对最后的成绩是一个正向的影响。</p> <p>The degree of homework completion is linked to test scores. Homework completion also to some extent pushes students to learn Chinese. The time students spend in practice surely positively affects their final grades.</p>

Major themes	Sub-themes	Example
	<p>Implementation of speaking practice</p>	<p>每一课课后的练习部分，基本上 speaking 都没有留成作业给学生去做，大部分会选一些跟当堂课相关性较大的更趋向于语法的部分，听力的部分也会有，口语的部分基本不是太被关注的部分，基本都是在做完其他练习还有剩余时间的情况下才会带大家去做。</p> <p>For the after-class practice of each lesson, I prefer to choose exercises that are relevant to what's covered in class and to focus more on grammar, along with some listening exercises. I rarely assign speaking exercises as part of the homework for students. I typically only do the speaking part after other exercises when time permits, so instructional attention is basically not put on the speaking domain.</p>
<p>Assessment</p>	<p>Presentation tasks</p>	<p>除此之外可能还会有一个几分钟的演讲，主题是提前准备好的，鼓励学生去开口说中文，需要他们提前做好准备。</p> <p>There are a few minutes of oral presentation to encourage students to speak Chinese and to prepare in advance, based on the given topics.</p>
	<p>Interpersonal and interpretive tasks</p>	<p>更多地，我们是根据课堂上和学生的交流的水平来判断他们是否需要更多的帮助。</p> <p>More often, students' performance of the communicative tasks in class helps to identify whether they need more support.</p>
	<p>Teachers' expectations and students' performances</p>	<p>整体来说，初学者的水平要稍低于我的期待，学生的表现应该再提升一下。可能在刚开始，汉语拼音刚学完的时候，学生的表现有点超乎意料的好，所以教完一个学期之后，我对学生的期待也会更多一些，变得有些挑剔，因为我的期待更高一些，所以我会对他们的表现的满意度降低一些。</p> <p>Overall, the level of beginners is slightly lower than I expected, and students' performance should be improved. Perhaps my expectation is high because students performed better than I expected in their Pinyin learning. So after teaching a term, my expectation became higher, and I also became a little picky. As a result, my satisfaction level with their performance has lowered somewhat.</p>