

WHAT MOTIVATED OUR STUDY?

The public-funded Chinese-English program in Edmonton: 39-year history, one of the largest Chinese bilingual programs [1]

Student population: children who speak Mandarin, English, other Chinese languages and dialects, and/or other languages at home [2]

Teachers actively negotiate between curricula and practice based on experience, intuitions, and reflections [8].

Teaching Chinese to a diverse group of students is hard [3]

Imbalance in student languages leads to English dominance [4]

Theoretical dilemma between **Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)** and **form-based pronunciation instruction** [7]

Mandarin speech is challenging to learn [5]

Pronunciation is often ignored in curricula [6]

The majority of teachers are native speakers of Mandarin [2]

WHAT DID TEACHERS MENTION?

To provide a quick impression of the interviews, 22 words were selected from the top 100 frequent words, which take up 16.15% of the transcriptions:



* A few synonyms were combined for simplicity, e.g. speak and talk, listen and hear, parents and family, improve and better.

WHAT DO TEACHERS THINK?

Teachers from diverse backgrounds

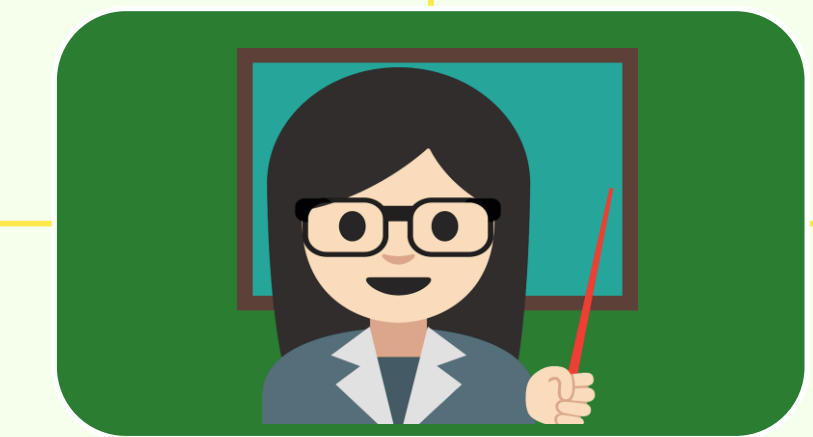
Teachers think the input they provide is important

Meanwhile, the Mandarin-L2 teachers provide role models in language learning

CLT in a bilingual classroom

Motivation and interest are the most important

Teachers should encourage meaningful communication in Mandarin



Children from diverse backgrounds

Teachers start from scratch and provide maximal support

Teachers should incorporate Chinese and Western cultures

Teachers look forward to

More time and opportunities for students to practice Mandarin

Teaching resources and materials

Professional training on Mandarin speech and teaching methods

WHAT DID WE WANT TO KNOW?

- How do bilingual children develop speech in Mandarin, which is a **minority language** in Canada?
- What are some **challenges** Chinese teachers encounter when teaching **Mandarin pronunciation**?
- How do teachers understand these challenges and what **approaches and strategies** do they use?
- What are teachers' **thoughts and philosophies** of teaching Chinese in bilingual classrooms?
- What are some research and practical **needs** reported by Chinese teachers in bilingual programs?

WHAT DID WE DO?

Study design: qualitative study with semi-structured interviews

Interviewees: 12 Chinese teachers in the bilingual program

Native languages: Mandarin (8), Cantonese (2), English (2)

Teaching duration: from 1 to 26 years

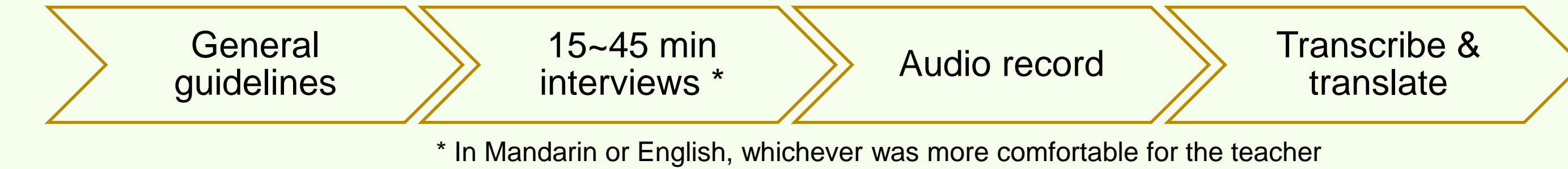
Currently teaching K to Grade 5

Interviewer

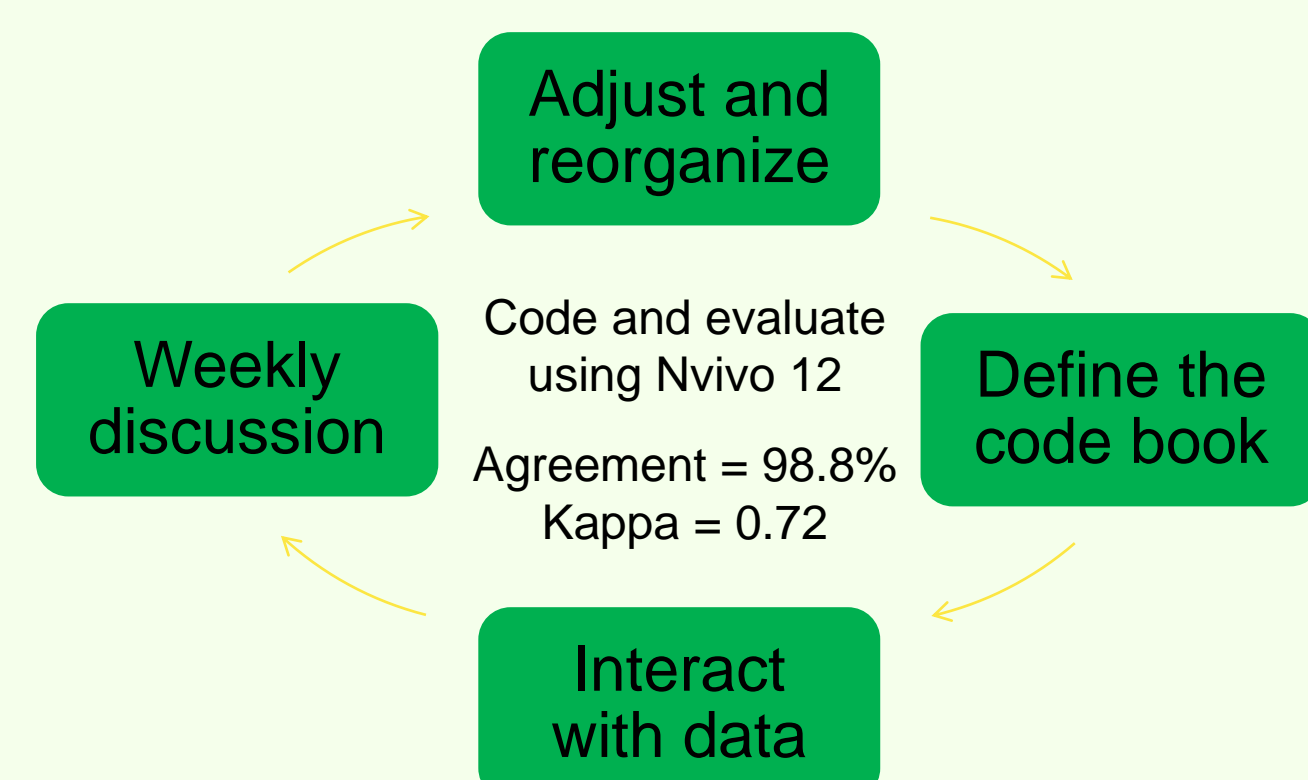
Insider: researcher in Chinese language development, phonetician, native Mandarin speaker

Outsider: new to Canada, limited experience in two-way bilingual programs

Interview procedures



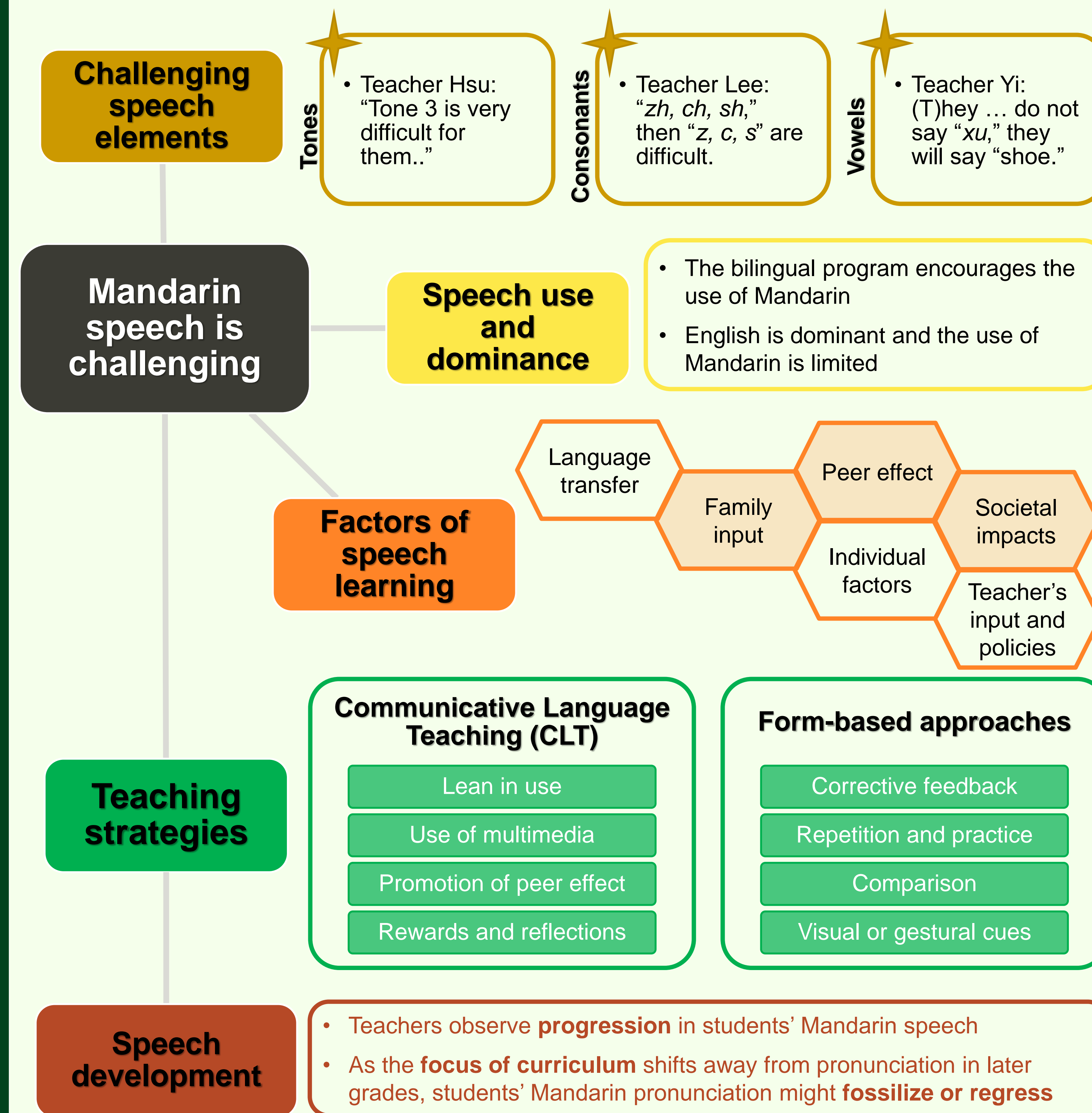
Data analysis



Information saturation

- All 27 nodes were mentioned by the **first 5 teachers**
- All 27 nodes were mentioned by **at least 2 teachers**
- 4 nodes** were mentioned by **all 12 teachers**
- 17 nodes** were mentioned by **> 50% teachers**
- 15 ~ 24 nodes** were mentioned by **each teacher**

WHAT DO TEACHERS SEE & DO?



WHAT WILL WE DO NEXT?

- Our team is especially interested in bilingual children's **speech** development.
- We will explore impacts of **family background** and learner **interest and motivation**.
- We will describe children's speech **across grade levels** and identify **error patterns**.
- We will examine the **acoustic details** of bilingual children's speech production.
- We will **share** our findings with teachers and parents, and provide **recommendations**.

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