

A while ago, I stumbled upon a chance to teach Chinese to a small group of children who were adopted from China by parents who did not speak Chinese. I was at first skeptical about teaching Chinese, since Chinese was never my favorite subject when I grew up in Taiwan. However, teaching could be so much fun—I was taken by surprise. I was not versed in any theory back then, but the joy of helping young children learn basic dialogue through play and hands-on activities compelled me to learn more about language acquisition and practices in second language teaching.

I had participated in the StarTalk summer program run by Teaching Chinese Resources in southern California from 2007-2011: the first two years as a teacher trainee, and the past three years as an administrator. During my time there, I began to pick up theories including 5 Cs, IPA, performance-based and task-based approaches, and backward design. Examining my own teaching with these theories and approaches definitely helped improve my teaching.

It's been eight years. I have moved from a Saturday heritage school to a public high school. The students are different, but my desire to help them find enjoyment in learning Chinese and continue learning it after they step out of my classroom remains the same. Hopefully, with continued professional development on my part, I can help them effectively gain the competency and appreciation of the Chinese language.