

When I was younger, becoming an engineer seemed to be the right thing to do since both my parents were engineers. I ended up majoring in engineering, which made them very happy, but not me. I have always loved Chinese language and literature. Right after I had received my bachelor's degree in Engineering, I took a position as a textbook editor at the university press. I had also worked as a reporter at a nationally circulated industry daily newspaper before I left China for North America.

Years later, I took a job as a webmaster at a high school and found that teaching students how to design their websites and working with so many kind, humorous and creative teachers and students both interesting and rewarding. I felt so proud when one of the independent students I instructed entered and won first place at the Wisconsin WebFair website design competition. So when the opportunity to teach Chinese was presented to me, I took it.

Little did I know how tough the job is! For one thing, Chinese is relatively more challenging for native English speaker to learn compare to other western languages. I am constantly in search of a better and more effective way to teach Chinese so my students will be proficient in Chinese language as well as interested in Chinese culture, and become life-long learners who are ready to face life's challenges in an ever more globalized world.

I am a novice teacher who faces a lot of challenges: little experience, large class sizes and no mentor. Even though I have taken a couple methods classes in my teaching certification program, but teaching Chinese language presents some unique challenges that only specialized teacher training programs like the prestigious STARTALK Chinese Teacher Academy at the University of Virginia. I felt extremely fortunate to have this opportunity to participate in this wonderful program, where I have learned so much from Dr. Tseng and other wonderful teachers from all over this great country! I have learned in theory of the STARTALK instructional Principles and got to put them in practice, where I learned a lot from my own reflection and valuable feedback from Dr. Tseng and other teachers. The collaboration with so many talented teachers and observing them in action are all rare opportunities I value a great deal! I am looking forward to the new school year to put my desire of becoming a more effective Chinese language instructor into action.