
Education: Before

Growing up in *****, a coastal city in China where international business is thriving, I understood from a young age the importance of mastering a foreign language. I began to learn English in kindergarten and got fascinated in this beautiful language in the 16-year wonderful journey. I enjoyed putting my language skills to use in various ways, like working as an interpreter and translator, and I came to realize that I want to delve even deeper into the field of second language acquisition as a researcher. A master's degree in this field will give me the knowledge and skills required to make real changes in English teaching in China, and *Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages* in GSE would seem to fit my needs perfectly.

As an undergraduate, I volunteered extensively, but teaching English was by far the most gratifying and valuable experience. I taught English to senior citizens at the ***** Community, and also worked one-on-one with fellow students to improve their English language skills. The thirst for more effective English teaching approaches and ways to meet the needs of specific language learners inspires me to pursue more, and pushes me to think critically about existing teaching methods.

When I began to ask questions about language teaching, I turned to hefty volumes of professional texts in search of answers. Attending the course General Linguistics helped me to acquire some basic knowledge of English linguistics, and my internship in an Indian NGO, which enabled me to travel to several universities in India, provided me with a new perspective on how English can be taught. I also coordinated a program in my university that enabled my classmates to teach English in a primary school in Beijing, where I experimented with several kinds of teaching methods and observed their effects. Balancing my volunteer work and extracurricular activities with a heavy course load, I supported myself while also battling spondylopathy, a condition that causes severe back pain. My grades dipped slightly during my sophomore year as I fought chronic pain, but my passion for learning and teaching helped me rise to the challenge and rebound academically as I recovered.

Early in this year, I accepted a position with Beijing *****, the largest private language teaching institution in China, as a middle school English teacher, where I taught students from different parts of China. At the beginning of my course, most students came to improve their tests scores, which I considered to be too superficial and found that this motivation usually could not lead to satisfying results. Using my previous experience and theoretical knowledge, I implemented my own way of teaching in order to change this. I advocated an interest-oriented approach in which I sought to understand students' various backgrounds since they came from different dialect areas, to encourage them to embrace the beauty of this language in the context of life and practice instead of treating it as the content of exam, and to appreciate the culture of English-speaking countries. In just a few weeks, I received surprisingly good results as their interest in English grew. Many students have kept in touch with me after they went back to school and told me that their test scores increased significantly as their interest in English rose. This experience instilled in me the confidence that I can, indeed, make a difference.

Though such experiences bring me confidence, I still crave professional training for language teaching since I realized that there is still inefficiency in my teaching methods and the teaching process in most educational institutions in China. I am confident that better

methodologies for second language acquisition exist and can be developed, and I am eager to begin research on it to find a more effective way to teach English in China. My professional knowledge is limited at this point in my education, and earning a master's degree is the next step in my journey to pursue a Ph.D. in TESOL.

The emphasis on intercultural communication, sociolinguistics and research opportunities with faculty assures me that the TESOL program in GSE suits me well. My academic rank of tenth among 258 students, professional experience as a teacher and service as the Vice President of the Student Union have proved my learning ability, strong communication skills and the ability to teach English as a second language. My interest in conducting research and my passion for English teaching also serve as a strong foundation for me as I undertake advanced studies in GSE. Given the opportunity, I have the commitment and stamina to excel.

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