



Tang Hanming Shah Nishith Avinash

Tianjin Normal University

Confucius Institute Scholarship (Master's Degree in
Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages)

My name is Shah Nishith Avinash. My Chinese name is Tang Hanming, and I am from India. In 2015, I was honored to get the Confucius Institute Scholarship. I studied at Tianjin Normal University where I received my Master's Degree in Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages. I like Chinese culture and want to make contributions to Sino-Indian cooperation. I participated in the Chinese movie *Dying to Survive* and I acted as a translator and a driver. In addition to this, I have translated and hosted Chinese cultural events for the Chinese Consulate-General in Mumbai. I have been an interpreter for Bollywood superstar Amir Khan and famous Chinese Director Jia Zhangke. I am currently drafting a Hindi-Chinese dictionary. My goal in life is to bring the Chinese language into the lives of Indians and promote the development of Sino-Indian friendship.





*Confucius Institute Scholarship and Me
—Stories from Outstanding Alumni*

Fly with Wings to Pursue My Dream

Shah Nishith Avinash (India)

I am the founder and principal of the India-China Academy (ICA) in Mumbai, India. My Chinese name is Tang Hanming, which is derived from the three important dynasties in China.

Born into a family that has been engaged in the diamond business for several generations, I didn't follow in my father's footsteps. I instead chose to learn the Chinese language, a more challenging career path for me. My first encounter with the Chinese language started during childhood, when I was fascinated by the Chinese characters in Chinese TV shows, and I began to learn to write them. Upon graduating from university, I continued to work hard as I studied Chinese by myself, but I still failed in speaking standard putonghua. During those years, I ardently wished that I could find a good Chinese school in Mumbai. Nevertheless, I made up my mind to learn Chinese well and become a Chinese teacher in Mumbai!

Dreaming is easier than doing, however, and I still struggled to learn Chinese. I was enlightened by the advice given to me by a German friend who told me about



the Confucius Institute — a multinational school across all continents where I could learn Chinese and the Chinese culture, and even apply for the Confucius Institute Scholarship to study in China. With the help of a teacher of the Confucius Institute, in 2013 I got the scholarship and went to Zhengzhou, Henan Province, the cradle of Chinese culture. A new door had opened up in my life.

My classmates came from Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Thailand. On the first day of attending class, I saw a gap between them and me. All of them were able to write Chinese characters, while I could only take notes in pinyin. Since I previously learned Chinese by myself, my tones were non-standard. Our different starting lines put great pressure on me.

As the proverb goes, “Where there is a will, there is a way,” I worked harder instead of giving up. While studying in China, I was never absent from class. For me, learning Chinese was an enjoyable experience. I also went to many cities in China to visit places of interest and historical sites, as I knew that Chinese civilization is rich and profound.

My first experience in China helped me improve my Chinese proficiency tremendously. When I returned to India, I immediately devoted myself to teaching the Chinese language. But I gradually found that speaking Chinese well was totally different from teaching the Chinese language, as said in the Chinese proverb, “knowing the hows but not the whys”. I realized that I needed to learn more about education and methods for teaching Chinese so that I could attract more students and effectively teach them.