[The object of teaching a child is to enable him to get along without his teacher.](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/e/elberthubb108038.html%22%20%5Co%20%22view%20quote)
[**Elbert Hubbard**](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/e/elberthubb108038.html)

Anna (Eun Gyeong Lee)

When I recall my second language learning experiences, two English classes come up in my mind. One is the English class at high school, the other being the general English class at a private institute at the age of 20 and each class had a distinctive format and style. English is considered to be extremely important in Korea therefore I began learning it from early on in my childhood. I will use these experiences because at the time my goals for English learning were clearer than others. In this essay, I will consider how second language acquisition would be successfully achieved by reflecting on these two experiences.

At high school, my aim was to get a high score in the college entrance test. My English teacher, Mr. Kim delivered his lesson according to the textbook by reading, translating passages, highlighting new vocabularies and grammar points. Also Mr. Kim often gave students homework and those who did not complete this were punished. The class was teacher-centered and explanation by Mr. Kim was monopolized the class. On the other hand, at the institute my aim was to gain better English communication skills. Classmates sat in a circle and the teacher, Peter, brought handouts and used various visual aids. Student talk time was encouraged through games and other activities which enabled students to freely express their thoughts and opinions.

In comparison to Peter’s class, Mr. Kim’s class was more traditional and had a high standard of discipline. According to Jim Scrivener’s three types of teachers, Mr. Kim’s jug and mug method was leaning towards ‘explainers’ rather than the other two, ‘involvers and ‘enablers’. Yet, in the sense that he provided students with a way to deal with questions and facilitated them to figure out correct answers by giving them homework, he was also an ‘enabler’. On the other hand, Peter’s class can be seen as being more contemporary. Compared to traditional classes at school, he let students talk more and feel free to express their thoughts. The role Peter played was closer to an ‘enabler’. Of course, he used brief explanations to introduce activities and error corrections which makes him an ‘explainer’ as well as an ‘involver’.

Having analyzed both teaching styles and methods, Peter’s modern classroom format could be seen as being more ideal to fulfill the needs of adult learners than Mr. Kim’s traditional style according to Malcolm Knowles’ five key characteristics. Knowles categorizes adult learners into five qualities; adults are experienced, relevancy oriented, goal-oriented, autonomous, and they need to be shown respect. For me, in Peter’s class at the age of 20, I was self-motivated and more experienced in learning language. I enjoyed communicating with classmates in a free environment. However, in Mr. Kim’s classes, even though I had a clear goal, I did not have enough experience to be an independent learner. Therefore, although Mr. Kim did not show respect towards students as Peter did, I appreciated his teaching style and discipline. It was an effective method to guide young students to their goals in limited time.

I would not say that any one of these English learning experiences was better than the other. Having considered the different circumstances and goals, each method has become a good guidance for me outside the classroom. Furthermore, both lessons helped me to fulfill my goal in language acquisition. I felt a sense of accomplishment when I came up with correct answers in exams at school. At institutes, being able to share my thoughts and ideas in English let me know I had improved. As my aims for each class were different, different formats and styles of learning were acquired and both methods were efficient.

Having considered classes from my past, I have learned what creates a good class environment and a good teacher. In order to teach effectively, I believe that the first question I should ask myself is ‘how would I help students to meet their goals?’ Before thinking about delivering a good lesson, a teacher should understand students’ purpose, goals and requirements. A teacher needs to be charismatic at times, thoughtful and caring at others.

To become a good teacher I should be open to the needs of students and help them feel a sense of accomplishment through class. Also, I should be an explainer, involver and enabler with a balance. Moreover, I will be a helper to students rather than a leader. Students would be able to reach their goals in the class as well as outside the class through their own efforts. Keeping my students focused on their dreams is my dream as a teacher.

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