I am thankful that I have had my language teachers who worked hard. Without them, my interest in English and Chinese wouldn’t have developed this much. Until I had this chance to study and think about the individual learning differences and different learner modes and intelligences as well as teachers’ teaching type, I wouldn’t have acknowledged their efforts. I believe their way of teaching was effective and also it suited the best for me. Knowing about the students is the very first thing that my best teachers have done and how they dissolved the knowledge into their teaching were just incredible.

It must be hard, knowing every individual student. However, my Chinese teacher when I was studying Chinese language in TianJin University in China knew the common needs of the all the students in the class. It was on a Christmas day. The teacher came to class earlier than usual and drew a Christmas tree on the chalk board and as students arrived, she asked students to write Merry Christmas on the board in their own language. Before the class began, there were ‘Merry Christmas’ in six different languages. This eventually drew out the curiosity from students to know how to write Merry Christmas in Chinese. And then the class went on about the words and phrases Chinese people usually use on Christmas. Most common students’ needs were to be able to speak the language the right way at the right situation, and make foreign friends by using Chinese. The teacher involved the students to know more about the subject by making them realize what they wanted to learn. On that day, the students participation went up to 100%.

According to Stephen Krashen, language courses must focus on communication rather than memorization of the rules – as one of the Learning Hypothesis. During my ESL classes in International school, I did not learn better by solving grammar questions but interactively participating in class eventually helped me to get the right grammar in sentences. My teacher knew how grammar explanation led me to fall asleep in class. I was more of an Auditory learner to learn English as my second language that my teacher came to me and always asked questions to make me talk more, and at the same time she corrected my sentences even though the topic was totally not about learning English, but something I was familiar to. She was aware that students tend to learn better when the subject involves something they’re familiar to and at the same time respecting individual’s learner modes.

My English teacher exuded the modern-classroom way of teaching. She asked all students to read different books every month and share to class about what they felt and learnt from the book by teaching the class what the book was trying to say. She used let-your-students-teach-each-other method. One thing that made this more effective was that the students could choose how they wanted to present it to the classmates. So each student could utilize their own learner modes to have class get involved. Different learner modes gained different students attention with different intelligences. No one was missing out. The teacher’s teaching style was very much an ‘enabler’. Rather than having students sit and listen to the teacher’s explanation, she minimized the time of her talking, and let students be responsible to run the class in their own way. This not only scored highest retention rate for teaching techniques, but also showed the best modern-classroom way of teaching; interactive and student-centered. No one was falling asleep in her class.

The best teachers’ effective way could be summarized as “Study your students” based on my experiences. It is because no one way of teaching can be the best. For the teachers to run an effective class, they would select several types of teaching style. To become a good English teacher, I’d keep in mind that it is not about me, but it is about them.