**Han So Yeon (Rosa)**

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**Miss A, The Greatest First English Teacher**

Couple of weeks after my seventh birthday my parents and I moved to Shanghai, China. I started to attend Shanghai American School (SAS) with zero English background. I obviously had to enroll in ESL, and that is where I met Miss A, my first English teacher. I had hard time adjusting to everything in my new environment. At the same time I was in the silent period. For a few months I refused to talk no dared to talk due to my high anxiety. I was still the English beginner by the time I had to move to another place. However, Miss A definitely boosted my self-esteem and motivation. I can proudly say that she is one of the reasons why my English improved this far.

It is said that being teacher being an involver is not the best way, but it was necessary to a true beginner like me. She would check if I was getting the concept of the class, or even tell me the answer time to time. A few months later, when I was able to use a few simple words for communication, she showed me that she was actually an enabler. She encouraged me never to be afraid of making grammatical mistakes or speaking out my own ideas out loud. She would also make some kinesthetic activities so students with different English levels could all participate. In the end I was not the best English speaking student, but I was not afraid anymore.

She always did her best to create an atmosphere where students unstable and anxious like me could relax. For example she would ask me basic questions such as “How are you feeling today?” After that she would give me a simple topic and let me draw for few minutes; because while she was observing my behavior, she had found out that drawing made me calm. Finally, after the short activities were done, then she would move on with her original curriculum. In that way I was able to absorb the information better. No one knows if Miss A intentionally applied Steven Krashen’s Affective Filter Hypothesis, but her way of starting the ESL class was a great help.

Miss A was an effective teacher not only because she seemed to enjoy teaching but also because of how she treated and evaluated her students. She was always very energetic, and her energy always affected me and my peers in a positive way. Beginner or no beginner she treated and evaluated all the students very fairly. In an environment where students from all over the world in a single class with a different English skill level, participation and effort were the big parts our score.

Many years have passed but I still believe that Miss A is the best person to have as a life’s first English teacher. She taught us in a traditional ways sometimes but it was not her only way. She was more than just a kind, sweet teacher. She was an enabler - she never left a student behind, she had always found a way to make everyone motivated and increase the retention rate. Her ways always made all the students so eager to learn. She definitely is my number one model for my future teaching.