

What are the 'Co-enrollment' practices?: A comparison

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Nowadays many Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (DHH) children enrolled in the regular schools in Japan as well as in developed countries, rather than in the special schools for DHH. Those inclusive DHH children, however, are sometimes reported to experience various challenges academically, socially, and psychologically. The co-enrollment program would be a promising attempt, in terms of sign bilingualism and inclusive learning for DHH. I visited several co-enrollment programs in the world (USA, Italy, Norway, Hong Kong), and found their differences and diversities of the practices in the classrooms. I defined tentatively the 'co-enrollment' as (1) DHH (not one, but a group) and hearing children in a classroom; (2) The general education teachers and the special education teachers (or Deaf teachers, sign language interpreters) teach collaboratively, and (3) Signed and spoken languages are both used as educational languages. In this paper, I would talk about my observation and experience of those co-enrollment programs including Japan (though it is still in an infantile stage), and compare their practices in the co-enrollment classrooms. More concretely, I would focus on those issues; what constitutes good practices in the co-enrollment classrooms? What challenges? How teachers collaboratively construct bilingual environment and cooperative learning situations for hearing and DHH children? What are the relations between signed and spoken languages in the co-enrollment classrooms?