

Participation of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students in a Co-enrollment Program: An Exploratory Study in Hong Kong

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Co-enrollment provides Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HH) students with opportunities for academic and social integration with hearing peers. Classes are team-taught by a deaf teacher and a regular education teacher in a mainstream classroom. In the school setting, children are exposed to experiences embedded in the social system and they learn how to use language in the cultural settings of their classrooms. They construct meaning through their social interactions with teachers and peers (Biederman, 2003). In this light, we would like to view the co-enrollment classroom as a specific culture community. In this classroom community, both the hearing and Deaf communities construct their new common culture gradually through daily interactions.

The extension of integration of the D/HH and hearing students' classroom community has been examined from three perspectives. The first perspective focuses on the observation of language choice in peer interactions (the proportion and content of students using sign language and spoken language have been coded and analyzed); the second perspective focuses on the participants' interaction patterns [Initiation-Response-Feedback/ Follow-up(IRF) model and classroom interactional analysis(Triadic Dialogue) model proposed by Lin(2007) have been adopted to explore the interactional pattern in classroom discourse]; the third perspective focuses on academic engagement of the participants (the Mainstream Version of the Code for Instructional Structure and Student Academic Response(MS-CISSAR) has been employed to track the attention and time-on-task pattern of the D/HH and hearing students).

Results indicated that the co-enrollment setting allows the D/HH students to be involved in classroom interactions just as their hearing peers but with slightly different pattern in interaction mode. Moreover, hearing students are more integrated with their D/HH peers near the end of the school term with the increased use of sign language. Results indicated that the D/HH students in Hong Kong's co-enrollment setting were as academically engaged as their hearing peers. Subsequent implications and suggestions will be discussed.

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References

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