

**Deaf teachers' involvement in the SLCO Programme:  
Views from students**

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Jimenez-Sanchez and Antia (1999) in their paper thoroughly discussed the benefits of team teaching involving hearing teachers and Deaf teachers on the development of both d/hh and hearing students linguistically and academically. They commented that when Deaf teachers became an integral part of the school community and involved in the team teaching practices for both d/hh and hearing students, "the most viable benefit was the access of all children to all communication in the classroom...where differences were not degraded but viewed as valuable and respected" (Jimenez-Sanchez, & Antia, 1999, p.223). However, how d/hh and hearing students perceived the role of Deaf teachers and their significance in the SLCO classrooms were not thoroughly studied in the past.

This preliminary study aimed to investigate how students perceived the involvement of Deaf teachers in the Sign Bilingualism and Co-enrollment in Deaf Education Programme (SLCO) in Hong Kong. A questionnaire survey was conducted with 23 DHH and 64 hearing students from Primary 4 to Secondary 1 in 4 SLCO classes, in which 5-6 DHH students were co-enrolled with 20-29 hearing students in an ordinary classroom. For over 60% of the lessons, a Deaf teacher co-taught with a hearing teacher, using both signed and spoken language as the medium of instruction. Follow-up interviews were then conducted with 6 DHH students in Secondary 1 based on the data collected from the survey to further establish the perceived role of the Deaf teachers in school and to identify ways by which the Deaf teachers have supported them academically and socially. Findings of the questionnaire survey showed that both DHH and hearing students affirmed the significance of Deaf teachers in the SLCO classrooms. Hearing students perceived Deaf adults as a teacher in class who helped them not only to learn in class, but also pick up a new language, i.e. Hong Kong Sign Language. In addition, students felt supported by the Deaf teachers socially and emotionally. Interviews revealed that for DHH students, Deaf teachers were particularly crucial as teachers' own experience in learning and daily life could be a reference to students and give them a sense of empathy. The DHH students also expressed that Deaf teachers were role models that demonstrated how

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a Deaf adult can be and how they live in a world where hearing people are the majority of the community.

## References

Jiménez-Sánchez, C., & Antia, S. (1999). Team-teaching in an integrated classroom: perceptions of deaf and hearing teachers. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 4(3), 215-224.