

# The 2014 Symposium on Sign Bilingualism and Deaf Education

Sign bilingualism in Taiwan (Taoyuan)

## Introducing exemplary deaf instructor into deaf education

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Before we introduced deaf instructing program, deaf students at special classes for deaf students in junior high school level in Taiwan were taught by hearing teachers only for several years. Although we possess special education teacher's licenses, our sign language abilities are very limited. And the previous sign language model we received is Grammatical Sign Language (official sign language) instead of Taiwan sign language (TSL); such situation led to lots of misunderstandings existing among teachers and students. It also restricted teachers' teaching efficacy and deaf student felt frustrated due to their poor academic performances. Thanks the sponsorship of Rotary club of Chung-Li South since 1998, we continuously invited Mr. Ku, a famous deaf instructor, to assist us by co-teaching with a hearing teacher for three hours once per week each semester. On the other hand, we also invited several extraordinary deaf leaders to our class to share their learning experiences, working experiences and social experiences with our deaf students. These bilingual teaching methods have lots of positive effects not only to the deaf students but also to the hearing teachers. Hearing teachers' TSL abilities have been greatly enhanced and thus teachers can teach deaf students more effectively and efficiently since teacher-student communication barriers have been resolved. On the other hand, deaf students can express themselves much better than before and thus decrease the frequency of conflicts during communicating with families and classmates. Also, the deaf students are inspired by the extraordinary deaf adults and thus may follow their foot steps to build up students' self-confidence and healthy self-image. Deaf students no longer considered themselves as inferior to hearing students. Besides, after mastering TSL, deaf students' academic levels have been improved in speaking, reading, and writing better Chinese. Introducing excellent deaf instructors into deaf education system can not only enhancing teachers' TSL abilities but also helping deaf students build their self-confidence and lowering the communication barriers between teachers and students. Most important of all, hearing teachers' teaching efficacy was enhanced.