

# Deaf teachers' involvement in the SLCO programme: Views from students

Chloe HO, Chris YIU, Anna PUN  
Jockey Club Sign Bilingualism and Co-enrollment in  
Deaf Education Programme



賽馬會手語雙語共融教育計劃  
JOCKEY CLUB SIGN BILINGUALISM AND  
CO-ENROLMENT IN DEAF EDUCATION PROGRAMME

捐助機構 Funded by:



香港賽馬會慈善信託基金  
The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust



香港中文大學  
THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG



手語及聾人研究中心  
Centre for Sign Linguistics and Deaf Studies

# Acknowledgement



賽馬會手語雙語共融教育計劃  
JOCKEY CLUB SIGN BILINGUALISM AND  
CO-ENROLMENT IN DEAF EDUCATION PROGRAMME

捐助機構 Funded by:



香港賽馬會慈善信託基金  
The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust

# Outline of this presentation

- Background
- Literature Review
- Research Questions
- Methodology
- Results
- Summary

# Background

- In August 2006, the Centre for Sign Linguistics and Deaf Studies of the Chinese University of Hong Kong has started to conduct the Sign Bilingualism and Coenrollment in Deaf Education Programme (SLCO) in local mainstream schools. It aims at benefitting both DHH and hearing students linguistically and academically by introducing Deaf teachers to the schools and Hong Kong Sign Language(HKSL) as one of the medium of instructions.

# Partner Schools of the SLCO

Peace Evangelical Centre  
Kindergarten (Ngau Tau Kok)  
平安福音堂幼稚園(牛頭角)



Notre Dame College  
聖母院書院



Kowloon Bay St. John the Baptist  
Catholic Primary School  
九龍灣聖若翰天主教小學

# Number of DHH and Hearing Students served by the SLCO in 2013-2014

School	Number of <b>DHH</b> students in co-enrolled classes	Number of <b>hearing</b> students in co-enrolled classes	Number of <b>Deaf Teachers</b>
Kindergarten Programme	11	51	2
Primary School Programme	36	129	7
Secondary School Programme	6	29	2
Total:	53	209	11

# Duties of Deaf Teachers in the SLCO

Teaching	Co-teach with school hearing teachers in major subjects
	Plan with school teachers on teaching and prepare teaching materials
	Tutor DHH students afterschool
Activities	Teach HKSL classes for students and parents
	Promote Deaf culture and Deaf Awareness
	Support extra-curriculum activities and competitions
Policy Making	Participate in policy making related to DHH students
Others	Communicate with Deaf parents
	Handle FM system of DHH students
	Link the school with Deaf Organizations



## Literature Review:

Perceptions of teams of Deaf and hearing teachers in co-enrolled classrooms

# Perceptions of Deaf and hearing teachers

Jiménez-Sánchez, Antia (1999):

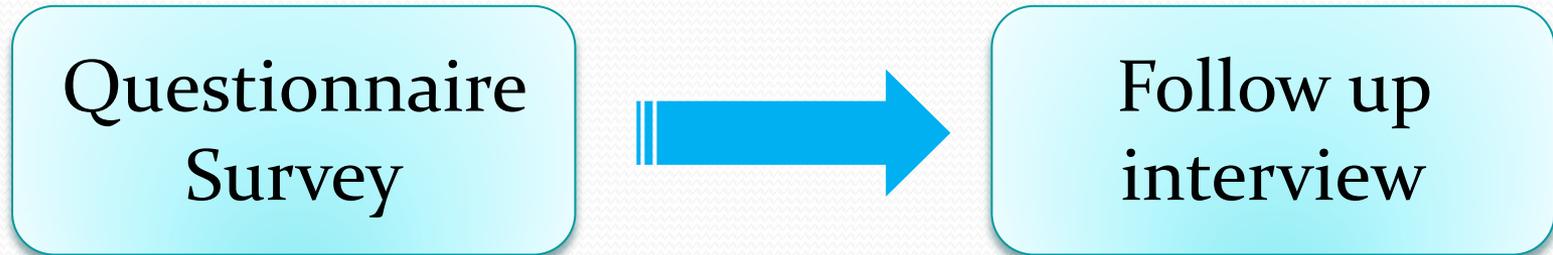
Collaboration of a deaf and a hearing teacher as a team to co-teach both D/HH and hearing students in co-enrolled classroom benefits students linguistically and academically. When Deaf teachers became an integral part of the school community and involved in the team teaching practices for both d/hh and hearing students, “the most viable benefits was the access of all children to all communication in the classroom...where differences were not degraded but viewed as valuable and respected”.

# Research Questions

How do DHH and hearing students perceive the role of Deaf teachers and their significance in the co-enrolled classrooms?

- How do students think about the significance of Deaf teachers?
- In what ways do students think Deaf teachers support them?
- Under what circumstances do students learn from Deaf teachers?

# Methodology



# 1. Questionnaire Survey

Questionnaire was used to assess the perception of significance and roles of Deaf teachers in acting as a language model, in learning and social and emotional support of DHH and hearing students.

- Participants rated the statements on how much they agree with them.
- Rating was in 4 point scale: 4 Strongly agree, 3 agree, 2 disagree and 1 strongly disagree (scores above 3 are desirable)
- Participants answered 2 open-ended questions of their opinions on having Deaf teachers in the school.
- Teachers spoke and signed those questions to all participants for more precise comprehension.

# Participants

- Primary 4 to Primary 6 of the SLCO primary school programme
- Secondary 1 of the SLCO secondary school programme
- A total of 4 classes
- 23 DHH students
- 64 hearing students
- Students have been studying in co-enrolled classes for at least 3 years



# Results of Questionnaire Survey

# Deaf teachers benefit DHH students academically

	Scores of students	
	DHH	Hearing
I always learn by getting information from signing of Deaf teachers.	3.4	2.8
I always learn by getting information from speaking of hearing teachers.	3	3.7

- DHH students' preference to learn from Deaf teachers is significantly higher than from hearing teachers.  
Pairwise T-test ( $t(22)=2.170$ ,  $p=0.041^*$ )
- **32 comments** made by 23 DHH students confirmed that Deaf teachers taught them various subject knowledge.

# Comments of DHH students

I can comprehend **abstract and complicated concepts** more easily by watching signs of Deaf teachers.

What I **missed by hearing** can be **compensated by looking at Deaf teacher's signing**. So I can learn as much as hearing classmates.

When explaining something new, Deaf teachers add **supplementary information** to facilitate my understanding.



# Deaf teachers benefit hearing students academically

	Scores of students	
	DHH	Hearing
I always learn by getting information from signing of Deaf teachers.	3.4	2.8
I always learn by getting information from speaking of hearing teachers.	3	3.7

- Hearing students' preference to learn from hearing teachers is significantly higher than from Deaf teachers.  
Pairwise T-test ( $t(66)=-9.207, p=0.000^{**}$ )
- **37/64 (57.8%) hearing students** commented that Deaf teachers do help them to learn better especially when they don't understand the messages conveyed by hearing teachers. For instance, in English lessons and when teacher is explaining something abstract.

# Deaf teachers benefit hearing students academically

	Scores of students	
	DHH	Hearing
I always learn by getting information from signing of Deaf teachers.	3.4	2.8
I always learn by getting information from speaking of hearing teachers.	3	3.7

- Hearing students who are more willing to sign prefer more to learn from Deaf Teachers. Willingness to sign and preference to Deaf teachers are significantly correlated.  
( $r=0.700$ ,  $p=0.000^{**}$ )

# DHH students learn from both Deaf and hearing teachers

	Scores of students	
	DHH	Hearing
I always learn by getting information from signing of Deaf teachers.	3.4	2.8
I always learn by getting information from speaking of hearing teachers.	3	3.7

- DHH students agreed that they learn from hearing teachers as well.
- Learning from Deaf and hearing teachers is **not mutually exclusive** for DHH students.

DHH students in the SLCO are bilingual!

# Deaf teachers act as role models

	Scores of students	
	DHH	Hearing
Deaf teachers are role models for me to learn better.	3.5	3.3
Hearing teachers are role models for me to learn better.	3.1	3.6

- Both groups of students **rated highly** for Deaf and hearing teachers as role models.
- Deaf teachers are perceived as respectful adults who worth imitating.

Both Deaf and hearing teachers are of equal status!

# Social and emotional support from Deaf teachers

	Scores of students	
	DHH	Hearing
When I come across difficulty in daily life, I seek for Deaf teachers' help.	3.2	2.5
When I come across difficulty in daily life, I seek for hearing teachers' help.	2.9	3.4

- DHH students' preference of seeking for social and emotional support from Deaf teachers is significantly higher than from hearing teachers.

CanTIT ( $r=-0.441$ ,  $p=0.035^*$ ), CanSWORT ( $r=0.473$ ,  $p=0.023^*$ ), CLNT ( $r=-0.448$ ,  $p=0.032^*$ )

# Comments of DHH students

When something happened in my **family**, I prefer to share with Deaf teachers.

I can share my **feelings** and **difficulties** with Deaf teachers. They help me by sharing their own experience with me.

Deaf teachers' past experience is **reference** for me to live my life!



# Social and emotional support from Deaf teachers

	Scores of students	
	DHH	Hearing
When I come across difficulty in daily life, I seek for Deaf teachers' help.	3.2	2.5
When I come across difficulty in daily life, I seek for hearing teachers' help.	2.9	3.4

- Hearing students prefer seeking help from hearing teachers than Deaf teachers.
- The more the hearing students like signing, the more likely they seek for social and emotional support from Deaf teachers. Willingness to sign and preference to Deaf teachers are significantly correlated. ( $r=0.656$ ,  $p=0.000^{**}$ )

# Natural Signing and Language model

	Scores of students	
	DHH	Hearing
Natural signing of Deaf teachers let me understand more.	3.4	3.1

- Both DHH and hearing students agreed that natural signing of Deaf teachers assists comprehension.
- **34/63(54%)** hearing students mentioned that they learnt HKSL from Deaf teachers during daily teaching in class and social interactions. It assists them much in communicating with DHH classmates.

# Team-teaching demonstrates how Deaf and hearing people interact

	Scores of students	
	DHH	Hearing
Collaboration between Deaf and hearing teachers helps me know how to interact with hearing/Deaf people.	3.8	3.6

- Both DHH and hearing affirmed that collaboration between Deaf and hearing teachers acts as a role model to demonstrate how people with different hearing status interact in the real world.

# Deaf teachers are significant!

	Scores of students	
	DHH	Hearing
I think the presence of Deaf teachers in the co-enrolled classrooms to teach in signed language is necessary.	3.6	3.5

- Both DHH and hearing students affirmed the significance of Deaf teachers in the co-enrolled classrooms! Their presence in the classrooms is necessary!

# Summary

- Both DHH and hearing students affirmed the **significance of Deaf teachers** that they must be present in the school.
- Deaf adults in the SLCO schools share **equal status** as hearing teachers.
- Deaf teachers support both DHH and hearing students in being a **language model of HKSL, learning, social and emotional support** just like hearing teachers in the school.

# Circumstances under which students learn from signing of Deaf teachers in lessons

- Students rated the frequency in different circumstances:  
Almost Never, Seldom, Often, Almost Always

<i>Circumstances</i>
When Deaf teacher gives instructions
When Deaf teacher is teaching
When hearing teacher changes topic suddenly
When Deaf teacher is explaining abstract concept
When classmate is answering questions
When classmates speak at their seats at the same time
When s/he doesn't understand what hearing teacher is talking about
When s/he finds difficulty during learning activities

# Circumstances under which DHH students learn from signing of Deaf teachers

<i>Circumstances</i>	<i>% of students choosing "Often" and "Almost Always"</i>
When Deaf teacher is explaining abstract concept	100
When Deaf teacher is teaching	91
When Deaf teacher gives instructions	87
When hearing teacher changes topic suddenly	78
When s/he doesn't understand what hearing teacher is talking about	78

# Circumstances under which hearing students learn from signing of Deaf teachers

<i>Circumstances</i>	<i>% of students choosing "Often" and "Almost Always"</i>
	<i>Hearing</i>
When Deaf teacher is teaching	69
When s/he doesn't understand what hearing teacher is talking about	65
When Deaf teacher is explaining abstract concept	62
When s/he finds difficulty during learning activity	58
When classmate is answering questions	55

## Circumstances under which students learn from signing of Deaf teachers in lessons

- The 2 languages are complementary.
- HKSL is effective in expressing abstract and complicated concepts.
- HKSL is not only benefitting DHH students but also hearing students to get information more comprehensively.
- Information is accessible to all students!

HKSL is a language which can express knowledge in the curriculum clearly!

## 2. Follow up interviews

The 6 DHH students studying in Secondary 1 were interviewed to

- further establish the perceived role of the Deaf teachers in school.
- identify ways through which the Deaf teachers have supported them academically and socially.



# Comments from DHH students

Deaf teachers are **fluent signers**. They can express a concept more accurately and briefly and I can understand it quickly.

**Natural signing** of Deaf teachers is much easier to comprehend so that I can learn new knowledge more quickly and easily.

Hearing teachers may be keen on teaching hearing students but it may not be applicable to DHH students.....Deaf teachers know the **learning methods specific to Deaf people** according to their own experience. They teach me in a way more suitable for me and I can learn more easily.



Learning

**Deaf culture** is something very **natural** to Deaf people. It happens naturally. I'm fine with it.

Deaf teachers are the same as me. **We are Deaf people.** I'm happy with that!

Deaf teachers explain to me **what Deaf culture is.** It helps me solve many problems in daily life.

Deaf teachers know **what Deafness is** and help me to know I am Deaf too. I don't have to doubt who I am!



Social and Cultural Identity

Deaf teachers **understand how I feel** as being a Deaf person because they are Deaf too. They share with us their experience and equip us to face the real world and different views from hearing people.

When I find difficulties in daily life, I ask Deaf teachers how to solve them because they came across these situations before. **They understand me.** They know how to handle the problem and give good suggestion to me.



Sense of Empathy

Deaf teachers told me that Deaf people can also be successful. I know that **I can have a dream too** and my dream will come true like my teachers.

Deaf teachers let me know what a Deaf adult can be. If I've never come across a Deaf adult, I may misunderstand that I have no future. Now I can **imitate** them and I will be just like them in the future that I can do what I hope to.



Projection of Future

# Summary

According to students' perceptions:

- Deaf teachers are **significant** and **necessary** wherever there is DHH student in the mainstream classroom with hearing students studying together.
- **HKSL** is qualified to be **a medium of instructions** in the education system.
- Deaf teachers share **equal status** as hearing teachers.
- Deaf teachers benefit both DHH and hearing students in terms of acting as **language model, teaching and supporting students socially and emotionally**.
- Deaf teachers are especially important to DHH students as they give DHH students **a sense of empathy** and **positive development of their identity** which undoubtedly contribute to their healthy psychological development.



# 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.