At present China has over 20 million deaf people. It is a quite important task to develop higher education for the deaf and to cultivate them into advanced talents for society.

In 1991, the department of special education was founded at Tianjin University of Technology and started recruiting deaf students of engineering. In 1997, China Disable Persons’ Federation signed a cooperative agreement with Tianjin municipal government to jointly establish a higher education college of engineering for the deaf — Technical College for the Deaf at Tianjin University of Technology, which is the first one in China.

During over a decade year, our college changed from triennium technical college to four-year undergraduate college. Now there are two specialities: computer science and application; art design. Nowadays there are 192 deaf students studying here and there are nearly 300 have graduated, who came from over 20 provinces, cities or autonomous regions.

Following is our experience of running a school.

I. master the major characteristics of deaf students

Hearing is an important sense of man which is a channel of getting information. Aural mar greatly influences on deaf students’ mental activities, makes a lot of different characteristics from hearing students in the process of receiving schooling education.

1. the characteristic in apperception

As deaf students apperceive the environment, hearing plays no or a little role, which holdbacks them getting information in depth and width. They mainly depend on the vision, cutaneous sensation, taste, smell, etc. to know environment. Based on the theory of disfigurement compensation, because of the function of compensation, generally speaking, deaf students are more sensitive than the healthy students in vision, cutaneous sensation, etc.

2. the characteristic in attention

As a result of aural mar, the interfere channel is interdicted when deaf students get information from environment. Generally speaking, their attention is easily drawn. It incorporates that tensity of attention is higher, stability is stronger, yet width of attention is narrow, the distribution of attention and transferability are weaker.

3. the characteristic in memory

The deaf perceptive characteristic decides that there are more images of vision, cutaneous sensation, kinaesthesia in their brain, that things of direct-view images can be remembered quickly, longer and easily reproduced. However, the relatively more nonfigurative things are remembered more difficultly and easily make mistakes.
4. the characteristic in thinking

Aural mar influences on the deaf students’ normal formation of language in their infant period, more on their development of nonfigurative thinking ability. Generally speaking, their nonfigurative thinking level is lower, they lay particular stress on imagery thinking.

5. the characteristic in affection

Because deaf students are limited on receiving information and communicate with other people less, mature degree of their mentality cannot reach the standard of healthy students. To some extent, dependant thoughts are in existence, their thoughts are relatively simple, and their character is candour. They are both of naivete, enthusiasm, clinging and extreme, suspicion and ramstam. Reins easily fluctuate.

6. the characteristic in will and quality

The deaf students who can enter into university need to make more efforts than healthy persons. At present in China the scope of higher education for the deaf is smaller, so the deaf students are the top ones of the deaf. In the long-term process that they struggle with their own deformity and get outstanding achievements, their dogged will and quality are exercised. In general, deaf students are harder at studying and strong at will.

II. Hold the three important relationships in higher education of engineering for the deaf

As a part of higher education, higher education of engineering for the deaf, of course, needs to follow the common rules of higher education. But because of the specificity to educational object, we still aim at the main characteristics of deaf students; hold the specificity of higher education of engineering for the deaf.

1. the relationship between teaching students in accordance of their aptitude and “regression to the main stream”

The deaf students have their own characteristics, so we should teach them in accordance of their aptitude, and teaching approach have to adapt to their special states. In whole, education to deaf students differs from the healthy ones. Individually speaking, individual deference of deaf students is more. Compared with the healthy students, it is clearer. The extent that deaf persons participate in society, their living condition and contribution to society was decided greatly by the extent that they syncretize with the healthy persons. The education to the deaf students is special but cannot be enclosed. It is needed that we purposefully stress in education on “regression to the main stream”. That is, try to syncretize deaf students with healthy students as much as possible, indeed demand and cultivate them according to the student standard. In this sense, leading of “regression to the main stream is an important aspect to deaf students when teaching them according to their aptitude.

2. the relationship between making best use of the advantages and bypass the disadvantages and making best use of the advantages and making up the disadvantages.

Based on the analysis of the deaf student main characteristics, we essentially master their advantages and disadvantages in the growing process. Our education must adapt to these characteristics, both make best use of the advantages and bypass the disadvantages and at the same time make best use of the advantages and make up the disadvantages.

“Make best use of the advantages and bypass the disadvantages” mainly point the
speciality setting, the teaching approach aims at trying to develop the advantages of deaf students' mentality, avoid the disadvantages of difficulty in communication in language. At the same time pay attention to “make best use of the advantages and make up the disadvantages. To the disadvantages like abstract thinking, etc. use the ways of education, booting, encouragement to promote them development of “weak items”, thus make for their improvement in integrate qualities and the all

3. the relationship between in and out of classroom

Compared with healthy students, education in and out of classroom of higher education of engineering for the deaf must be united closely. Not only is out-of-classroom education regarded as an important road of cultivating the qualities, but also is considered as a necessary continuousness and extendedness. In out-of-classroom education, direction and organization under educators is absolutely necessary. Our experience is higher education of engineering for the deaf is a kind of “complex quality education system with in-and-out-of classroom integrating”.

III. Establish a characteristic cultivating plan of higher education of engineering

Starting from deaf students’ main characteristics, following the guideline of mastering three important relationships, we, during more than a decade years, we progressively set up a set of cultivating plan of higher education of engineering for the deaf, which adapts to China’s present situation in mode of schooling-running, teaching plan, teaching approach and faculty.

1. mode of running a school

We adopt mode of combining running school independently with open-running school. We carry out the way that deaf students are separate but not away from the healthy students. On one hand, Technical College for the Deaf is set up separately, which has her own leadership system, structure, separate classroom teaching, separate teaching activities, brings special approach and method to teaching. On the other hand, the school-running place of Technical College for the Deaf locates in Tannin University of Technology. It shares the same teaching building with other colleges. Deaf students and healthy students are in the same dormitory building and the same library, dining hall, laboratory, etc.

2. teaching plan

Higher education of engineering for the deaf that we are conducting in whole, teaching plan is nearly the same as the same specialties that common students study in order to keep cultivating quality. Meanwhile, adapting to main characteristics of deaf students, we follow the basic thought of “optimizing base, reinforcing practice, stressing on quality” and properly adjusted the teaching plan

3. teaching approach

On this aspect of teaching approach, faculties have accumulated practicing experience during recent years. In order to adapt to the characteristics of deaf students, individual deference has been emphasized, more classroom discussion have been used and out-of-classroom education have been paid attention to.

4. faculty

It is very important to do well in higher education of engineering for the deaf and to construct a high tone faculty team. We reply on Tannin University of Technology. Excellent specialty teachers are selected to enrich faculty of Technical College for the Deaf. In order to teach well deaf students, teachers must study the mental
characteristics of deaf students with great concentration. Technical College for the Deaf
designedly sends teachers to attend in advanced studies about interrelated knowledge,
for example, psychology, education, etc.

Deaf students who want to become a talent must pay out extra efforts; so do the
teachers who educate deaf students. We require teachers have the thought that "deaf
students be regarded as the children of our own" and are full of love.

5. cooperation home and abroad

China started late in higher education for the deaf, so we not only reinforce
scientific research of our own, but also strengthen cooperation between sister
universities and international cooperation to draw advanced school-running ideas and
experience.

In terms of international cooperation, we established a friendly interuniversity
relationship with Tsukuba College of Technology in Japan. From 2001 to 2004, Prof.
Nishijo Kazushi and Prof. Naoki Ohnuma (from Tsukuba College of Technology), the
two presidents, visited our college for many times. Prof. Naoki Ohnuma was invited to
make a lecture on audiology for faculty and was given a warm welcome. I ever led on
teachers and students to visit Tsukuba College of Technology, met a lot of teachers.
Their profound knowledge and precise attitude of pursuing their studies impressed me
much. We two college signed an agreement of sister university, at the same time we
are the colleges which held student activities most. Directed and organized by Mr.
Araki Tsutomu, two paper car competitions were held between us. In the intercourses
with international sister college, we have learned a lot of new experience which will
guide us in work.

Take this opportunity, I thank President Naoki Ohnuma and wish Tsukuba College
of Technology develop continually.