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Abstract

Our Experience in Preserving and Documenting Sign Languages in Indonesia in the APSL Program

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This presentation will focus on efforts to document and preserve sign languages in Jakarta and Yogyakarta as part of training and research at the Asia-Pacific Sign Linguistics Research and Training Program (APSL) at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Laura and Adhi are now studying in the higher diploma level. Laura is a deaf of deaf parents and lives in Jakarta. Adhi is the only deaf from a hearing family and from Yogyakarta. He suffered a hearing loss at around age 6. After the hearing loss, he entered a special school for the Deaf and became a part of the Deaf community.

The presentation begins with an introduction about the sign language situation in Indonesia and Indonesian people’s perception on sign languages and Deaf people. Later, the presenters share the changes in their perceptions on sign languages and Deaf identity before and after participating in the Asia-Pacific Sign Linguistics Research and Training Program. The presenters also describe the data comparison between Jakarta Sign Language and Yogyakarta Sign Language as an example of their work in the program.

The presentation concludes that respect for the Deaf and their sign languages is important in the documentation and preservation of sign languages. This includes the acceptance of their languages, equal access to employments and quality education, especially for deaf children.