Taiwan is famous for its natural hot springs that can be found all over the island. The history of hot springs in Taiwan stems from Japanese occupation at the beginning of the 1900’s. They introduced and developed the culture surrounding hot spring and their supposed healing properties. Today, it is very common to find “aunts and uncles” (older people) soaking in the hot springs during the cool fall/winter months in Taiwan, and even in the blisteringly hot months of summer.

The purpose of this lesson is to introduce to students some of the differences between Hot Springs in Taiwan and the ones that I grew up around in Florida. I know this is a rather contextually specific lesson, but maybe some of the countries that other ETAs live/teach in will have similar springs that they can talk about with their students.

Taiwan has many types of hot springs, cold springs, mud springs, and seabed springs. One of the cold springs in Taiwan is famous, “The Su’ao Cold Spring is a truly rare natural spring with water at temperature at 22 °C below. This kind of unique springs is only in Italy and Taiwan. The water of Su’ao Cold Spring is odorless, clear and drinkable and contains sodium bicarbonate.”

After talking about this I introduced Blue Springs in Orange City, Florida. This is a very popular spring to go to in Central Florida. It is particularly popular because the water is crystal clear, and has a bluish tint to it. It is also very popular for the Manatees that frequent the spring in the winter months. I showed three videos of some of the wildlife that live in and around the spring (rivers and lakes) in Florida, as many of the natural springs feed some of Florida’s large bodies of water. Also, because Florida is extremely flat, and in some cases swampy (think Florida Everglades), alligators and snakes are also very common to see when swimming in the springs, although it is very common today to have nets or other barriers to separate the animals and swimmers.

I showed a video of a man swimming very close to a 12 ft. alligator (unfortunately this alligator was believed to have killed someone, and was later shot and killed). I have a video of a girl swimming with a manatee, I find it amusing because she is freaking out, even though manatees are quite harmless, and rather curious and friendly animals. Finally, Blue Springs is also a popular place for people to go diving, the boil (where the water comes out of the earth). I showed a video of a guy free diving down into the cave so students could see how deep it was.

Next, I introduced Ponce Deleon, a Spanish explorer, who was looking for the “Fountain of Youth.” It was believed to make you younger (live longer) if you drank from it. Ponce Deleon Springs is the fabled, “Fountain of Youth” located in Central Florida.

Afterwards, there are a few useful vocabulary words that I introduced to students that would be useful at a hot spring. Students attempt to learn these words in case they ever need to help a foreigner at the hot springs. Afterwards, to help the students review the words we played a vocabulary edition of “Go Fish.”

This is a one-time lesson taught over a 45-minute period. Some students found it to be very interesting and others did not. My co-workers enjoyed the material, so overall it was a successful lesson.