

## **Roles of Community Language Schools in New Times: The Case of a Japanese Saturday School in Australia**

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Lo Bianco, Liddicoat and Crozet (1999) argued that multiculturalism without multilingualism is a weak model of multiculturalism. Few people would deny the view that language is a core part of culture. However, despite the strong advocacy for multilingual society and the inclusion of minority languages in school education by prominent researchers in so-called multicultural nations (e.g. Cummins and Danesi in Canada and Clyne and Lo Bianco in Australia), social and governmental commitment to community language education appears to have been losing rather than gaining in strength in the last 10 years. This weakening seems to be partly attributable to the powerful diffusion of English all over the world and the shift of focus of language education from LOTE to English literacy in those countries. However, the number of children who cross national borders and grow between different cultures is rapidly increasing in many parts of the world. Mother tongue maintenance, bilingualism, academic development and cultural identities are important issues for these children, and community language schools should play an important role in addressing them.

This paper presents the current situation of community language schools in Australia and discusses their roles from the perspective of multiculturalism in "New Times" (Hall and Jacques 1990). It will also introduce my current research, a case study of the Japanese Saturday School in Melbourne.