

## **Multicultural and Multiethnic Education in Japan**

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*In Japan, the Ainu people have been living mainly in Hokkaido and many Koreans continue to live since the end of the World War Two. Since 1990's, the number of migrant workers has increased rapidly. In this sense, Japanese society has been multicultural and multiethnic. However, those minority groups have been strictly discriminated against in Japanese society and in schools, they have not been given opportunities to multicultural and multiethnic education.*

*Against the ignorance of their culture and language, those minority groups established their own schools apart from existing school system to educate their children with pride of their own culture and language. Today those international and ethnic schools have an important role in providing foreign children with alternative education. Then, those schools have to be supported financially by the Government. The struggle of the Ainu people to establish their own school should be also supported by the Government, since the Ainu people have been recognized as an indigenous people by the Japanese Government.*

*With globalization, the number of foreign students has rapidly increased in public schools. In order to respond to the educational needs of those children, the educational authorities have begun to provide them with special programs for teaching Japanese as a Second Language (JSL) and with native language instruction.*

*Concerning JSL programs, the period of the program should be extended to more than 5 years. It is too short to develop cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP). On the other hand, regarding the quality of JSL program, the content-based program has to be expanded instead of the program that develops only basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS). Native language instruction for different cultural backgrounds should be implemented in every public school as quickly as possible if there is even one such student.*

### **1 Introduction**

Japan is often thought of as a homogeneous society by Japanese themselves and often by outsiders. This is not the case. Japanese society has been multicultural and multiethnic since the

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beginning of its modernization in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1869, the Meiji New Government integrated officially, “Ezo” as a territory of Japan, naming it Hokkaido and establishing the Agency of Reclamation to develop it with domestic migration. Ezo was called “Ainu Moshiri”, which means “The land where human beings live” in Ainu language. Ryukyu, the southern island chain called Okinawa today, was also integrated into Japanese territory by the Meiji New Government in 1872. Ryukyu was an independent kingdom where they had their own culture and language. Many Korean people had moved to Japan after the military occupation started on the Korea Peninsula from 1905. Today, about five hundred thousand of those Koreans and their descendents continue to live in Japan, keeping their national or ethnic identity as Korean. They are called, “Zainichi” (which means the people staying in Japan). Moreover, since the second half of the 1980’s, Japan has received a wave of migrant workers and their families. The population of foreign residents, including Koreans and these immigrant workers, reached more than 2 million and is still increasing.

As mentioned above, today in Japan we have various groups and individuals with cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity. However, Japanese school system has not provided their children with opportunities to multicultural and multiethnic education.

This paper will describe how Japanese school system educates these children and how the cultural and ethnic minorities have attempted to maintain a cultural identity for their children. The educational activities in international schools and ethnic schools like the Korean and Brazilian schools will be analyzed. Finally, this paper will introduce a new vision to develop multicultural and multiethnic education in Japan.

Although the movement for liberation of Burakumin is a typical movement which has affected strongly on the methodology of multicultural and multiethnic education in Japan, here we don’t have much space for this issue.

## **2 Society with Cultural, Linguistic and Ethnic Diversity**

### **(1) The Ainu people**

According to the survey conducted by the Hokkaido Government in 2006 (The Hokkaido Government, 2006), there are 23,782 Ainu people residing in Hokkaido. In fact, it is estimated that the Ainu population is far larger than the results of the survey show. Due to discrimination, there may be many Ainu people who don’t identify themselves as Ainu. Mr. Yuji Shimizu, the President of Forum on Ethnic Minorities, estimated that the number might be ten times larger than the survey’s figures.<sup>(1)</sup> Outside the Ainu population of Hokkaido, about 2700 Ainu people are living in Tokyo Metropolitan area<sup>(2)</sup>.

The Ainu people were discriminated against legally by the Japanese Government from 1899, when the Hokkaido Former Aborigines Protection Act was promulgated and put into force. In 1997, with abolition of the former law, the new Law for the Promotion of Ainu Culture and the Dissemination and Advocacy of Knowledge in respect of Ainu Traditions was put into force.<sup>(3)</sup> For approximately 100 years, they have been living in inferior living conditions, facing discrimination in education, marriage, job hunting, etc..

With promulgation of the new law concerning the Ainu people, the conditions they face in recovering their culture and language has rapidly changed, although there has been some criticism, because the content of the law is limited to cultural issues.

In recent years, we had two epoch-making occasions that might reflect in large scale to the Ainu people's movements. The first is the adoption of Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the U.N. General Assembly in 2007. The Japanese Government supported it. The second is that the House of Representatives and the House of Councilors adopted unanimously the Request for the Japanese Government to recognize the Ainu as indigenous people in June, 2008. Soon after its adoption, the Chief Cabinet Secretary, Mr. Nobutaka Machimura published an official comment to acknowledge the Ainu as an indigenous people and to establish Forum on Policies regarding the Ainu people, composed of people familiar with Ainu issues.

The Okinawa people also have been oppressed and discriminated against for a long time after Japanese occupation supported by the Japanese Government. Okinawa was a kingdom called Ryukyu where they had their own culture and language. Even though they still have disadvantages, like a concentration of U.S. Military Bases and there still exists discrimination against the Okinawan people, their culture and language are more and more accepted by Japanese people.

## **(2) Korean people**

At the end of the Second World War, there were 2 million Korean people living in Japan. Almost all of them were forced to move from the Korea Peninsula to Japan during Japanese military occupation. Some of them were brought to work as a kind of slave in mines or in the construction of dams. 1.4 million of those people went back to Korea soon after the end of the War, but six hundred thousand Koreans decided to continue living in Japan. Some of them had lost everything when they came to Japan and had nothing in Korea. Others couldn't return to their land, because of the confusion at start of the Korea War.

After the end of the War until today, they have faced serious discrimination in Japanese society. Although they were victims of the Japanese military occupation, they never received an apology from the Japanese Government. On the contrary, they were considered dangerous. It was feared that they were related to the communist movement by the Allied Occupying Forces (G.H.Q.) and the Japanese Government. They were controlled by official oppressive policies.

One of the most tragic chapters in this history was the order by the Japanese Government to close Korean schools. Soon after the end of the War, the Korean people began to establish their own schools where their children could learn Korean language and culture. Until 1948, there had been about 600 single classroom or small schools constructed all over Japan. However, in January, 1948, the Japanese Government, following orders from G.H.Q., ordered the local governments to close Korean schools in local areas and to force the Korean children study in Japanese public schools.

There was strong resistance by the Korean people and Japanese people with solidarity against this policy, especially in Hanshin area that lead to the death of a sixteen-year-old student, shot to death by police in Osaka.

In spite of oppression by the Japanese Government, the Korean people didn't stop organizing their own associations to protect their identity and interests, and founded again Korean schools to teach their children Korean language and culture.

## **(3) Migrant workers and other new comers**

Since the second half of the 1980s, the number of foreign residents has increased. In December, 2007, it reached 2,152,973 which amounted to 1.7% of population of Japan. The number of residents listed according to nationality is in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Foreign Residents in Japan

Nationality	Number	%
Total	2,152,973	100
China	606,889	28.2
Korea	593,489	27.6
Brazil	316,967	14.7
Philippine	202,592	9.4
Peru	59,696	2.8
USA	51,851	2.4
Others	321,489	14.9

Font: Ministry of Education<sup>(4)</sup>

The category of Chinese includes the family members of Japanese returnees who were left in their childhood in Northeast China because of the confusion at the end of the War. Today Japan is accepting a lot of trainees who come to learn professional skills. Besides those types of Chinese residents mentioned above, we have university students or students in Japanese language school and Chinese women who have come to marry Japanese men living in rural areas.

Out of six hundred thousand Korean residents, five hundred thousand are those who came to Japan because of the War. Other Koreans are university students, women living as wives of Japanese and workers in factories.

Almost all of Brazilian and Peruvian people are those who have come to work in Japan with special permission from the Japanese Government, since 1990 when the regulation of Immigration Law changed. They are working mainly in the factories of automobile industry in Aichi, Gifu, Mie, Shizuoka, Nagano, Kanagawa and Gunma Prefectures.

The case of Philippine people is a very particular one. Half of them are women who married Japanese. At first, they came to Japan with entertainment visas to work in the entertainment industry. They met marriage partners through their work and after marrying settled in Japan.

The Japanese Government and the industrial world intend to open their doors to more migrant workers, because it is estimated that the shortage of workforce would continue. They are still working at the bottom of labor market and will continue to live in precarious conditions as like they are used as a valve in labor market.

These migrant workers are willing to live in public housing developments divided, according to their nationalities so that they can exchange information about jobs or daily life and can cooperate in supporting each other in their new environments.

Another reason to live in close proximity to others of the same nationality is residential discrimination. The foreign residents have difficulties in renting apartments due to discrimination of foreigners.

### 3 Education for Foreign Children or Ethnic Minorities in Public Schools

#### (1) “Failure” in public schools and its Cause

In Japanese public schools, the children with culturally, linguistically and ethnically diverse background have to face great difficulties in entering into Japanese mainstream. As a result of poor conditions, about half of the foreign students don't continue their education post junior high school (Inui, 2008). The general average that continue is 97.8%.<sup>(5)</sup>

Here we have two cases that show the serious situations of those foreign children. The first case is the children with Chinese backgrounds related to Japanese returnees. In 2000, Kaji showed that the ratio of those Chinese students to go on to high school in 1995 was 50% against the 95% of the population. He also found that the “semi-lingual” phenomenon was happening to those students at that time (Kaji, 2000). From that time on, new policies have been taken and new methodology to improve the situation has been applied. However, research shows that the ratio of Chinese children is still lower than the average. The survey conducted by Hyogo Prefecture, indicates that the ratio of students that continue to high school is still 73% in 2006 (The Conference of Support Centers for Native Language Education, 2008).

The situation of Brazilian students is also serious. The survey of the number of school-aged foreign children without any registration to any schools showed that 28.8% of foreign children didn't go to Japanese schools nor to ethnic schools. This survey was conducted in 2002 by 14 cities where they have more Brazilian residents since Immigration Law reform in 1990.<sup>(6)</sup> Although this rate wasn't considered to be reflecting the real situation, because it includes unknown people, the rate could show how serious the situation was. The survey conducted by Kani City in Gifu Prefecture during 2003–2004 shows that 5 out of 23 foreign students (21.7%), mainly 13 years old Brazilians, and 15 out of 29 students (51.7%) aged 14 years old didn't go to any school (The Kani City, 2005).

Historically, Japanese school system has forced the children belonging to ethnic or language minorities to assimilate into Japanese mainstream culture, denying their own languages and cultures. The Ainu children in Hokkaido and the children in Okinawa have been deprived of their mother tongues and forced to speak Japanese at school. They were forced to wear a sign around their neck called “Hogen-Fuda”, which meant, “I used local dialect”, so that they were forced by humiliation to learn standard Japanese as quickly as possible, prohibited to use their own language in school life.

The main factor to promote assimilation of those children with culturally, linguistically and ethnically diverse backgrounds is the character of Japanese National Curriculum Standard that focuses on educating, to educate Japanese people, ignoring the presence of children who speak other languages and have different cultural backgrounds. The general guideline of the Curriculum Standard states<sup>(7)</sup>:

Moral education in schools aims to..... nurture morality as a base for bringing up Japanese with subjectivity that contributes voluntarily to create an international society with peace and prospects for the future.

That's why it is very natural that Japanese Ministry of Education and other local educational authorities don't give any consideration to the existence of foreign students, forcing them to make a pledge to the Hinomaru (the Japanese flag) and sing Kimigayo (national anthem). Recent reforms of The Fundamental Law of Education also emphasize the importance to educate children “to love our nation and home province”.

## **(2) Monolingualism in school education**

Among those policies that don't respect the existence of foreign students in Japanese schools, a Japanese-only policy and the inadequacy of Japanese language instruction in quantity and quality are major factors in foreign children's “failure”.

First of all, Japanese schools don't give the students with a different cultural background the opportunity to learn their native languages within the framework of the official curriculum. Instructing native language has been limited by the Japanese Ministry of Education. However, in some schools which have many foreign students, they have some experimental classes to teach mother tongue.

In this monolingual context, some teachers suggest the students not to talk with their friends in first language, but try to speak in Japanese all the time while they are in schools. Others suggest the parents to try to talk with their children in Japanese at home, even if they don't have enough Japanese language skills, so that their children could develop Japanese language proficiency as soon as possible.

Based on the findings of second language acquisition studies or bilingual studies, those suggestions seem not to be correct. On the contrary, the use of their native language might create pride of their own culture and the parents could try to develop the native language of their children as well as possible, while they are talking with the children in their native language at home. Little by little, school teachers in public schools get to know through their in-service training how important educating the native language is.

On the other hand, at local level, some secretaries of education have offered the foreign students the opportunity to learn their native language. For example, the Secretary of Education in Hyogo Prefecture has developed a project to help promote activities to teach native languages since 2007. The project aims to help the acquisition of cognitive/academic language proficiency in Japanese through development of native language and to help the establishment of their cultural identity with native language and cultural activities (The Conference of the Support Center for Native Language Education, 2009).

In Icho Elementary School in Yokohama City, Kanagawa Prefecture, which is located in the Icho Housing Estate, the classes for Chinese children began in 2003 (Yamawaki, Keizo and Iho Elementary School in Yokohama City, 2005). The classes have been run by PTA, based on the voices of the parents anxious about difficulty in communication between them and their children.

### **(3) Inadequacy of Japanese language instruction for foreign students**

Many public schools in which foreign students are registered are providing special programs like pull-out classes for limited Japanese proficient students. But generally those programs don't last more than 2 years. The program term is too short to let those students integrate to the mainstream.

According to Jim Cummins (2001), there is a distinction between conversational language proficiency and academic one. He calls the former Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and the latter Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), insisting that it would take 2 or 3 years to acquire BICS in general, but in case of CALP it would take from 5 to 7 years. He has used this hypothesis to explain the failure of the limited language proficient students, for whom the schools stop to offer special language program, even though they need more time to develop CALP.

The schools would have to provide limited language proficient students with 5–7 years' special program to develop CALP. Through some training courses, little by little, Japanese teachers are getting knowledge about the distinction between CALP and BICS, and the hypothesis insisting that it takes more than 5 years for limited language proficient students to develop their language proficiency well. In spite of diffusion of this knowledge and information among school teachers,

it is not easy to have this kind of long term program because of financial restriction.

There is another serious problem in quality of Japanese language instruction. Many Japanese school teachers responsible for foreign students don't teach the content of subjects, but try to develop mainly conversation skills to mainstream the foreign students (Nomoto, 2006).

For example, in some schools, the limited language proficient students are pulled out of mainstream mathematic classes to study Japanese with functional textbooks which don't contain the content of subjects. As a result of that type of pull-out classes, many students lose chances to enter into the mainstream. We know that type of class is not suggested in multicultural programs in USA.

It is very interesting to compare this practice in Japanese schools with content-based ESL in the USA in which the students develop their cognitive/academic language proficiency through study within the content of subjects. One of the most famous content-based ESL program is provided by Urbana School District in the State of Illinois. The content-based ESL program is totally different from existing Japanese language instruction. The former classes are almost the same as the mainstream. The difference is its methodology which uses a lot of hand-outs to help the understanding of the children. In the Japanese language instruction, it is usual for the student to have individual class without any materials of other subjects. Sometimes, volunteers without teaching qualification might teach them.

Recently the Japanese Ministry of Education began to use the concept "Japanese as a Second Language" (JSL) to develop Japanese language teaching programs and to develop teaching methods that emphasize the content of subjects. However, the new concept and methods have not been implemented to Japanese school teachers.

## **4 Education in International Schools for Foreign Children or Ethnic Schools**

### **(1) Korean Schools**

Today in Japan, we have about 70 Korean schools all over Japan which are run by the Korean communities. Almost all of them are run by the General Association of Korean Residents ("Soren") except 4 schools related with the Korean Residents Union in Japan ("Mindan").

The former Korean School system has all level of schools from kindergarten to the "University" (Chosen Daigakko) which is not legally recognized by the Japanese Government. They have their own teacher-training system for those schools. Besides, they edit their own textbooks which are used in those schools.

The curriculum covers Japanese national curriculum so that the graduates can continue to study in Japanese schools at any level.

It is very interesting to note that Korean schools have the most elaborate bilingual programs. Although the language spoken at home is Japanese in almost all families, the students learn all subjects in Korean except Japanese language class. It is very similar to an immersion program. In the first grade, the Japanese language has to be used to control the class. But, in the second term of the first grade, Korean language is used all the time.

During 12 years from elementary level to high school level, they learn in Korean, keeping their Japanese language proficiency and developing its academic language proficiency. As a result of those programs, they become almost balanced bilingual in Japanese and Korean. The fact that many students pass the entrance exam to the most competitive universities in Japan show its suc-

cess. Even though the entrance exams are written in Japanese and require a high level of cognitive/academic language proficiency, they pass them.

The method of transference is what makes it possible for those students in Korean Schools to get a high level of Japanese ability. Those who want to go to Japanese university struggle to transfer the concepts in Korean to Japanese ones, especially during three years in high school. It might not be easy to memorize words and concepts, but it might not be so difficult because they don't need to learn those concepts from zero, once they have gotten proficiency in their native language.

## **(2) Brazilian Schools**

From the beginning of 1990's soon after the exodus of Japanese Brazilians to Japan, there has been voices asking for Brazilian schools which would give opportunities for the Brazilian children to maintain their native language, Portuguese. Because many Brazilian children in Japanese schools began to lose it and the parents are anxious about not only the loss of identity as Brazilian but also lack of communication in Portuguese with their children.

In the middle of 1990's, some Brazilian schools were founded in cities such as Hamamatsu (Shizuoka), Toyota (Aichi), Oizumi (Gunma) or Ota (Gunma) where Brazilians live in close proximity. Other institutions began to provide Portuguese classes to the Brazilian children after school. The year 2000 was a turning point when many Brazilian schools began to operate. It was related to the fact that Brazilian Ministry of Education came to authorize them as Brazilian schools abroad whose certificate would be as accepted as one in Brazilian national territory.

Many Brazilian schools came to operate not as supplementary institutions for the Brazilian children studying in Japanese public schools, but as regular schools where the children study all day long following the Brazilian curriculum (Onai, 2003). A lot of Brazilian children who were studying in Japanese public schools, but they didn't understand the content of their lessons, left Japanese schools to move to Brazilian schools.

According to the survey on Brazilian Schools in Japan, conducted by the Japanese Ministry of Education, today there are 86 Brazilian schools in Japan and about 4 thousand students are studying there. Except four of these schools, the others have no recognition as miscellaneous schools by the Japanese Local Government, they are not receiving any subsidy from government. The tuition is very expensive even though the institutional conditions are very poor, comparing with public schools. They don't have a library, science room for experiments and room for domestic science. What is worse, the number of students has been radically reduced because of the economic crisis.

Those Brazilian Schools have an important role in Japanese society and its school system. Because those schools have provided the Brazilian children not only to continue to study in the same way as in Brazil, but also to give space for them to escape from Japanese School System. Sometimes they have serious difficulty in adapting themselves to Japanese school culture. In fact, many of the students who study in Brazilian Schools have studied once in Japanese schools.

In these years, those schools have been required to teach them Japanese. Some schools began to have a bilingual program to bring students up as bilingual (Nomoto, 2005).

## **(3) The Case of Paulo Freire Community School**

Paulo Freire Community School (ECOPAF: Escola Comunitaria Paulo Freire) is one of the Brazilian schools with a bilingual program and other unique activities. It is located in the Homi

Housing Estate, Toyota City, Aichi Prefecture, which is very famous for concentration of Brazilian people. In that Housing Estate, Brazilians occupy four thousand of nine thousand residents.

ECOPAF began to function in January, 2005, with following goals:

- Guarantee the right to education for all the children and youth, with free education.
- Provide quality education so that the children would develop all of the competences.
- Provide bilingual education so that they could communicate in Japanese and Portuguese.
- Operate as a Community Education Center for the exchange of all the residents.

It was imperative for ECOPAF to guarantee the right to education for all the children and youth. Because the community workers knew that many Brazilian children and youth who drop out of school and couldn't go to Brazilian schools committed crimes and went to prison. Some Brazilian schools rejected their registration because of delinquency. Quality of education of the Brazilian schools was not as good as Japanese public schools or Brazilian schools in Brazil. First of all, many teachers don't have enough experiences to be responsible for the class. Poor facilities had also deprived the opportunity to develop all of the competences. Being bilingual in Japanese and Portuguese would be a great advantage for the Brazilian children living in Japan. They can use those skills in their future jobs. The ECOPAF is not just a educational institution with fixed goals, but a kind of community educational center which always tries to find new educational needs and to response to them. For example, evening regular courses for youth which the ECOPAF provides was born from community-based research on education.

Paulo Freire was a famous Brazilian teacher in the world who wrote "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" or "Extension or Communication" and contributed to a world-wide social and educational movement. Unfortunately, the name of Paulo Freire was not well known among Brazilian people except teachers, because the military regime from 1964 to 1985 prohibited the reading of his books for a long time. As the Homi Housing Estate is a community where the experimental practice of problem-posing Japanese language education was carried out and his name was known among community residents, the Homigaoka Latin American Center which runs the ECOPAF, decided to name it as this and to follow his ideas, using his methodology.

The bilingual program of ECOPAF is based on findings in the research on second language acquisition or bilingual education. Basically the children learn the content of subjects in Portuguese. First they develop their academic ability in native language. After that, they try to transfer to Japanese (Nomoto, 2008).

Another unique activity of the bilingual program is to provide support for the enforcement of Japanese language proficiency and learning native language, Portuguese, called "Cantinho do Saber", which means "Garden of Knowledge". Brazilian children who study in Japanese school come to ECOPAF everyday after school. As soon as they finish having a snack, they start to study. First, they try to finish their homework with support of Japanese teachers for one hour. Then, they begin to learn their native language, Portuguese, for one hour.

As they learn their native language everyday, we can see the fact that they are developing their native language abilities.

## 5 New Visions for Next Decade

### (1) Bilingual Education in Public Schools

With globalization advancing, more and more public schools require programs to deal with the increase of multicultural and multiethnic students. It is indispensable to have law reform related to National Curriculum Standard that defines the base of education for foreign students. The public schools are not only for children with Japanese nationality, but also for foreign children. Then, they must have to have multicultural programs which permit them to keep their cultural identity and to enter into the mainstream.

First of all for that, the schools have to provide them access to learn their native language. One lesson a week is not enough for them to develop their native language. It would be necessary to have more than 30 minutes' lesson every day. It is also important for children to develop their native language in their childhood. Access to native language instruction should be available in the nursery schools or kindergarten.

Concerning Japanese as a Second Language (JSL), a content-based curriculum has to be developed. As mentioned above, the reason for the failure of foreign children has been very clear. If the schools don't provide the foreign children with study content of the subjects, they can never catch up with the mainstream students. The period of JSL has to be extended to 5–7 years so that they can develop cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP). The period of special program which has been provided by each local educational authority is too short for the students to enter into the mainstream.

Along with this educational reform, the system for teacher training has to be reformed to establish a new system for bilingual education. The most important issue is to create a new category of qualification in teacher training like a JSL teacher. A licence for JSL could be an additional qualification certificate based on other basic licences such as Math, Science etc..

The new point of view with critical bilingulism could be introduced into practices. because those who need multicultural education are from minority groups or excluded people. A multicultural education should be an education for transforming the society which oppresses these individuals and groups.

### (2) Support for International Schools and Ethnic Schools

The bilingual education in Korean schools needs to be examined. Those experiences of bilingual programs are rich enough to be analyzed and used in other international schools or multicultural education in public schools.

Concerning financial support, as the experiences of Korean Schools show, the management of schools without any public subsidy is very difficult. Especially primary schools need more attention to smaller classes. Until today, almost all of the international schools and ethnic schools have been managed by voluntary individuals and collective support. The parents have worked as part-time workers, in the factories. The unemployment rate might be estimated at about 70% in May, 2009. Many students of the Brazilian Schools had to stop studying in those schools because the parents couldn't pay their tuition.

According to the survey conducted by the Ministry of Education in March, 2009, from December, 2008, to February, 2009, the number of enrolled had radically decreased from 6.373 to 3.881 a drop of 39.1% (The Ministry of Education, 2009).

To overcome that situation, a new law to give financial support to those schools has been

debated in the Diets. Historically, the Ministry of Education has not been in favor of supporting international schools and ethnic schools, especially Korean Schools. However, in the near future, those schools will be supported by the government.

Another important point of view is legal recognition as a “School”. The 1<sup>st</sup> Article of the School Education Law defines “School”. Those International schools or ethnic schools have not been recognized as a “school” defined by the Law. That’s why those schools have been left in poor condition.

### **(3) Foundation of the Ainu People’s School**

Since the recognition of the Ainu as an indigenous people by the Japanese Government, the possibility to establish an Ainu People’s School has been discussed among those who are supporting the Ainu people’s movement. Mr. Yuji Shimizu is Ainu, the President of the Forum on Ethnic Minorities, who is advocating eagerly the possibility and necessity of foundation of the Ainu People’s School.

In the proposals made by “Chi Kara Nisatta (Tomorrow We Make)” to the People’s Forum on Policies to the Ainu People composed of people familiar with Ainu issues, which was established by the government soon after the recognition by the government. It has requested for the Government to support foundation of the Ainu People’s School which would make it possible for the Ainu children to learn their own culture, tradition and language<sup>(8)</sup>.

Although the final report and proposals made by the People’s Forum on Policies to the Ainu People, in July 29, 2009, didn’t mention it, more and more people, including Japanese people, are becoming aware of necessity to establish a school for the Ainu.

The possible Ainu People’s School may be bilingual in Ainu language and Japanese. The curriculum should not be the same as the mainstream Japanese. They should have their own curriculum following their own traditions.

## **6 Conclusion**

The Japanese society has been a multicultural and multiethnic one. The Ainu people have been living mainly in Hokkaido and many Koreans continue to live in Japan since the end of the World War Two. A part from 1990’s, the number of migrant workers has increased rapidly. Historically the culture and language of those people have not been respected. On the contrary, they have been strictly discriminated against in the Japanese society. In school education, they have not been given the opportunity to multicultural and multiethnic education.

Against the ignorance of their culture and language, those minority groups established their own schools apart from the existing school system to educate their children with pride of their own culture and language. In those tentatives, we can see the most elaborated bilingual program in Korean schools. It is inevitable to support those Korean and Brazilian schools which are providing foreign children with multicultural education. The struggle of the Ainu people to establish their own school should be supported by the government, since the Ainu people have been recognized as an indigenous people by the Japanese Government.

With globalization, the environment around students with multicultural and multiethnic backgrounds has radically changed. The number of foreign students has rapidly increased in public schools. In order to respond to the educational needs of those children, particularly at the local

level, the educational authorities have begun to provide them with special programs for teaching Japanese as a Second Language and with native language instruction.

However, there are problematics in quantity and quality of those JSL programs. The period of programs is too short to develop cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP). It should be extended to more than 5 years following the findings of bilingual study of Jim Cummins. Concerning the quality of JSL program, the content-based program has to be expanded instead of the program that develops only basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS).

Native language instruction is indispensable for the children with different cultural backgrounds. It should be implemented in every public school as quickly as possible if there is even one such student. If there is any class or school for native language in the community, the government should assist and cooperate in providing access to it.

### Notes

1. According to his presentation realized in the Small Meeting in June of The Japan Society for Study of Adult and Community Education in 2009.
2. According to the Survey conducted by Tokyo Metropolitan Government in 1988.  
<http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/ainu/dai1/1siryou.pdf> retrieved July, 2009.
3. See HP of the Ainu Association of Hokkaido.  
<http://www.ainu-assn.or.jp/english/eabout01.html>
4. The Ministry of Justice  
<http://www.e-stat.go.jp/SG1/estat/List.do?lid=000001031723> retrieved July, 2009.
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6. Based on the materials which were published and distributed in the Tokyo Meeting of the Cities with Concentration of Foreign Residents, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2002
7. The Ministry of Education, National Curriculum Standards  
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