

## The Support System for Students with Limited Japanese Proficiency in Akita

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After the reform of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Law in 1990, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology began to carry out the “Survey Concerning the Conditions of Acceptance of Foreign Pupils Who Need Japanese Language Instruction” beginning the following year. According to the survey results for 2007 which were published in 2008, the total number of foreign pupils who need Japanese language instruction enrolled in national elementary, junior high and high schools, as well as intermediary schools and special needs schools stands at 25,411. Since the survey began in 1991, the decision as to just who decides which pupils are in need of Japanese language instruction and on what basis has been arbitrary. There are also many children who have complex linguistic and cultural backgrounds who are not covered by the survey. For instance, children with Japanese nationality and third or fourth generation Chinese backgrounds, or children through international marriages. Above all it is children with Japanese nationality born of international marriages between Japanese men and foreign women and children who come to Japan as dependents through their mother’s remarriage to Japanese men who are catered for in schools.

In this presentation I would like to explore the possibilities for a transnational education basing my discussion on examples of how schools and regions have changed in response to the emergence of “different cultures” (*ibunka*). Also, without regard to nationality, I wish to try and think of children with complex linguistic and cultural backgrounds as “children of multicultural”. By clarifying their situation I will ask just how they are shaking up Japanese public education.