

## **Teaching Italian in Australia to Second Generation Italian-Australian Students**

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**Abstract.** Heterogeneity of class composition in schools, regarding cultural background and often language, is increasingly the norm in western countries. This paper explores some of the effects of cultural diversity on students' participation in school activities, examining a transcript taken from the videorecording of an Italian lesson in a high school in Sydney, Australia. The lesson is taught by a teacher whose mother tongue is English, while the pupils come mostly from families of Italian origin.

The video data will be analysed through a detailed discourse analysis within an ethnomethodological framework. I will point out how the students' knowledge of Italian, in fact, hinders the smooth running of the lesson. Teacher's authority is based on her/his superior knowledge, on which the control of the class depends. The presence in school of students of different cultural backgrounds in this case creates visible incongruities and questions the meaning of the learning processes.