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“Language of the Mother Country”
: “Languages of Other Countries”
= “Mother tongue” : “X-language”
Comparing These Concepts with “Langue Étrangère”

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Abstract

In modern Japanese, “Bokoku-go” (Language of the mother country) and “Bo-go” (Mother tongue) are relatively distinguished. On the other hand, “Gaikoku-go”, which literally means “Languages of other countries”, covers not only “Languages other than the mother country’s” but also “Languages other than the mother tongue”. Indeed, in modern Japanese, one can not refer to “languages other than the mother tongue” without automatically associating it to the notion of the nation. This paper labels this non-existing word as “X - go (X - language)”, looks into several problems caused by its absence and examines “Langue étrangère” (“foreign language” in French) as a referential concept.

Keywords

Languages of Other Countries; Language of the Mother Country;
Mother Tongue; Subject Connected with Language; Langue Étrangère

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