

## The Language Policies in Australia: Ideas and Objectives in two national language policies

Maiko Aoki

[Graduate School of International Media and Communication, Hokkaido University]

The main purpose of this paper is to make clear the differences between two national language policies, *National Policy on Language* (NPL) and *Australia's Language: Australian Language and Literacy Policy* (ALLP), in Australia, by comparing on ideas, objectives and goals of these policies. The first national language policy, NPL was established in 1987. This policy was based on the philosophy to respect all of languages that were used in and needed for Australia. They thought that the respect for languages could bring two major benefits to Australia and her people. One of these was to mold identities at some levels-individual, group, national and human level. Another one was economic development at each level. In order to obtain these two benefits, NPL stressed the importance of cooperation with each state and institutions, and language education, especially second language learning. English was regarded as the element to contribute to mold national identity, and Languages other than English (LOTE) to develop Australia's economy.

ALLP was established in 1991. This policy was based on the thought that languages are part of human resources, and ALLP considered language education was firstly based on national interests. So, English and some LOTEs was regarded as the importance for economic development to Australia. The responsibilities for these language education were divided to each state and institutions under the initiatives by the federal government, in order to achieve outcomes efficiently. Another elements besides the stressing by the policy, like the languages that were used in ethnic communities in Australia, were said to implement at fixed institutions like ethnic schools.

In conclusion, the differences between NPL and ALLP, I can point out, were primarily the shift of a center of balance of the policy. While NPL was regarded that languages were important to mold identities, to promote communication and to obtain economic benefit, ALLP was regarded that languages brought economic development to Australia. As a result, in ALLP, harmony between federal government and each state government, institutions etc was broken. The responsibilities for language education were divided to each state and institutions under the leadership of federal government. So, language education was divided to some groups from the point of objectives, target people, and institutions. In consideration of these divisions, we have to think what is Australia's multiculturalism.