英語作為工作語言

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一名訪客在樟宜機場降落，乘的士前往萊佛士坊，再花一天與銀行家、律師及監管人員開會，可能整天都聽不到英語以外的任何語言。各部門的標示、稅務機關的表格、交易所的規則手冊、新加坡金融管理局的公告以及法院的判決，全部以英語寫成。然而，英語只是部分人口的第一語言。《憲法》把馬來語定為國語。本章探討一個大多數人說福建話、潮州話、粵語、馬來語或淡米爾語的前殖民地，如何以英語運作其政府、法律及商業。本章亦探討這項選擇對金融中心的意義。

這個問題在日內瓦一書中有直接的對應。*Genève, place financière internationale*第J部分把法語視為日內瓦金融中心的一項基礎設施：一種屬於大陸法傳統的法律語言，與法國、比利時、盧森堡、魁北克、馬格里布及非洲法語區共通，亦是競爭對手無法建立的資產。新加坡的語言基礎設施屬於另一類型。英語是這個城市與全球金融體系本身、普通法世界以及制定國際標準的監管機構共通的語言。日內瓦的優勢來自一種令它與別不同的語言，新加坡的優勢則來自一種令它與所有人連繫的語言。

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本章是第J部分的開篇，該部分探討語言在金融中心的角色。本章追溯英語的殖民遺產、獨立後保留英語的政治決定，以及英語作為多元社會各社群之間共同語言的角色。其後轉而討論英語在金融及合約中的應用，最後探討新加坡英語、其口語變體新加坡式英語（Singlish）與國際英語之間的關係。雙語政策及華語的地位是第J部分第II章的主題。普通法作為法律輸出及法律服務市場屬於第J部分第III章，而教育與金融業人才則在第J部分第IV章探討。

要點

在英國統治下，英語成為行政、法院及商業的語言；由1834年的新加坡義學（Singapore Free School）開始，教會學校及政府學校承載了英語，而獎學金亦把最優秀的學生送往英國大學。自治及獨立後，國家承認四種官方語言，並保留馬來語為國語。不過，國家選擇英語作為政府、法律及商業的工作語言，因為英語在各社群之間保持中立，並打開通往世界經濟的大門。由1960年代至1987年，教育制度由四種分開的語文源流，轉為一個以英語為第一語文、母語為第二語文的單一國家制度。到2020年，英語已成為家中最常用的語言。2025年，英語是明顯多數居民的家庭用語。對金融中心而言，英語意味着法規、監管公告、合約、法院程序及仲裁，全部都以國際金融的語言運作，無須翻譯。

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