英语作为工作语言

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一位在樟宜机场降落、乘出租车前往莱佛士坊（Raffles Place），并与银行家、律师和监管者开了一整天会的访客，可能听不到一句英语以外的话。各部委的标牌、税务机关的表格、证券交易所的规则手册、新加坡金融管理局的通告以及法院的判决，全都以英语写成。然而，英语只是部分人口的第一语言。宪法规定马来语为国语。本章探讨一个大多数人讲福建话、潮州话、广东话、马来语或淡米尔语的前殖民地，如何走上以英语处理政务、法律和商业的道路。本章还要追问，这一选择对金融中心意味着什么。

这个问题在日内瓦卷中有直接的对应。*Genève, place financière internationale*第J部分把法语视为日内瓦金融中心的一项基础设施：它是大陆法传统中的法律语言，与法国、比利时、卢森堡、魁北克、马格里布和非洲法语区共享，也是竞争对手无法建造的资产。新加坡的语言基础设施属于另一种类型。英语是这座城市与全球金融体系本身、与普通法世界以及与制定国际标准的监管者所共享的语言。日内瓦的优势来自一种使其与众不同的语言，新加坡的优势则来自一种使其与所有人相连的语言。

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本章是第J部分的开篇，该部分探讨语言在金融中心中的作用。本章追溯英语的殖民遗产、独立后保留英语的政治决定，以及英语在多元社会各族群之间作为共同语言的作用。随后转向金融和合同中的英语，最后讨论新加坡英语、其口语变体新加坡式英语（Singlish）与国际英语之间的关系。双语政策和华语的地位是第J部分第II章的主题。普通法作为法律输出以及法律服务市场属于第J部分第III章，教育与金融业人才队伍则在第J部分第IV章中探讨。

要点

在英国统治下，英语成为行政、法院和商业的语言。自1834年的新加坡义学（Singapore Free School）起，教会学校和政府学校承载着英语，奖学金则把最优秀的学生送往英国的大学。自治和独立之后，国家承认四种官方语言，并保留马来语为国语。尽管如此，国家仍选择英语作为政府、法律和商业的工作语言，因为英语在各族群之间是中立的，并且打开了通往世界经济的大门。从20世纪60年代到1987年，教育制度从四种各自独立的语文源流转变为统一的国民教育体系，以英语为第一语文、母语为第二语文。到2020年，英语已成为家中最常使用的语言。2025年，英语是明显多数居民的家庭用语。对金融中心而言，英语意味着法规、监管通告、合同、法院诉讼和仲裁全都以国际金融的语言运作，无须翻译。

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