

摘要

跨国企业在全球化和本土化的双重路径中,需要解决多语的内外交际网络带来的沟通和管理问题。随着企业海外分支的规模扩大,跨国企业对语言进行管理的过程变得愈加复杂,信息技术发展及全球性人才流动加剧也对跨国企业语言多样性产生了深刻的影响。

本研究从全球化社会语言学理论视角出发,并采用语言管理理论构建了理论分析框架,通过分析在沪跨国企业语言管理的现状,总结模式和特点,探索语言管理的影响因素,从而讨论跨国企业的语言管理对其国际商务竞争力的影响。本研究需要回答以下四个问题:(1)跨国企业语言管理有哪些模式和特点?(2)影响跨国企业语言管理策略的因素是什么?(3)语言管理对企业国际化战略和跨国管理有什么影响?(4)如何构建和提升跨国企业的语言能力?

本研究采用多阶段的混合研究方法,由三个阶段的研究构成:第一阶段的个案研究(I),通过对样本企业的语言选择、语言需求以及语言能力现状的调查,研究了在沪跨国企业语言管理的类型和特点;第二阶段的问卷调查,研究了跨国企业语言管理策略的使用情况以及影响因素;第三阶段的个案研究(II),通过对样本企业语言管理影响机制的讨论,研究了语言管理对于跨国企业全球商务竞争力的影响,并提出了跨国企业语言能力的内涵以及评价体系。三个阶段环环相扣,前一个阶段的研究为后一阶段的研究提供数据信息,后一个阶段验证前一阶段的结果,并进一步深入探究该阶段的研究问题。通过三个阶段的数据分析,研究发现:(1)跨国企业语言管理随着主体的不同而呈现出不同的特点,各层级主体关注的焦点不同,对语言的功能和角色的认知也不同。从组织层面而言,跨国语言管理本质上是企业人力资源管理和知识管理的一部分;从简单(个体)语言管理层面而言,语言管理不仅是个人职业的人力资本,而且是社会身份认同和社会互动的构建成分。(2)总部和分支之间的语言管理主要受到企业的国际化战略、企业母国的社会文化、企业组织架构、分支的战略地位、员工语言能力的影 响;其中,工作语言管理策略和企业母国的相关性最为显著。(3)共同工作语言政策的制定和实施是跨国公司语言管理的核心,是消除多语环境交际障碍的主要途径。

但共同工作语言的中心化会造成企业语言资源意识不足，并且降低了员工学习其它语言的学习动机。员工害怕其语言能力不足与“个人能力不足”直接挂钩，或者害怕“丢面子”，导致回避使用该语言进行深入的工作讨论和日常社会交往，造成沟通不充分以及语言社区分化。此外，企业在多语策略受到成本因素和商业通用语言意识形态的影响，交际资源的开发和利用方面表现被动和迟缓。(4) 跨国企业语言能力主要由语言管理能力和员工语言能力两个互相作用的部分构成。语言管理能力构建的路径是从语言需求的评估出发，达到语言资源的优化配置。多语交际能力是跨国企业员工语言能力的特征之一，但多语组织环境下的个体语言能力并不仅仅表现为英语、日语、中文等带有具体标签的语言技能，还包括个体层面语言管理所表现出来的对于符号、身体语言、技术工具、语境因素等交际语库集合体 (assemblage) 的调动能力，将多层空间下的语库资源像可以随手取用的材料来现场搭建作品 (bricolage) 一样完成交际活动。这种灵活的语库运用能力也应该被作为语言能力得到认可。

基于以上发现，本研究提出：(1) 跨国企业语言能力的构建需要考虑到语言管理影响机制的动态性和多层性。动态性体现在市场变化、员工的流动以及全球化不同阶段下的分支战略地位和组织形式变化。多层性体现在组织层面和个体层面语言管理主体的分层和利益关注点的不同。跨国企业的语言能力基于员工个体的多语交际能力和调用语库的多元能力，还应该包括组织层面的语言管理能力。

(2) 对于跨国企业这一多语社区而言，语言不仅是人力资本，也是社会文化资源。管理者应考虑语言的社会互动和社会身份建构功能，重视语言的社会功能对于企业知识共享、价值观融合以及管理沟通效果的影响，充分发挥多层次多元化主体的主观能动性，鼓励员工自发的多语交际策略，最终提升企业的全球商务竞争力。

关键词： 跨国企业； 多语组织； 语言管理； 企业语言能力

Abstract

In contemporary society, the nexus between globalization and localization often demands Transnational Corporations (TNCs) to develop competitive language proficiency, thereby minimizing communicative and managerial challenges when they correspond with their partnering organizations. This norm has become a prominent need for those TNCs, potentially increasing a level of success in the global business arena. Besides, the development of information technology and the increasing mobility of transnational employees are closely intertwined with language diversity in contemporary TNCs. Thus, as exemplary cases, this study aims to explore factors influencing language management among TNCs in Shanghai.

This study adopts Language Management Theory (LMT) and global sociolinguistic theories to explore the current status quo of language use, language need and language proficiency of TNCs, and their language management process and the possible factors influencing the effectiveness of business communication. Hence, the primary research questions that guide this study are: (1) What is the status quo of language management of TNCs in Shanghai? (2) What factors influence the implementation of TNCs' language management strategies? (3) How does their language management impact TNCs' global integration and local development? and (4) What are the implications for the construction of language capability of TNCs?

This study designed a three-phase mixed-method approach, including: (1) a qualitative approach that aims to explore the types and characteristics of language management in the three selected TNCs (Case study I); (2) a quantitative approach that aims to investigate the strategies of language management and the possible factors influencing the effectiveness of business communication by employing questionnaires; (3) an interpretive project that explores the three prominent cases and their mechanisms of language management and to reveal the impact of the mechanisms on TNCs' global business competence (Case study II).

Through systematic data collection and analysis, the findings indicated four significant components. Initially, the first component refers to the multilayered agents in TNCs and their diverse interests and perceptions of the roles and functions of language that promote the dynamics of language management in the notion of TNC. From an organizational perspective, language management is an essential part of human resource management and knowledge management. However, from an individual perspective, language management is not only a form of human capital, but it is also a form of social capital that promotes social interaction and identity development. Secondly, language management strategies are predominantly used in corporate language policies, which entail influencing factors such as international strategies, headquarter location, organization structure, subsidiary role, and employees' language capability. Notably, the most significant factor is the sociocultural environment in native countries where the headquarters are located. Thirdly, a common corporate language can minimize the communication barriers that multilingual communities often face. However, employees' language proficiency in common languages may form language clusters, avoid in-depth communications that entail fear they face or sabotage their employment credentials. Finally, two prominent aspects of language proficiency are ingrained into TNCs, such as TNCs' language management system's capability and employees' communicative performances. The ways to enhance the language proficiency of TNCs and their language management system begin with evaluating motivational and aspirational factors. These factors can optimize language resources. Namely, employees' communicative performances should not only be judged by their multilingual capabilities, which still focus solely on the fundamental skills of labeled language such as English, Japanese, Chinese, among others, but it should also be encouraged to boost the communicative repertoires. In this respect, employees can access or engage in multilayered spaces of the TNCs, which may increase the level of success in business communication and resemble bricolage. Therefore, employees' capabilities in their language performance should be

recognized as an essential part of their communicative capability.

Finally, this study suggests two crucial implications to promote theory and practice in scholarship. Firstly, TNCs can develop a language proficiency model that promotes the dynamic and multilayered feature of language management. Secondly, TNCs as multilingual communities should regard language as a fundamental form of human and social capital that can be exchangeable and rebranded as sociocultural resources. The symbolic power can bolster the quality of communication among employees from diverse cultural backgrounds. Overall, TNCs as agencies stimulate agents from different language management systems and promote linguistic capital to enhance their global competitiveness.

Keywords: TNCs ; multilingual organizations; language management; corporate language capability