

Language Management and Translation: How Companies Deal with Language Diversity in Taiwan

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Abstract

With the globalization trend, the economic boundaries among countries have been blurred. In order to search for the best way to survive, businesses have tried to divide traditional manufacture processes into different parts to remain competitive. One of the inevitable result for this trend is the frequent communication with staff from foreign countries. Translation fees become necessary costs for a business. However, translation alone cannot solve all the problems. Sometimes, even high quality translation does not guarantee expected effect. This research aims at investigating the language policies in Taiwan-based businesses and the way corporates deal with language management.

Keywords: Language Management, Multinational Enterprise (MNE), Translation

I. Introduction

The rapid progress of globalization has caused international boundaries to become less and less distinct. International travel is the default of modern global citizens and multi-national workforces will soon become commonplace. Nowadays, very few companies can resist the trend to go international, either to boost sales or to attract talent. This trend has caused language and communication to become a daily issue to which companies have to give serious attention. An employee might need to answer e-mails, communicate with foreign buyers or sellers, negotiate with international suppliers or demonstrate and promote products indifferent foreign languages. In the international workplace, efficient communication that transcends language barriers has become vital to the very survival of a company. Furthermore, the choice of languages used also reveals much about the mentality of management and the existence of power struggles.

When it comes to language management in a multinational enterprise (MNE), the languages used in the mother company and their overseas branches will reveal a lot about relationships. For example, if a local language is used and local managers are appointed to overseas posts, this usually means the mother company occupies a relatively minor position in those countries. However, if a company uses a quasi-universal language such as English in their foreign branches, it becomes obvious that there is an emphasis on the efficiency of communication. No matter what the concerns and assignment of the headquarters may be, language plays an important, and sometimes rather subtle, role in the international encounters between people. Many have believed, to their chagrin, that language barriers can be easily overcome by the employment of translators and interpreters or even by the use of machine translation (MT). However, these tools and alternatives have limitations and usually do not perform well when they are most needed.

With the unprecedented increase of the number of MNEs and various kinds of international operations, Feely and Harzing (2003) point out that language barriers are serious problems any international company will have to face. Modern supply chains may involve many different countries, losses that result from defective products may be incurred because of ineffectual cross-cultural communication. Research into language management for the MNEs in Taiwan is surprisingly sparse for unknown reasons. In this paper the aim is to first introduce the concept of language management and then address the problem of translation in the MNE. Local and international cases in Taiwan will also be studied to cast some light on the available means used to deal with language barriers in companies. Finally it is hoped that companies in Taiwan will put more thought into language strategies.

II. The Development of Language Management

When Jernudd and Neustupný (1987) attempted to identify the problems faced by linguists, they defined the term “language management” as a “system of [people’s] interaction [with language]” (p. 71). Linguists wanted to know not only how people use language, but how people interacted with the language they were using. We later learn that such interaction involves economic, societal, political and cultural factors. Language planning, or language policy, first came into existence in the 1960s when many previously colonized countries became independent and there was an immediate need for language planning to establish ethnic identity and subjectivity. Language management (or language planning) usually encounters opposition and conflict in a country or in an organization because it has a lot to do with group “interests.” As long as there are different groups with different interests, “it would seem that a ‘neutral,’ ‘interest’-free system of language planning and of language management is impossible” (Ibid p. 72).

In the process of language management, be it in a nation or in a corporation, conflicts of interest make opposition commonplace and unavoidable. However, in the process of language management the interests of participants will change. Jernudd and Neustupný (1987) conclude that certain social groups’ or individuals’ interests will be affected in the language management process. This is also true in an organization where language policies will be enforced. They also indicate that “linguistic interest,” which is closely related to the economic, social, political or cultural interests of those involved, will be a decisive factor in the addition of a language to school curricula, companies, or government units. Such addition of languages comes from two sources: firstly, a need for communication; secondly, the symbolic value (or potential effect) of such addition (Ibid p. 77).

In a study specifically about language management in MNEs, Feely and Harzing (2003) lay out the three dimensions of the issue: language diversity, language penetration and language sophistication. With “language diversity,” some large companies such as Microsoft, can afford to manage many different languages. Others will fare quite well with the 15 or so leading languages in the world, including such as French, German and Spanish for Europe and Japanese, Chinese and Arabic for Asia. “Language penetration” refers to the internal involvement of staff that might need cross-lingual communication. In the past, such a cross-lingual mission might have been carried out by a small group of executive-cum-language specialists. Now, MNEs have become much more interconnected to require far more coordination, and linguists are usually needed in every department. What Feely and Harzing meant by “language sophistication” is the level of English proficiency needed by staff in various positions. The language skills needed by a receptionist will not be the same as those of an engineer or someone who might be involved in negotiations.

It is not easy to evaluate the true cost of language barriers in an MNE caused by how they “distort and damage relationships” (Feely and Harzing 2003, p. 42). Such abstract concept of cost can include “uncertainty,” “suspicion,” “conflict,” “group division,” “distrust,” and “polarization of perspective, perception and cognition” (Ibid.). These costs are usually incurred in buyer/seller relationships or when local companies seek to expand into foreign markets. In these circumstances, “psychic distance” will be created by language differences (Ibid.).

III. Strategies for Corporate Language Management

So, what are the strategies MNEs need to overcome language barriers on the path to international expansion? They can either elicit external help or hire linguists. The most common form of external help is to search for professional translation service. The other approach is to include language experts on the staff or even adopt a second corporate language. Neither approach is perfect. There are positive and negative sides to both and the options need to be carefully weighed.

Is a translation and interpretation service a panacea for linguistic problems? We later found that the language ability needed by company staff does not simply include the mastery of the foreign language. It has to go beyond that. The staff should be able to communicate effectively and comfortably with foreigners. The problem of language differences cannot be easily solved by hiring translators and interpreters. These outsiders often face barriers because they might not have the necessary intimate relationship with the culture of an enterprise. It is hard to absorb company values in a short period of time. To maintain long-term ethical cooperation and help clients cut costs, veteran translator Antony Pym (2012, p. 158) even insists that “translators should advise against using translation wherever it is unjustified.”

Furthermore, only when translators are brave enough to advise against their own commercial interests can they become more than a translator, and not just be relegated “to the level of subsidized culture” (Ibid.). What Pym meant by “being more than a translator” could be that the translator becomes a language manager and advises practices that foster cooperation between the translator and client.

A video clip has been available on the Internet for a few months. In the clip a presenter, showing an instantaneous Chinese to English/English to Chinese translation device, invites a member of the audience onto the stage. The presenter speaks Chinese into the device microphone and a brief moment later the translated phrase is repeated from the device in English. The reverse happens when the guest speaks English and hears the Chinese translation from the device. It would seem that the international language problems have been solved completely. At the end of the presentation, the Chinese presenter asks the guest, “With this device, do you think you still need to learn Chinese?” The invited guest, who spoke English, smiled, as if knowing what everybody was expecting her to say, then replied, “This device has left me shocked. I would like to recommend it to my friends. But... I’m more interested in learning Chinese.” Her response probably implied that by learning a foreign language one would get more benefit than was available from a code swapping algorithm. Understanding the cultural, linguistic and ideological background of a different group of people is of major benefit, particularly when one is contemplating doing business with that group.

If translation can save us the trouble of learning foreign languages, why are people still so frequently encouraged to learn a common global, or foreign language, particularly in the business world? The reason is obvious, there are always some problems that translation cannot resolve. For example, how can translators deliver the nuances of subtle cultural differences while there remains an insistence that they should be invisible (implying neutral) as mere language converters?

Also, in some circumstances, using different languages in MNE conferences can easily invite the sense of distrust. Using a common language allows positive communication because both sides will be sharing common ground. Hiroshi Mikitani, CEO of Rakuten, Japan, was aware of the changes taking place in modern corporate structure and the increased contact with foreign customers. In 2010 he started to make English the official language of Rakuten. Reliance on elites and translators may not be enough in a future business world. The cost of translation in a corporation cannot be underestimated. Sometimes the quality of a translation is not satisfactory because of the problematic salary structure of translation companies and also because of insufficient information provided to translators.

In the past, machine translation (MT) was widely applied in the Volkswagen Group. The Volkswagen Language Portal, as it is called, has been in use on the VW Intranet since 2002. A multilingual terminology database and a machine translation tool are available for its employees to use, covering German, English, French, Russian and Spanish (Porsiel 2008). These are very useful tools for a company that has billions of e-mails sent every day. According to statistics, on average, an employee of one of the Fortune 500 companies—and Volkswagen is one of them—receives 80 e-mails a day. According to estimates, 70% of the employees in a large company in Germany can lose an hour every working day processing incomprehensible e-mails (Ibid. p. 58).

However, as Jörg Porsiel correctly pointed out “the increasing number of e-mails does not necessarily mean an improvement in the level of communication or in the exchange of information” (Ibid.). Communication thus becomes inefficient because of misunderstood messages sent in a foreign language, which machine translation cannot handle, or the delays caused by necessary human translation.

Although machine translation can help employees reduce the time taken for the routine answering of e-mails in a foreign language or for preparing the minutes of meetings, this may also involve risk. Employees in a company that has no intranet translation tool, might use free on-line tools. The uploaded company texts can actually put confidential company documents in jeopardy.

On the other hand, there are also advantages and disadvantages for MNEs to use one corporate language. Although adopting another language can facilitate communication and foster a sense of belonging, the problems of time, cost, and personnel split, caused by the use of different languages are also problematical. There are also doubts and criticism about the adoption of a foreign corporate language. The Honda CEO, Takanobu Ito, criticized the “Englishization project” launched by Hiroshi Mikitani. He said, “It’s stupid for a Japanese company to only use English in Japan when the workforce is mainly Japanese” (Neeley 2012, n.p.).

The perfect combination for language expertise in an MNE would be someone who is both good at languages and a technical or business expert. However, when the employer needs to choose between the two, which ability should be compromised? However, at the same time, we should be reminded that the “language node,” i.e., the linguistically skilled personnel, can sometimes become communications gatekeepers (Feely and Harzing 2003, p. 48), who make decisions about what should be translated and what should be ignored.

Assigning expatriates to the language node might be the easiest way to satisfy the need for an MNE to solve their language problems. However, companies also find that costly salaries and allowances for expatriates have become very high, to the extent that many companies are actually cutting down on expatriate recruiting. MNEs have slowly come to realize that expatriates do not actually solve the company language problem. They just “shift it down a level,” in an environment where local languages are used for most management (Ibid., p. 49). In addition to costly relocation expenses, expatriates may impede communication in teamwork with local employees. They may even block career opportunities for local staff, preventing them from moving to higher levels, and this can limit the “potential benefits from cultural diversity” (Ibid.).

IV. International cases and local enterprises

More and more MNEs are changing their corporate language to English with the purpose of attracting international talent. With the claim of Englishnization, MNEs such as Volkswagen and Rakuten try to persuade global citizens that they are no longer local and regional. In this study the aim has been to investigate what companies are doing to face their international composition and to meet their language needs. However, this is by no means a comprehensive study because time is limited as are resources. Only a small number of examples will be reviewed and hopefully this will lead to further results. Companies that might need to deal with language issues in Taiwan can be divided into different categories. However, I also include a governmental unit here since this is also unique to Taiwan:

1. local companies:

these companies are completely local and the foreign language issues they need to deal with are less interactive. These companies focus on the Taiwanese market exclusively. Most of their language needs are for the translation of promotion material into different languages and little foreign language abilities are required of their staff. Translation agencies are enough to satisfy their needs. For example, the ChuanLian (全聯) high discount Supermarket Group is so local that their homepage does not even show an English name, or even an English introduction, despite an increase in the foreign population of Taiwan. Many traditional businesses in the food industry might belong to this category. In fact, such companies will even strengthen their localness by weaving local festivities and history into their promotion strategies, leaving expatriates in Taiwan as outsiders to understand the promotion and discounts. With their distinct target on locals, it is imaginable that the foreign language skills will not be much needed, at most the greetings and numbers, etc. when international customers shop.

2. local companies extending their business abroad:

More and more local companies, such as G-Shank Enterprise Co Ltd, originally a local precision die and stamped metal parts manufacturer, have started to develop overseas business plans. In such companies, the usual international group is established to help them reach overseas markets. Instead of hiring Taiwanese personnel who can speak the languages of their target markets, they often hire foreigners from the target markets. The belief being that language alone is not enough to reach the markets; it is also necessary to have local relations in those markets to establish business connections. In such companies and factories, many technicians, whose English communication abilities are very limited, are required to operate machines.

It seems that they do not need any English abilities. However, their International Marketing Manager, who usually bring international buyers to visit the factory to ensure quality, found that if these workers can communicate in English with their buyers and explains the quality control and other details of their products, the visitors (potential buyers) will be able to know more about the company and then more likely to cooperate. With the increase of international students and tourists in Taiwan, local companies should grasp the opportunity to promote their brand and products via numerous corporate visits by these students. Each exposure may lead to cooperation abroad in the future.

3. MNEs with branches and offices in Taiwan:

Nowadays, there are more and more multinational companies moving into Taiwan. It is not difficult to imagine the very complicated cross-cultural and inter-lingual coordination and communication that goes on in them. Some MNEs actually have their Asian offices in Taipei and it is revealing to see how these internationally-based companies deal with language barriers in their Asian offices.

(1) In May 2010, Rakuten announced its “Englishization project” to turn the company into an English-speaking one in two years. All the instructions, signs, announcements and menus were changed to English and employees needed to provide English language proficiency certificates to keep their jobs. The systematic and scientific methods used to promote the change-over to English resulted in the employee TOEIC grades increasing from 526.2 to 784 by July 2014. Around 57% of the employees scored more than 800 (Chen 2014). The company office in Taipei also specifies its “English” policy in job descriptions on a job hunting website in Taiwan.

(2) In 2016, Volkswagen announced the change of its official language to English, partly as an effort to avoid Dieselgate from happening again. The Group believes that this move will help them find the international expertise they need.

Previously the Group had relied on its Volkswagen Language Portal available on the company Intranet. Realizing the importance of diversity, Karlheinz Blessing, head of Human Resources at Volkswagen explained that by adopting English as the corporate language they were fostering “a culture of discussion and decision making” possible only with the good communication available by the use of a common language (Taylor 2016, n.p.). Volkswagen regards this cultural shift as a way to prevent miscommunication and also an opportunity to cultivate global perception, which had been absent in the past because of its local origin and dull surroundings. By re-positioning itself as a global operation, the Group believes it will be possible to attract international managers and executives, although this suggestion incurred strong protest from the German Language Foundation.

However, the Volkswagen website in Taiwan is still concentrated on local residents and is monolingual, probably because the corporate language policy is quite new. The Group’s recruiting advertisements for some positions, such as for used car market development or a product support specialist, are all in English. But for other positions, such as customer service, the hiring ads are in Mandarin, and no foreign language skills are specified (information accessed in April 2017). In August of the same year, the job postings for IT Project Manager and Marketing Supervisor have specified fluent English communication skill as one of the requirements.

Browsing the website of Volkswagen in Taiwan is, however, an interesting bilingual experience while some project terms are used in English, such as “Customer-Link,” and “Think Blue.” Such mixture of Chinese and English in the texts of a website is not common in Taiwan’s websites, and will somewhat create the feeling of “foreignness.”

4. Government unit: The Tainan City Government

Over the last two decades, proposals for a second official language have been advanced and discussed exhaustively in Taiwan. No definite resolution had been reached because of the strong nationalist opposition and belief that a second official language might subvert national identity. The conflict between nationalism and internationalism has resulted in stagnation of the island’s language policy. Some argue that government units are not like private companies and need to take national dignity into consideration. Others believe that to function more efficiently and to establish the country at an international level in terms of tourism and industrial development, government units should establish corporate management and an official second language becomes a means to go global.

The Tainan City Government is the only public department that has ventured to undertake such a project. Although there have been many discussions concerning the adoption of a second official language in Taiwan, a strong sense of Taiwanese identity and ideology, caused the focus of the debate to be the assignment of “Taiwanese Hokkien,” a dialect spoken and understood by around 70% of the population in Taiwan, as a second official language of the country, not English. Opponents of English as a second official language feared that the use of English would jeopardize its citizens’ sense of identity and dilute government resources for the native languages, Mandarin and dialects, such as Hokkien, Hakkanese and various others spoken by the island’s aborigines. Interestingly, similar debate, took place about 120 years ago in the early Republican era, when the country (now China) was discussing whether English should be included in elementary education.

Despite opposition from grassroots councilmen who held that the initiative was a waste of money on the wrong language, in an area where Hokkien was a mother tongue for many, the Mayor of Tainan City, Lai Ching-Te, launched a 10-year project in 2015 to promote English as second official language in southern Taiwan. In this proposal, internationalization of the city was the main goal. The project aims at fostering the ability to use English as a tool of communication, the promotion of tourism, and of becoming the first model for similar governments of small countries around the world. After 10 years, it is expected that all government announcements and information will be bilingual. Teachers from grade 1 to 9 will use English as medium of instruction in 90% of their classes and 90% government officials will pass the requirement set for English proficiency.

V. Discussion and Suggestions

More and more MNEs are mandating English as the common corporate language. These include, Airbus, Daimler-Chrysler, Fast Retailing, Nokia, Renault, Samsung, SAP, Technicolor, and Microsoft in Beijing (Neeley 2012). According to Neeley, “adopting a common mode of speech” is a must for both domestic companies and MNEs (Ibid.). Jernudd & Neustupný (1987) were right when they said the selection of an official language is a complex task. Bernard Spolsky (2009, p. 1), the author of *Language Management*, also points out that “Language policy is all about choices...some of the choices are the result of *management*, reflecting conscious and explicit efforts by language managers to control the choices.”

Modern management needs to understand that employees with foreign language ability will become crucial to the success of an enterprise. Take enterprises in Taiwan as an example. When a company intends to promote its products to an international level, adopting English as the corporate language seems to be the only major language for transforming the structure of the company. Writing from a local perspective, Chen (2014) proposed a thorough shift to English for local businesses in Taiwan aiming to sell internationally. He advised that meetings and documents be conducted and prepared in English. Corporate executives should no longer treat language ability as a personal asset. Language as a whole should be upgraded to a higher level and managed accordingly.

Language managers play important roles in launching a comprehensive project in an enterprise. Such radical enforcement of language policies require determination. Managers need to invest time, energy and money in upgrading the overall English ability of their enterprises, in the face of strong opposition, doubt and frustration from their employees. While the Japanese government proposed in 2008 that foreigners intending to stay in Japan pass a Japanese language exam, Hiroshi Mikitani’s decision to introduce English to Rakuten as the official company language required tremendous insight, determination and spirit. Mikitani believes that a common corporate language—English—will expand worldview and lead the group to become the number one online service provider in the world.

Language managers will excel if they can turn opposition to change into support. They need to first know the source of opposition and deal with it. Language barriers in enterprises can cause some sophisticated changes of the power of authority. Junior staff often receive more attention, responsibility and trust if their English ability is better than that of their senior counterparts. Unfortunately, there is no shortcut to removing language barriers in any place. As Anne-WilHarzing explains, firing those who are not linguistically competent and hiring others are the easiest option for HR managers. However, this is a very dangerous move in the long run (cited in Chen, 2014). In addition to power reshuffles, there might also be concerns about employee performance and efficiency when doing their normal tasks if language requirements are added. For example, the cognitive load on the human brain needs to be considered. Part of the brain will necessarily be employed in processing the second language. Will this result in less brain capacity being available to deal with true decision making? Anne-WilHarzing shared a class experiment in which students who conducted a discussion in their native language performed differently from those who used English (a non-native language for them) (cited in Chen, 2014). When using different languages to think, debate or negotiate, the result might turn out to be totally different.

The language policy of an organization needs comprehensive evaluation. Language managers need to consider what language management will be needed in a company. Adopting English as a common company language is not just about English speaking ability; it is about the thinking logic behind the use of the language. A company also needs to decide what languages require management. Are they assets to the company? In addition, the CEO also needs to plan the scale of language management. Is it going to be a comprehensive practice applicable to all company units? Or will it be confined to the marketing and PR units?

The tools that language managers will use to bridge the linguistic gap are also important and each has their pros and cons. While language training programs are used by companies as a way to cultivate their own linguistic experts, their use is never a quick fix for new language needs. For example, Volkswagen has a comprehensive language training program. Yet, they expect a minimum of three years of intensive training to be needed to produce eloquent professionals in accounting, engineering, purchasing or marketing (Feely & Harzing, 2003).

Translation and interpretation are probably the most frequently used methods for language managers to deal with language barriers. However, they have limitations. Machine translation can make language translation faster and less expensive. What it cannot do is to read between the lines, detect nuances, guess, or interpret text that cannot be translated. These are aspects that can cause huge losses and damage when big deals are negotiated. However, large companies still rely on translation services to provide versions of documents in the languages they need. Monetary costs aside, the temporal cost can sometimes be high. Quite often a translation service company cannot react with enough speed even though a project may be extremely urgent. In a translation company, project managers will first need to locate a qualified translator and confirm each step of the process with the client. Such scrupulous layers of management cause delay, regardless of the urgency. Translation is always late in nature given the characteristics of a translation service. Drafts may need to be revised and reviewed at least twice before a final version can be delivered. This makes it very difficult to keep pace with the fast changing world of business. Feely and Harzing also mention the problems a company has in finding an external language resource:

These services can be very expensive, a top Simultaneous Translator can command daily rates as high as a partner in an international consulting company. Secondly, any good translator or interpreter will insist that to be fully effective they must understand the context of the subject matter. This is not always possible.... Finally, while a good interpreter will attempt to convey not only the meaning, but also the spirit of any communication, there can be no doubt that there is a loss of rhetorical power when communications go through a third party. So, in situations requiring negotiation, persuasion, humor etc. the use of an interpreter is a poor substitute for direct communication. (2003, p. 48)

Some MNEs have come to realize the importance of language management to corporate expansion and even survival. As mentioned before, Rakuten has a very specific language policy and enforces it rigorously. This is, however, somewhat unusual because many governments and corporates may overlook the importance of foreign language ability. When it comes to global economic activities, cultural and language differences cannot be underestimated. Globalization has brought the mobility of capital and human talent. However, after the failure of Nokia and TOYOTA¹, we know that such mobility is actually more costly if differences are not tackled with care.

Chen (2014, p. 9) believes that the goals of language management are communication and innovation. Languages in workplaces need to be managed because managers can exercise their power to change the language ability of their employees by enforcing language policies for future development. Working actively in promoting English as a global language in Taiwan, Chen (Ibid. p. 52) proposes two steps for Englishization in Taiwan. He said, first, we need to persuade people to accept English as a common language. Second, we have to change the way people use English and instill a habit of English use. Once the decision has been made to cultivate a lingua franca in an organization, resources and support should be provided. It is common for organization leaders to give inspirational talks, prompt leaders to encourage employees to use English in transactions and internal documents as much as possible. However, this encouragement is futile if no further incentives or enforcement follows. Verbal encouragement alone is not enough.

V. Conclusion

Is a Corporate Language the solution to the internationalization of MNEs? The question is difficult and resists an easy answer. Technically speaking, a single Corporate Language will incur opposition and division among staff, although it seems to be the most efficient and effective way for corporate communication and expansion. In terms of cultural diversity, we know that different languages means different thinking, and diversity will bring more creativity and originality.

¹ Nokia has its R&D in Finland, production line in Brazil and TOYOTA has its production line in the US, R&D in Japan and raw materials come from South America. All these require much inter-cultural communication. Drawbacks, instead of strengths, will appear because of diversities in the process. If not dealt with carefully, losses will be incurred (Chen, 2014).

From this perspective, the establishment of a single Corporate Language does not seem to be the best way to develop an MNE. However, one corporate language at least provides a common ground for global talent to communicate. The adoption of expatriation or inpatriation strategy is a serious question. Feely and Harzing suggest that when mixing water (the parent company) and sulfuric acid (the subsidiary)², an MNE needs to think about whether it wants an explosive or gradual effect.

Bernard Spolsky is right when he said, "Language policy is all about choices. If you are bilingual or plurilingual, you have to choose which language to use" (2009, p. 2). Martin Winterkorn, Volkswagen's old boss, and current VW Group chairman Matthias Mueller, both have difficulties with English. They have no choice but to use German. On the other hand, BMW's chairman Harald Krueger and Daimler's chairman, Dieter Zetsche are both fluent in English. Audi's chairman, Rupert Stadler also speaks fluent English, but prefers to speak German when dealing with financial matters (Taylor 2016).

Das Gupta once elaborated on the process of language policy by saying that "the major barriers to language planning are political" (cited in Jernudd & Neustupný 1987, p. 73). Although he did not specify the meaning of "political," It might be construed as politics from the viewpoints of governmental public affairs. Language management might not be easy for government to implement because of many political concerns. The fact that more and more companies are adopting a common corporate language is a clear indication that a common language facilitates communication and attracts international human resources. Although the task sounds daunting, many successful cases have shown such investment to be rewarding.

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² Feely and Harzing's analogy goes like this: if we add a drop of acid (the subsidiary) to water (parent company), the water won't be much affected because the acid will dissipate, making not much difference. However, if we place a drop of water (the expatriate) into an acid solution (subsidiary), an explosive reaction will follow (2003, p. 50).

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