

# An Inter-Linguistic Analysis of a Bilingual Corpus of Corporate Websites

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## Abstract

Internet is one of the major media for global corporations to communicate with their existing and potential customers globally. A corporate website with skilful and appropriate use of language can help project a positive image of the corporation to both its staff and customers who are of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Linguistic analyses of bilingual websites become meaningful in helping a corporation to achieve effective communication with its web viewers. However, relevant studies of linguistic features of texts obtained from global corporate websites are still lacking. This study therefore aims to analyse the inter-linguistic similarities and differences between English and Chinese, by comparing the webpages of global corporations from various industries. A bilingual corpus was formed by the English and Chinese texts collected from websites of different global corporations. Fifty corporations from the industries of banking, food and beverage, and airline were selected. Examples include HSBC, Citigroup, McDonald's, Starbucks, British Airways, and Cathay Pacific. The comparative analysis of the bilingual corpus focuses on the linguistic features adopted in the two different language versions targeting diverse communities. The areas for analysis cover discourse, register, and rhetorical devices adopted on the webpages of corporate profile, product/service, corporate social responsibility, etc.

Findings illustrate that there are significant inter-linguistic differences between the two language versions (English and Chinese) in the above areas for analysis, such as discourse and register. On the other hand, certain linguistic features are found to be shared across corporate websites in various industries. The insights gained from this linguistic analysis may serve as a useful reference for drafting texts of bilingual corporate webpages, and form a basis for further investigation into the language use of a larger bilingual corpus containing e-texts from corporate webpages in other industries.

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