

A Corpus-based Study on the Corporate International Publicity Translation and Semantic Construction of Corporate Image

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Abstract

The corporate image and the national image influence each other. The corporate international publicity translation is closely related to the construction of the Chinese corporate image. On the basis of defining the key concept and reviewing related literature, based on the self-built Chinese-English parallel corpus, taking 5 listed new energy companies from China as the research samples, this study uses the UCREL Semantic Annotation System (USAS) to examine the corporate image construction strategy that is hidden in the chairperson’s statements of corporate social responsibility (CSR) reports. The results show that there are 10 major semantic fields and 11 sub-domains of semantics used in the chairperson’s statements, and 5 types of semantics, namely evaluation semantics, business semantics, citizenship semantics, time-space semantics, quantity semantics, are strategically employed to construct a favorable and vivid corporate image. This study provides new insight into the publicity translation studies and enriches the content of China’s image research to some extent. It is expected to help Chinese companies to go global, and improve their international competitiveness.

Keywords: corpus, corporate image, corporate international publicity translation, semantic construction

1. Introduction

The enterprise is a decisive factor in a national brand (Daniel, 2007). The basis for Chinese companies to “go globally” lies in the intelligibility of language, because the corporate information can only be understood and accepted by foreign stakeholders by translating it into the target language that conforms to the culture, law, and system of the destination country (Wang, 2016). Corporate international publicity translation is a topic of significance, because it aims to promote the corporate image to overseas clients, and finally, it will bring economic benefits to the enterprise (Sun & Feng, 2014).

The texts used by companies to publicize themselves to specific target groups are generally called corporate publicity texts, which include corporate profiles, brand names, advertisements, commercial specifications, annual reports, corporate social responsibility (CSR) reports, etc. (Zi, 2018). This study focuses on the chairperson’s statements in CSR reports. As one of the genres of corporate public discourse, CSR reports present information about a company’s social and environmental performance, give stakeholders the necessary resources to evaluate corporations’ overall sustainability development (Bebbington et al., 2008; Gray et al., 2001; Milne et al., 2009), and thus have been drawing growing attention among scholars, business practitioners, and policymakers in recent years (Fuoli, 2018). Normally demonstrated at the beginning of CSR reports, the chairperson’s statement is often composed and signed by the senior executive or chairperson of the board as a personal message to the public about corporate policies, achievements, and the prospect of social responsibilities. It is considered a promotional genre that employs language meanings to build and present the company’s favorable image (Anderson & Imperia, 1992). Therefore, it is of great significance to investigate the semantic construction of the corporate image in the chairperson’s statements within Chinese CSR reports and their English translations.

In recent years, publicity translation has gradually attracted academic attention. However, according to the existing literature, there are few studies on how to build corporate images through language semantics in Chinese CSR reports and their translations, and empirical studies are insufficient. Based on defining the concept and reviewing the relevant literature, this study builds a small-scaled Chinese-English parallel corpus of chairperson’s statements of CSR reports from 5 domestic listed firms in the new energy industry to investigate the hidden corporate image construction strategies in the Chinese and its English translation of corporate publicity texts by using USAS semantic analysis system. This study not only expands the scope of translation studies but also enriches the contents of China’s image

research, to help Chinese enterprises “go globally” and enhance their international competitiveness. Therefore, it is of theoretical and practical significance.

2. Literature review

2.1 Corporate image

The word “image” in the Oxford English Dictionary means “a concept or impression, created in the minds of the public, of a particular person, institution, product, etc.”. The corporate image can be literally understood as “the image of the corporation”. According to Hu and Sheng (2020), the corporate image refers to the overall perception and attitude of an individual or group towards the company, and it is usually divided into the self-molded image and the other-molded one (p. 94). Self-molded image is created by the enterprise or its employees with symbols (i.e., language, pictures) or specific behaviors, while an other-molded one refers to the image created by individuals or groups outside the enterprise through symbols. Corporate image can be also understood from the substance level and the symbol level. The former means the cognition and view concerning the company formed by people due to the operation or development of the company. The latter refers to the people’s perception of the company as a result of what the company says and what others say about the company (Hu & Sheng, 2020, pp. 94–95). In a highly commercialized society, corporate image plays a critical role in the development of enterprises. Dowling (1996) claimed that a positive corporate image could reduce business costs and increase market share. With the advancement of globalization, countries continue to encourage enterprises to go global. Enterprises begin to play the role of public diplomacy and become a window for the global public to understand the image of their home country (Mou & Wu, 2021). In view of this fact, corporate image is always a heated topic in many disciplines, including business management and marketing, as well as journalism and communication.

In recent years, scholars began to analyze the corporate image at the symbol level from the linguistics perspective. Li et al. (2018) used the discourse theory to analyze the reports on Chinese enterprises in the English media from 2015 to 2017 and found that Chinese enterprises were generally described as neutral and positive images in the three years, but there were also some problems such as monotonous images and characteristics. Wang (2019) analyzed the image of Chinese enterprises by focusing on the collocation of words and modal verbs in the self-build corpus of English-language media along with the Belt and Road countries. The study found that the Chinese enterprises continuously produce beneficial products, actively assume social responsibility, and positively practice corporate citizenship duty, but there are few media reports and the public image is not prominent enough. Based on critical discourse analysis theory, Zuo (2019) extracted American media reports on Huawei during 2009–2019 from the LexisNexis database and took Huawei’s strategic transformation in 2016 as the cut-off point. A comparative study of reports from 2009–2016 and 2017–2019 shows that Huawei’s competitiveness has shifted from price advantage to technology strength, but negative reports about Huawei have also increased.

The above studies deepen the understanding of the nature and features of corporate image, yet they focus heavily on the other-molded corporate image and pay scant attention to the self-molded image. There are even fewer studies enquiring into the corporate image from the translation perspective.

2.2 Corporate international publicity translation

The Chinese expression “Xuanchuan (宣传)” can be translated into propaganda, publicity, promotion, etc. in English. The birth of “Xuanchuan (宣传)” can be traced to Rome in the 17th century, during which the Pope granted the Roman church the power to spread its teachings abroad (Vincent, 2006). The international communication scholar Lasswell (2003) claimed that “Xuanchuan (宣传)” aims to control the opinion by means of symbols of information dissemination, such as stories, pictures, and reports (p. 124). Both scholars translate the “Xuanchuan (宣传)” into “propaganda”, which usually has derogatorily political connotations in English. In the commercial context, the neutral word “publicity” seems to be more appropriate.

“Waixuan (外宣)” in Chinese is the simplified expression of “Duiwaixuanchuan (对外宣传)”, which means the publicity for the public. It can be understood from the broad and narrow sense according to the targets (Zhang, 2013). Broadly speaking, as long as it is targeted at anyone outside the organization or the region, it can be called “Waixuan (外宣)”; narrowly speaking, it is targeted at the people outside the Chinese mainland (Zhang, 2013, p. 19). Zhang (2013) further defines the “Waixuanfanyi (外宣翻译)” as the translation of publicity materials (p. 20). Huang (2004) pointed out that the primary task of publicity translation in China is to translate Chinese into other languages, and spread China’s views to the other countries through various means of communication (p. 27).

Based on the above introduction, we adopted Xu and Zi’s (2020) understanding and defined the “publicity of corporate image” as the publicity of corporate image targeting overseas stakeholders. And the “corporate international publicity translation” means interlingual translation activities for corporate publicity materials in order to publicize companies’ information, products, and services, build a favorable corporate image, and finally realize the economic and social benefits (Xu & Zi, 2020, p. 94).

2.3 Studies on corporate image and publicity translation

Previous studies that combine corporate image and publicity translation are conducted from theoretical or empirical perspectives with the theoretical research being the mainstream.

On the basis of the Skopos theory, Hong (2006) discussed the principles and strategies of the translation of commercial advertisements; and Sun and Feng (2014) analyzed the corporate profiles. Within the framework of the Appraisal system, Xu and Xia (2013) analyzed the attitude resources in Chinese corporate profiles and their English translations. Also taking corporate profiles as research objects, Guo (2013) conducted his study based on the Adaptation theory.

Some scholars made an empirical analysis to investigate the corporate image construction in publicity translation. Shi et al. (2012) analyzed the language features including lexical frequency, collocation, and translation universals in Chinese corporate profiles and their English translations by self-building a small-scaled Chinese-English parallel corpus. Lu (2012) also focused on the corporate profiles on the websites of 20 large enterprises in China and the US, based on the Werlich text grammar.

It can be summarized that scholars have been aware of the close relationship between corporate image and publicity texts, and related research broadens and deepens the comprehension of the principles, strategies, and functions of corporate international publicity translations. However, previous studies are mainly concerned with corporate profiles and are conducted simply from the theoretical level. There has been little empirical research that delves into the semantic construction of corporate images in the Chinese CSR reports and their publicity translations

3. Methods

3.1 Research questions

To enrich research in the corporate international publicity translations, this study is designed to answer the following questions:

- 1) What are the major semantic fields in the chairperson's statements of the Chinese CSR reports and their English translations?
- 2) What are the sub-domains of semantics in the chairperson's statements of the Chinese CSR reports and their English translations?
- 3) How is the corporate image semantically constructed in the chairperson's statements of the Chinese CSR reports and their English translations?

3.2 Corpus data

This study built a small-scaled Chinese-English parallel corpus that consists of two sub-corpora, namely the Corpus of Chinese Chairperson's Statements (CCCS) and the Corpus of English Chairperson's Statements (CECS). Each corpus contains 15 texts that are retrieved from the CSR reports of 5 Chinese new energy companies from the list of Top 500 Global Renewable Energy Companies in 2020¹⁶. These five companies are selected randomly on the basis that they are Chinese companies and issue both Chinese and English versions' CSR reports, and the reports can be downloaded free from the official websites. The information of the companies selected is shown in Table 1.

¹⁶ Source: <https://www.163.com/dy/article/FSFA3JDT05509P99.html>

Table 1. Company information

Name	Issued year
GCL New Energy (GCL)	2016-2018
Contemporary Amperex Technology Co., Limited (CATL)	2019-2020
Everbright International (CEIL)	2016-2020
Trina Solar	2018-2019
BYD	2017-2019

The total number of words in CCCS is about 22130 and the average length is about 1475 words. The total number of words in CECS is about 13967 and the average length is about 931 words. The information of the corpus is provided in Table 2.

Table 2 Corpus information

Sub-corpus	Total number of words	Number of texts	Average length
CCCS	22130	15	1475
CECS	13967	15	931

3.3 Corpus tools and analysis

This study firstly uses AntConc 4.0.3 (Anthony, 2022) to generate the word lists of CCCS and CECS and then chooses the top 216 words ranked by frequency in descending order in each corpus. These words in both corpora are used more than 9 times.

Secondly, it uses Wmatrix 5.0 to identify the semantic fields of those chosen words in CECS. Wmatrix offers an online interface to the UCREL Semantic Annotation System (USAS) that can be used to automatically allocate a semantic field with a semantic tag to each word or multiword expression in a dataset with an accuracy of 91%–92% (Rayson, 2008; Sun et al., 2018). Based on the Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English, the semantic tagset of USAS has a multitier structure with 21 major semantic fields and more than 232 subdivisions, as shown in Figure 1.

Thirdly, the semantic annotation of Chinese in CCCS used Chinese Semantic Tagger, the Chinese counterpart of USAS, developed by incorporating the Stanford Chinese word segmenter and the Chinese part-of-speech tagger into the USAS Java framework (Piao et al., 2016; Sun et al., 2018). The Chinese semantic tagset has been automatically generated by translating the English semantic tagset.

A general and abstract terms	B the body and the individual	C arts and crafts	E emotion
F food and farming	G government and public	H architecture, housing and the home	I money and commerce in industry
K entertainment, sports and games	L life and living things	M movement, location, travel and transport	N numbers and measurement
O substances, materials, objects and equipment	P education	Q language and communication	S social actions, states and processes
T time	W world and environment	X psychological, actions, states and processes	Y science and technology
Z names and grammar			

Figure 1. USAS semantic tagset

4. Results and discussion

4.1 Major semantic fields

This study uses USAS semantic analysis system to annotate the semantic fields of the top 217 words in CECS and CCCS respectively. The major semantic fields in both corpora are shown in Table 3, and the “Frequency” refers to the number of the type of words for each field.

Table 3. Major semantic fields

CCCS		CECS	
Semantic fields	Freq.	Semantic Fields	Freq.
general and abstract terms (A)	48	names and grammar (Z)	45
names and grammar (Z)	34	general and abstract terms (A)	42
social actions, states and processes (S)	27	social actions, states and processes (S)	23
numbers and measurement (N)	22	numbers and measurement (N)	17
Time (T)	15	Time (T)	13
psychological, actions, states and processes (X)	14	movement, location, travel and transport (M)	13
money and commerce in industry (I)	12	money and commerce in industry (I)	12
movement, location, travel and transport (M)	9	psychological, actions, states and processes (X)	11
substances, materials, objects and equipment (O)	9	substances, materials, objects and equipment (O)	10
world and environment (W)	9	world and environment (W)	8

Table 3 demonstrates the top 10 major semantic fields in both corpora. We can see the top 10 fields in both corpora are identical with slight differences in the order. In both corpora, the fields “general and abstract terms” and “names and grammar” are the top 2. In CCCS, the “general and abstract terms” is most frequently used while in the CECS, it is the “names and grammar” that occurred most frequently. The fields “social actions, states and processes”, “numbers and measurement”, and “time” ranked 3 to 5 in both corpora with the same order. The fields “psychological, actions, states and processes”, “money and commerce in industry”, and “movement, location, travel and transport” ranked 6 to 8 in CCCS, while they ranked 8, 7, 6 respectively in CECS. The fields “substances, materials, objects and equipment” and “world and environment” ranked 9 and 10 in both corpora.

4.2 Subdivisions of semantic fields

We further analyzed the sub-domains of semantics in the Chinese chairperson's statements and their English translations according to the subdivision of the UASA semantic tagset. We disposed of those functional words or unmatched words, and the results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Subdivisions of semantic fields

Semantic fields			Frequency	
Major	Sub.	Name	CCCS	CECS
A	A9	Getting and giving; possession	11	10
	A5	Evaluation	3	5
S	S8	Helping/hindering	7	5
	S5	Groups and affiliation	5	7
N	N5	Quantities	6	7
	N3	Measurement	5	5
T	T1	Time	9	4
X	X7	Wanting; planning; choosing	4	3
I	I2	Business	6	5
M	M7	Places	4	6
W	W5	Green issues	4	5

The “general and abstract terms (A)” is the most important semantic field in all texts, and it includes 15 subdivisions (A1-A15). Except for the “A1: general”, the two typical sub-fields used in the chairperson's statements are “A9: getting and giving; possession” and “A5: evaluation”.

As mentioned earlier, the chairperson's statement is a promotional genre, and the chairperson intends to present a favorable corporate image by introducing what it has provided for its customers, the reputation and profits it has earned, the resources and patents it has owned, and the experiences it has accumulated. Such expressions in Chinese reports include “tigong (提供)”, “yongyou (拥有)”, “gongxian (贡献)”, “ziyuan (资源)”, “zhuanli (专利)”, “qude (取得)”, “dailai (带来)”, and in the English version they include “has/have”, “achieve(d)”, “provide”, “resources”, “patents”.

Likewise, the chairpersons use many positive words to evaluate and promote the quality, standard, and capacity of production, the employees, and the ranking, like “meihao (美好)”, “zhiliang (质量)”, “biaozhun (标准)”, “gaishan (改善)”, “genghao (更好)”, “cujin (促进)”, “zhuoyue (卓越)” in Chinese, and “well”, “better”, “outstanding”, “improve”, “enhance”, “quality”, “standards” in English.

There are 9 sub-fields in the semantic “S: social actions, states and processes”. For the chairperson's statements, the sub-domains “S8: helping/hindering” and “S5: groups and affiliation” are used more frequently.

By examining the words in S8, we found that the chairpersons use expressions like “fupin (扶贫)”, “gongyi (公益)”, “cishan (慈善)”, “zhichi (支持)”, “baohu (保护)” to show that the corporation actively assumes social responsibility by alleviating poverty, making donations and protecting environments. Corresponding expressions in English are “promote”, “support”, “protection”, “charity”. This finding is different from that of Xu and Zi (2020). It can be attributed to the difference in the research object. Xu and Zi (2020) investigated the semantic construction of the corporate image in the corporate profiles while this study focuses on the CSR reports. And the introduction of corporate social responsibility is one of the distinctive and important components of CSR reports.

The words in S5 in Chinese include “shehui (社会)”, “jituan (集团)”, “gongsi (公司)”, “gongzhong (公众)”, “shequ (社区)”, and correspondingly include “society”, “group”, “public”, “community” in English. These words reflect that the corporation is a part of society and has close connections with the public and the community. Therefore, the corporation cannot develop without a sound social environment and the support of the public and community.

The words in “X7: wanting, planning, choosing” include “jiang (将)”, “zhanlue (战略)”, “fang'an (方案)”, “guihua (规划)” in Chinese reports and “will”, “strategy” in English versions. The chairperson usually states the companies' preparations for any unexpected risks, and plans for its development in the future. As a result, it enhances the confidence of stakeholders and establishes a trustworthy image.

For the semantic field “money and commerce in industry”, the subdivision “I2: business” occurred frequently. An enterprise is a production unit that aims to pursue maximum economic profits (Mansfield, 1988). The chairperson's statement is also a window through which the readers can learn about the basic information of the corporation.

Therefore, the introduction of the business of the corporation is an indispensable part of the CSR reports. Moreover, the

business belongs to the strategic information of the corporation, which demonstrates the strategic image of the company (Hu et al., 2007, pp. 1–3). Such words include “shichang (市场)”, “qiye (企业)”, “gongsi (公司)”, “yewu (业务)” in Chinese reports and “market”, “enterprise”, “company”, “business” in English translations.

The “W5: green issues” is also a typical semantic field in the chairperson’s statements, especially for the energy industry. Energy production and use represent a sensitive industrial area, which is based on limited resources and is still a major cause of the risk of incidents and contamination (IAEA, 2005, p. 1). Energy companies have therefore felt a more urgent need to legitimize their activities and to account for their sustainability (Aiezza, 2015). In CCCS, the words belonging to W5 include “wuran (污染)”, “huanjing (环境)”, “huanbao (环保)”, “shengtai (生态)”, and in CECS, they include “conservation”, “pollution”, “ecological”, “environment”. By stating their actions and missions to environmental problems, the company develops an environment-friendly image.

4.3 Semantic construction of the corporate image

Based on the above analysis, we proposed a model of semantic construction of the corporate image in the chairperson’s statements. The corporate image in the Chinese chairperson’s statements of CSR reports and their English translations is constructed by 5 types of semantics, namely evaluation semantics, business semantics, citizenship semantics, space-time semantics, and quantity semantics, as shown in Figure 2.

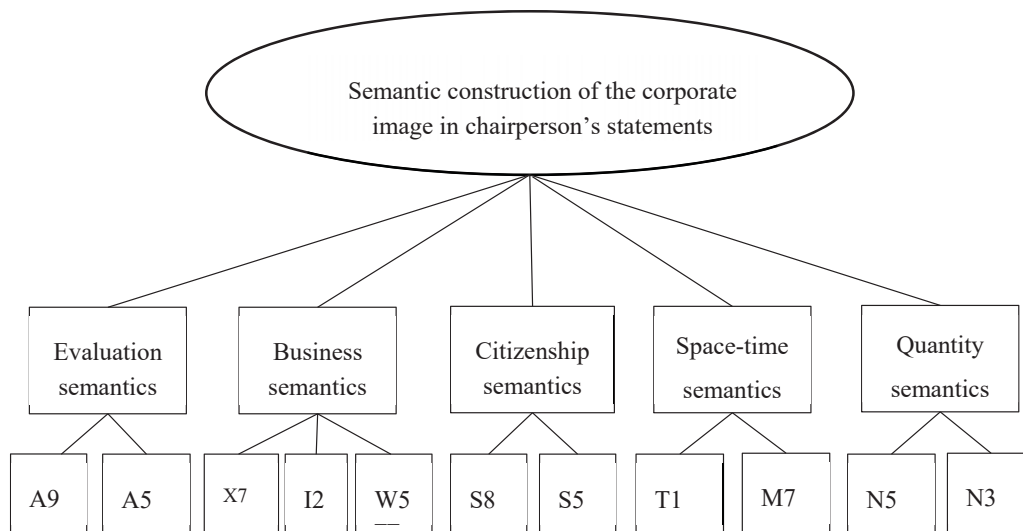


Figure 2. Semantic model of corporate image

4.3.1 Evaluation semantics

Evaluation semantics consists of words that positively evaluate the products, employees, and systems of the corporations, as well as that indicate the assets, reputations, and profits that the company has owned or earned. Extract 1 is an example.

Translation example 1.

Source text: 本公司致力为员工提供理想的工作环境，奉行平等、非歧视等原则，充分体现光大国际对企业责任的承担。[光大国际 2017]

Source text Romanized: Běn gōngsī zhìlì wéi yuángōng tígòng lǐxiǎng de gōngzuòhuánjìng, fèngxíng píngděng, fēiqǐshì děng yuánzé, chōngfèn tǐxiàn guāngdàguójì duì qǐyè zérèn de chéngdān.[Guāngdàguójì 2017]

Target text: The Company strives to **provide** employees with an **ideal** working environment and pursue principles such as **equality** as well as **non-discrimination**, which signify Everbright International’s **commitment** to corporate responsibility. [Everbright International 2017]

This extract uses “ideal”, “equality”, “non-discrimination” to positively evaluate the company’s working environment, and uses “provide” to show its care for employees. By using evaluation semantics, the chairperson’s statements construct a favorable corporate image.

4.3.2 Business semantics

The business semantics consists of sub-fields “X7: wanting; planning; choosing”, “I2: business” and “W5: green issues”.

Translation example 2.

Source text: 我们将继续按照既定发展**战略**，加大碳达峰、碳中和的政策研究与发展创新，助力实现**绿色低碳**发展，为国家**环保事业**作出贡献。[光大国际 2020]

Source text Romanized: Wōmen jiāng jìxù ànzhào jìdìng fāzhǎn zhàn lüè, jiādà tàndá fēng, tànzōnghé de zhèngcè yánjiū yǔ fāzhǎn chuàngxīn, zhùlì shíxiàn lǜsè dītān fāzhǎn, wéi guójiā huánbǎo shìyè zuòchū gòngxiàn. [Guāngdàguójì 2020]

Target text: We will continue our established development **strategy**, enhancing our policy, research, development and innovation related to peak carbon emissions and carbon neutral, so as to help achieve **green and low-carbon** development and contributing to national **environmental protection cause**. [Everbright International 2020]

The words “strategy”, “green” and “low-carbon” demonstrate the company’s determination to protect the environment, which is the cause of the nation, as well as the business of the corporation. The business semantics shows the strategic image of the company, that is to maximize the profits in an environment-friendly way.

4.3.3 Citizenship semantics

The citizenship semantics is composed of semantic fields “S8: helping/hindering” and “S5: group and affiliation”.

Translation example 3.

Source text: 除了积极承担对经济、环境和社会**可持续发展**的责任，比亚迪始终高度关注并**积极参与各类慈善公益活动**。[比亚迪 2019]

Source text Romanized: Chúle jījí chéngdān duì jīngjì, huánjīng hé shèhuì kěchíxù fāzhǎn de zérèn, bǐyàdí shǐzhōng gāodù guānzhù bìng jījí cānyù gèlèi císhàn gōngyì huódòng. [Biyàdí, 2019]

Target text: On top of fulfilling our responsibilities to the **sustainable development** of the economy, environment, and society, BYD is also **an active contributor to charity**. [BYD 2019]

A corporation affiliates with the community and society. BYD fulfills its responsibility to society as it cannot develop without a settled and prosperous society. Its active contribution to the charity shows a responsible corporate citizenship image.

4.3.4 Space-time semantics

The space-time semantics consists of semantic fields “T1: time” and “M7: places”.

Translation example 4.

Source text: **2020年**对宁德时代而言具有特殊的意义。[宁德时代 2020]

Source text Romanized: 2020 nián duì níngdéshídài éryán jù yǒu tèshū de yìyì. [Níngdéshídài, 2020]

Target text: **The year 2020** is of special significance to CATL. [CATL 2020]

Source text: 业务版图已延伸至国内 18 个**省和直辖市**、120 多个**地区**以至遍及**海外地区**，包括德国、波兰及越南。[光大国际 2017]

Source text Romanized: Yèwù bǎntú yǐ yánshēn zhì guó nèi 18 gè shěng hé zhíxí shì, 120 duō gè dìqū yìzhì biànjí hǎiwài dìqū, bāokuò déguó, bōlán jí yuè nán. [Guāngdàguójì 2017]

Target text: With these, the Group further expanded its presence to 18 **provinces and municipalities**, covering over 120 **locations** in China, as well as **overseas markets** including Germany, Poland and Vietnam. [Everbright International 2017]

The chairperson’s statement is a summary of the significant events of the corporation in the last year, as well as a narrative of the future scenario. Therefore, the statement would use many temporal expressions, like year, month, century, etc. At the same time, it would describe the landscape of its business in the domestic and international markets. As the first part of the CSR reports, using time-space semantics in the chairperson’s statements can introduce the business of the company from temporal and special dimensions, so as to leave readers with a clear outline of the performance of the company.

4.3.5 Quantity semantics

The quantity semantics combines the semantic fields “N5: quantities” and “N3: measurement”.

Translation example 5.

Source text: 2018 年，天合光能的单位组件**耗电量**和**耗水量**分别为 134MWH/MW 和 1360m³/MH，较 2014 年分别下降 **38.8%**和 **31.6%**。[天合光能 2018]

Source text Romanized: 2018 nián, tiānhéguāngnéng de dānwèi zǔjiàn hàodiànliàng hé hàoshuǐliàng fēnbié wéi 134MWH/MW hé 1360m³/MH, jiào 2014 nián fēnbié xiàjiàng 38.8% hé 31.6%. [Tiānhéguāngnéng, 2018]

Target text: In 2018, Trina Solar's **electricity and water consumption** per MW module production were **133.6 MWH/MW** and **1360.1 m³/MW** respectively, representing **38.8%** and **31.6%** of reduction compared to that of 2014. [Trinasolar 2018]

The numbers occur everywhere in the reports, such as the description of products and services, honors, research and development, and assets and equipment. The chairperson's statements use numbers and quantifiers to make the language more accurate, brief, and objective, in order to facilitate the reading and give readers a favorable impression.

5. Conclusion

This study analyzes the strategies of semantic construction of the corporate image in the chairperson's statements of Chinese CSR reports and their English translations. The results show that: 1) the major semantic fields in the chairperson's statements include "A: general and abstract terms", "Z: names and grammar", "S: social actions, states, and processes", "N: numbers and measurement", "T: time", "X: psychological, actions, states and processes", "I: money and commerce in industry", "M: movement, local, travel, and transport", "O: substances, materials, objects and equipment", and "W: world and environment"; 2) the major sub-domains of semantics include "A5: evaluation", "A9: getting and giving; possession", "S5: group and affiliation", "S8: helping/hindering", "N3: measurement", "N5: quantities", "T1: time", "X7: wanting, planning, choosing", "I2: business", "M7: places", and "W5: green issues"; 3) the chairperson's statement and its English translations construct the corporate image by 5 types of semantics: evaluation semantics, business semantics, citizenship semantics, time-space semantics, and quantity semantics; it uses positively evaluative expressions to develop a general favorable image, employs business semantics to build its strategic image, deploys citizenship semantics to create a responsible corporate citizenship image, and adopts time-space and quantity semantics to provide readers with a distinct and vivid impression.

The corporate image hides in the texts of the chairperson's statements of the CSR report. By using the corpus tools, we can figure out the strategies of semantic construction of the corporate image in the CSR reports. The image of the Chinese corporation is a significant part of the image of China. Therefore, the corporate international publicity translation is closely related to the construction of the Chinese corporate image. This study can expand the scope of translation studies to some extent, as well as broaden the field of the research of Chinese image. It is beneficial to Chinese enterprises to "go globally", and to improve international competitiveness. Therefore, this study has theoretical and practical implications.

This study has limitations inevitably due to the time limit. First, the corpus scale is small and all texts come from the new energy industry, and thus the results might be not representative to a sound degree. Second, the Chinese words feature polysemy, and the accurate meaning depends on the context. The USAS Chinese Tagger provides multiple semantic fields for some words and the subjectivity is involved in the manual selection of the appropriate semantics. Third, the analysis of the results is a little general, and a more in-depth discussion can be provided in the future.

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