

# A Comparative Study of Chinese and American Pharmaceutical Corporate Profiles Based on Rhetorical Appeal

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## Abstract

Rhetorical behavior refers to the behavior of actively using language resources around a specific audience, narrowing the distance between the two parties who had a strong sense of separation, and guiding the audience to cooperate. In this sense, the corporate profile for the purpose of communication and dissemination is also a rhetorical act. The differences in Chinese and Western cultural psychology, aesthetic concepts, and value concepts affect the significant differences in rhetoric between the two. With the profiles of Chinese and American pharmaceutical companies as subjects, on the basis of Aristotle's rhetorical appeals, the paper has made a contrastive analysis of the rhetorical process of realization of ethos, pathos, and logos in corporate profiles between China and America. The study found that the main differences in the rhetoric process of Chinese and American corporate profiles are as follows: Chinese corporate profiles emphasize the nature of the company, the awards, and honors the company has won, and product safety, to highlight the status of the company in the national economy. They generally take the third person form. The U.S. corporate profiles emphasize the business scope or business objectives of the business, focus on the interests of consumers, and adopt a specific statement of facts, usually in the first-person form. Studying the profiles of Chinese and American companies from the perspective of rhetorical comparison can help people understand Western rhetorical habits, make rhetoric centered on the audience, and then more efficiently meet the needs of the audience and better enhance the competitiveness of enterprises. The study is expected to give reference to Chinese corporate international communication.

**Keywords:** corporate profiles, rhetorical contrast, rhetorical appeal

## 1. Introduction

Under the background of the trend of globalization and the "Belt and Road" initiative, China is actively developing economic cooperation relations with countries around the world, and major enterprises are also actively seeking foreign markets, trying to integrate with international standards. In the era of "Internet+", network media has obvious advantages such as wide dissemination, low cost, fast speed, diversification, and freedom from time and space constraints. Commercial promotion and introduction of products and services utilizing network carriers have become one of the preferred ways for enterprises to establish their image, demonstrate their advantages, and attract investment and cooperation. For this reason, many Chinese enterprises have opened Chinese and English websites and adopted bilingual propaganda manuals, hoping to introduce the basic situation of enterprises to the world through these external propaganda materials, to establish a good image in the world, and strive for more international business opportunities. The company's external publicity materials include company profiles, trademarks, product introductions, manuals, advertisements, corporate culture promotion, official websites, etc. It is an important display of the company's products and culture, and it is also an important tool to attract consumers and partners and expand its influence. With the continuous development of network technology, the profile on the company's official website is the core part of the company's external publicity materials. Therefore, the importance of the company's official website profile is self-evident.

As a rhetorical discourse, the corporate profile uses language symbols to persuade the target audience to achieve its rhetorical purpose. With the increasing frequency of Sino-foreign trade exchanges, the company profile is an important platform for the company to publicize its basic information of the company. Whether its rhetorical form and rhetorical content can be recognized by the target audience plays an important role in the smooth progress of cross-cultural business communication. An appeal is a symbolic strategy whose purpose is either to evoke an emotion or to gain the audience's loyalty or commitment. However, even though the purpose of corporate profiles is to build a good image and stimulate customers' willingness to invest and cooperate, due to the differences in economic, political, and cultural aspects between China and America, the appeal strategies adopted in corporate profiles texts are quite different.

Rhetorical appeal theory is often used in the analysis of speeches, advertisements, academic papers, and other discourses, but its application in corporate discourse research has received relatively little attention from scholars.

Therefore, based on the previous research results, this paper attempts to use the method of parallel text analysis to compare the Chinese and English enterprise profiles with the theory of rhetorical appeal. It examines the characteristics of the textual conventions of Chinese and American pharmaceutical companies and compares how Chinese and American company profiles resort to persuasion resources. It is hoped that through the research of this paper, the differences can be understood in the textual conventions of Chinese and English enterprise profiles. Understanding these differences can reduce the communication barriers caused by cultural differences, improve the effect of cross-cultural communication, make the company profile effective in promoting, and establish a professional image of Chinese companies in the world, to obtain a broader space for development. According to the research purpose of this paper, this paper will mainly answer the following questions:

What are the differences between Chinese and American pharmaceutical company profiles in terms of ethos?

What are the differences between Chinese and American pharmaceutical company profiles in realizing pathos?

What are the differences between Chinese and American pharmaceutical company profiles in completing logos?

## 2. Previous research on corporate profiles

This part will review the previous research on company profile texts, comparison of Chinese and foreign corporate profile texts, and comparison of Chinese and foreign corporate profiles from the perspective of rhetorical appeal.

Many scholars are keen on the research of corporate profiles, and the research angle and application theory are also very rich. Looking at the existing research, the content mainly focuses on the discussion of the English translation of Chinese enterprise profiles, mainly from the perspectives of adaptation theory, text type theory, text grammar, etc. For example, Tang (2013), based on Vessollen's Adaptation Theory, discussed the strategies that should be adopted in the English translation of "China Time-honored Brands" from the perspective of pragmatics. Chen (2013), based on Rice and Newmark's text type theory, divides corporate profile texts into three categories: informational texts, expressive texts, and calling texts according to the different functions of language. She also analyzed the problems existing in the English translation of corporate profiles and discussed translation strategies applicable to different types of texts. The existing research results have a certain guiding significance for the practice of English translation of Chinese enterprise profiles, which is conducive to improving the external publicity effect of enterprises. It is worth noting that many scholars have explored the English translation strategies of Chinese enterprise profiles from a comparative perspective. Zhang (2013), based on the characteristics of parallel texts in English translation and guided by functional translation theory, comparatively analyzed the differences between the corporate profiles of Chinese and American corporate websites. Lu (2012) constructed a parallel text comparison mode suitable for the English translation of corporate profile texts based on Werlich text grammar, describing and analyzing the similarities and differences in textual conventions of corporate profiles on Chinese and American corporate websites. He also discusses some enlightenments obtained from the English translation of enterprise profile texts. Lu (2019) used the corpus analysis software Wmatrix to examine the semantics, grammar, and word frequency distribution characteristics of corporate profile texts on English web pages of Chinese pharmaceutical companies and compared them with data related to U.S. pharmaceutical companies' profile texts.

As far as the comparison between English and Chinese is concerned, in addition to the enthusiasm for English translation strategies, some scholars have conducted comparative research on Chinese and foreign enterprise profiles from the characteristics and content of the text. Guided by the genre analysis theory of Swales and Bhatia, Chen (2009) compares the similarities and differences between Chinese and American enterprise profiles from two aspects: genre structure and genre realization form. Yin (2014) collected 25 English profiles of Chinese and foreign shipping companies as a research corpus and selected 10 English profiles of Chinese and foreign shipping companies to manually mark and count them, and use SPSS software for data analysis. It aims to study the three thematic functions of experiential functional theme, interpersonal functional theme, and discourse functional theme. Feng (2015) reviewed the similarities and differences between Chinese and foreign petrochemical enterprise profiles in terms of text structure, content innovation, and language usage. Based on the Hasan genre structure potential, Tang (2015) compares and analyzes the genre components and genre structure potential of Chinese and American business profiles. Zou (2020) used critical metaphor analysis to compare the conceptual metaphors in the English profiles of Chinese and foreign Internet companies, aiming to analyze the different practices of Chinese and foreign companies in building corporate identities and to reveal the hidden ideas of the two parties. It can be seen from the above research that scholars pay more attention to the text structure, genre, text convention, and text content of Chinese and English company profiles.

The existing research results help to improve the cross-cultural communication quality of Chinese enterprise profiles to a certain extent and enhance the effect of Chinese enterprises' external publicity. At present, some scholars have paid attention to the rhetorical persuasion function of corporate profiles and tried to conduct comparative research on Chinese and foreign corporate profiles. For example, He (2018) tried to use rhetoric as the theoretical framework and

selected nearly 30 corporate profiles of the official websites of the top 500 companies at home and abroad as the research objects, including English corporate profiles, Chinese corporate profiles, and their English translations. At last, the rhetorical differences between Chinese enterprise profiles are discussed. Zeng (2015) investigated the use of the three elements of Aristotle's rhetoric with ten English profiles of Guangxi enterprises and ten English profiles of well-known western enterprises. Chen (2018) took the profiles of Chinese and American companies as the research object, used the rhetorical appeal theory, and comparatively analyzed the rhetorical process of the Chinese and American company profiles' appeal to personality to build corporate credibility. Fan (2020) took the profiles of the Imperial Palace and Buckingham Palace selected from domestic and foreign tourism websites as the research objects and took Aristotle's three rhetorical strategies as theoretical support. From the audience's point of view, she discussed the similarities and differences in rhetorical strategies between the two and tried to find the reasons for the differences, to provide some inspiration for improving the rhetorical persuasion effect of China's tourism promotion texts.

As a rhetorical discourse, enterprise profile plays an important role in constructing enterprise credibility, but unfortunately, some studies still have some limitations. For example, some studies compare the profiles of enterprises in different industries without further dividing the nature of enterprises. The sources of the data they collected are rather messy, there are no various control variables, and the rhetorical function of enterprise profile has not been paid enough attention by the academic circles. This study takes the three elements of rhetorical appeal as a theoretical framework, combined with parallel text analysis methods. Combined with the current hot spots, a total of 6 well-known pharmaceutical companies in China and the United States were selected. In parallel text analysis, enterprise types correspond to each other, so the text is more comparable. Combining a theoretical perspective of rhetorical appeal with a parallel text analysis method, this study may provide a new idea for the cross-cultural communication of enterprises, which can be applied to other types of enterprise profile research.

### **3. Theoretical framework**

The content of this part will focus on several key concepts relevant to this article, including the definition of the enterprise profile and its function and rhetorical appeal theory.

#### *3.1 The Rhetoric of the Corporate Profile*

A company profile is an explanatory text material that introduces the company's current status, historical background, company nature, business scope, business characteristics, and corporate advertising. It is like a company's resume, an important part of the company's external publicity materials, the epitome of the company's image, performance, cultural connotation, and the first window of external communication. A well-presented company profile can impress potential customer groups and partners, thereby increasing the company's opportunities for external development.

The primary function of the company profile is to provide basic information about the company to potential customer groups and partners. Its ultimate purpose is to produce considerable publicity effects, establish a good business image of the company, arouse the interest of potential customers and partners, and gain their trust and support. It can be seen that the company profile not only has the characteristics of information text but also has the function of stimulating the audience to take a certain action. Therefore, in its essence, it is a specific form of rhetorical practice. Both rhetorical persuasion and corporate profile are aimed at specific groups of people. Rhetoricians hope to attract readers through the application of various speech and argumentation methods so that they can identify with them, achieve persuasive effects, and thus achieve the rhetorician's communicative purpose. However, due to the difference in the use of rhetorical strategies between China and the West, if the company profile is directly translated from the Chinese version into the English version as a publicity text and presented to foreign audiences, the rhetorical strategy does not conform to Western rhetorical habits. Therefore, the English profile of Chinese enterprises cannot exert its persuasive effect to the greatest extent, and cannot make foreign customers better understand the company's products and stimulate their psychological identity. This article will compare and analyze the profiles of Chinese and American pharmaceutical companies, explore the differences in the use of rhetorical strategies between Chinese and American companies, and provide some inspiration for improving the rhetorical persuasion effect of Chinese pharmaceutical company profiles.

#### *3.2 Parallel text contrast mode*

The concept of parallel text originated from comparative text linguistics. It originally referred to the original text and the corresponding translation that were placed side by side and compared sentence by sentence. Later, the connotation was extended to generally refer to the types of texts with similar communicative functions in different languages and cultures. Hartmann (1980), the founder of parallel texts, divides parallel texts into three categories. Category A refers to translations and original texts that are highly consistent in form and semantically equivalent. Category B refers to translations and originals that are not identical in form but functionally equivalent. Type C is the corpus corresponding to the register, which is not equivalent in terms of semantics, and only has a certain consistency in the topic, style, use occasion, and applicable object of the text. The parallel text referred to in this article refers specifically to the C-type parallel text in the Hartmann classification. Although the semantic information conveyed by the Chinese and English

corporate web pages is different, the themes, usage occasions, and applicable objects of the text are similar. The purpose is to promote enterprises and stimulate the potential consumption intention of the target audience.

### 3.3 Rhetorical Appeals

Rhetoric is one of the oldest subjects in the West, as early as the seventh century B.C. the ancient Greeks learned how to speak skillfully to achieve the rhetorical effect. Although the practice of rhetoric had been in vogue centuries before Aristotle, rhetoric was not established as a discipline at that time. *Rhetoric* written by Aristotle (1924) is a work that played a foundational role in the development of Western rhetoric. In his view, rhetoric is the function of seeking possible means of persuasion in any given situation. If a rhetorician wants to persuade others, he first needs to speak with reason. Secondly, it is necessary to fully understand the character of the audience, understand the emotions of the audience, and the reasons for the emotion. It can be seen that rhetoric in Aristotle's eyes not only emphasizes reason but also pays attention to emotional and ethical values, which is consistent with the three rhetorical appeals involved in this article.

There are three main means of rhetorical appeal: ethos, pathos, and logos. Ethos is a rhetorical means to persuade the audience by constructing a rhetorical personality. To construct a credible rhetorical personality, the rhetorician needs to demonstrate such personality qualities as common sense, good character or virtue, and goodwill. Ethos is the most persuasive means of persuasion in rhetorical appeals because audiences are more willing to accept the rhetorician's point of view when they believe the rhetorician is reasonable, trustworthy, and friendly. Pathos is a rhetorical method that stimulates the audience's emotions, makes them accept the rhetorician's point of view, and then takes corresponding actions. Logos refers to the rhetorical means by which the subject of rhetorical discourse presents reason and facts so that the audience perceives the logic in his discourse.

## 4. Method

This study selects the corporate profiles of 3 Chinese pharmaceutical companies and 3 American pharmaceutical companies as research data. The six selected Chinese and American pharmaceutical enterprises are shown in Table 1. The author reviews the Chinese and English profiles of its official website and selects U.S. companies with similar business scope as parallel texts. The texts include English corporate profiles, Chinese corporate profiles, and their English translations. All the texts of these 6 companies are taken from the official websites of the companies, so the data is more authentic. They have the same topic, belong to the same genre and text type, and have similar text functions. In terms of the nature of enterprises, there are state-owned enterprises, private enterprises, and joint-stock enterprises. Most of the selected companies have a certain influence and representation in the pharmaceutical industry. Although the 6 profiles of Chinese and American companies are only a small corpus, the selected companies are highly representative.

Table 1. Selected Chinese and American Pharmaceutical Enterprises

Chinese Pharmaceutical Enterprises	American Pharmaceutical Enterprises
China National Pharmaceutical Group Co., Ltd. (Sinopharm)	Pfizer
Guangzhou Pharmaceutical Holdings	Merck (known as MSD outside the U.S. and Canada)
Kexing Biopharm	AstraZeneca

This study mainly uses qualitative methods to compare and analyze the rhetorical process of using ethos, pathos, logos, and other persuasion methods in Chinese and American pharmaceutical company profiles, which will help people to understand the discourse differences between Chinese and American company profiles. Based on fully understanding the differences, enterprises can adjust and present the profiles of Chinese enterprises in the English context in a targeted manner, to conform to the language thinking mode of the audience and effectively achieve the purpose of external publicity.

## 5. Differences in the three rhetorical appeals

In the practice of rhetorical discourse, a single form of appeal cannot play a decisive role in the effect of persuasion, and ethos, pathos, and logos are inseparable (Deng, 2011). Rhetorical discourse is based on logos, but logos are inseparable from pathos, and ethos plays a dominant role in persuasion. These three make the discourse reasonable, convince the audience with personal prestige, and achieve the purpose of rhetoric. This part will make a text comparison and analysis of the differences in the three principles of ethos, pathos, and logos in the profiles of Chinese and American pharmaceutical companies. Due to the limited space, this paper mainly selects representative profiles of Chinese and American pharmaceutical companies for presentation. The Chinese version and English version of the profile of Chinese pharmaceutical enterprises are selected respectively. The Chinese version is mainly used to show the original logic of the profile, while the English version is used for a more intuitive comparison. For American enterprises, only the English version of the company profile is selected for comparison.

### 5.1 Differences in the ethos

Ethos in rhetoric refers to the personality factors displayed by the rhetorician through the text, that is to say, the rhetorician shows the good character of the enterprise through language, to construct the rhetorical authority, obtain the affirmation of the audience, and achieve effective persuasion. By using rhetorical devices, the speaker makes the speaker appear to be a certain kind of person and makes the audience think that he has a certain attitude towards them because this will have a significant impact on persuasion (Liu, 2008). In business activities, consumers are more willing to deal with honest companies. When the audience thinks the rhetorician is trustworthy, they are more likely to accept and agree with the rhetorician's point of view and attitude.

#### 5.1.1 The means of building corporate image

Profiles of Chinese companies mainly use political discourse to shape the image of honest companies. American corporate profiles mainly use positive words such as "responsibility, commitment, dependable" and other words to convey the business philosophy of integrity to the audience. Please compare the following example:

Example 1 : Excerpted from the Introduction of GPHL<sup>2</sup>

Source text: 诞生于广州这片中国近代与现代革命策源地的广药集团, 始终与“红色血脉”紧紧相连, 培育了中国共产党早期领导人、广州起义的组织发动者、中央政治局常委杨殷。红色血脉代代相传, 如今广药集团每年均开展纪念革命烈士、纪念向秀丽、纪念神农诞辰等传承红色基因主题活动。(广药集团)

Target text: GPHL, with its headquarters located in the cradle of Chinese revolutions in contemporary and modern times, has been a staunch supporter of CPC. It had produced a galaxy of revolutionaries, such as Yang Yin, a leader of the CPC in early days, advocate and organizer of Guangzhou Uprising and member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee. To pass on the spirit of patriotism, GPHL organizes events in honor of revolutionary martyrs and Xiang Xiuli, and Shennong, the discoverer of medicine in the Chinese myth. (Excerpted from GPHL)

Parallel text: Consistent with our responsibility as the world's leading biopharmaceutical company, we also collaborate with health care providers, governments and local communities to support and expand access to reliable, affordable health care around the world. (Excerpted from the Introduction of Pfizer<sup>3</sup>)

In Example 1, the discourse subject Guangzhou Pharmaceutical Holdings used revolutionary and political discourses such as "the cradle of Chinese revolutions", "a galaxy of revolutionaries", "CPC" and "the spirit of patriotism". It aims to convey to consumers that its business orientation and philosophy are positive. In the parallel text, Pfizer conveys the trustworthy quality of the enterprise through the expression "responsibility, to support and expand access to reliable".

#### 5.1.2 Citing authoritative sources

Prestigious companies are more likely to win the approval of consumers. Using authoritative resources can enhance the prestige of the subject of rhetorical discourse. Authoritative resources such as officials, experts, and social elites are easily converted into "authority" and "credibility" in the minds of customers. Profiles of Chinese companies usually emphasize the nature of the company. Discourses such as "solely state-owned company" and "state-owned backbone enterprise" highlight the status of the company. Please compare the following example:

Example 2 : Excerpted from the Introduction of Sinopharm<sup>4</sup>

Source text: 中国医药集团有限公司(以下简称“国药集团”)是由国务院国资委直接管理的唯一一家以生命健康为主业的中央企业, 是国家创新型企业, 是中央医药储备单位, 是中国和亚洲综合实力和规模领先的综合性医药健康产业集团, 拥有集科技研发、工业制造、物流分销、零售连锁、医疗健康、工程技术、专业会展、国际经营、金融投资等为一体的大健康全产业链。(医药集团)

Target text: China National Pharmaceutical Group Co., Ltd. (Sinopharm) is a large healthcare group directly under the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC) of the State Council, with 128,000 employees and a full chain in the industry covering R&D, manufacturing, logistics and distribution, retail chains, healthcare, engineering services, exhibitions and conferences, international business and financial services. (Sinopharm)

<sup>2</sup> Chinese version: <http://www.gpc.com.cn/aboutUs.html>

English version: <http://en.gpc.com.cn/aboutUs.html>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.pfizer.com.cn/about/overview\\_en.aspx](https://www.pfizer.com.cn/about/overview_en.aspx)

<sup>4</sup> Chinese version: <http://www.sinopharm.com/1073.html>

English version: <http://www.sinopharm.com/en/1398.html>

Parallel text: For more than 160 years, Pfizer has worked to make a difference for all who rely on us.  
(Excerpted from the Introduction of Pfizer<sup>5</sup>)

For 130 years, we've focused on not just the next quarter, but the next quarter-century. (Excerpted from the Introduction of Merck<sup>6</sup>)

In Example 2, the discourse subject Sinopharm Group used terms such as "the State-owned Assets Supervision" and "Administration Commission (SASAC) of the State Council", focusing on publicizing the nature of the enterprise and highlighting its authority. The discourse subjects of the parallel text, Merck and Pfizer conveyed to the audience that the company occupies a pivotal position in the industry by introducing the company's long history.

### 5.1.3 Ways to show strength

The credibility of an enterprise is not only reflected in the integrity of management, the sense of responsibility, and the enjoyment of a certain prestige and status, but more importantly, it has considerable strength. In the process of business communication, the strength of an enterprise is an important factor in persuading potential customers. The profiles of Chinese and American companies reflect the strength of companies in different ways. Please compare the following example:

Example 3 : Excerpted from the Introduction of Sinopharm<sup>7</sup>

Source text: 2020 年国药集团营业收入超 5000 亿元，位列世界 500 强企业榜单第 109 位，在世界 500 强医药企业榜单中位列第 2 位。集团规模、效益和综合实力持续保持中国和亚洲医药行业领先地位，连续七年度被国务院国资委评为“中央企业负责人经营业绩考核 A 级企业”。集团入围中央电视台“2019 中国品牌强国盛典榜样 100 品牌”，在《人民日报》“中国品牌发展（企业）指数榜单”中位列医药类企业第一位。在国际权威品牌价值咨询公司 Brand Finance 发布的 2021 年全球品牌价值医药企业 25 强排名中，蝉联亚洲第一。（医药集团）

Target text: The past years witnessed Sinopharm's steady and sound development. From 2009 to 2018, the CAGR of revenue and total assets reached 24.24% and 30.54% respectively. Sinopharm ranked 169th in Fortune Global 500 and the revenue of 2018 amounted to nearly 400 billion yuan. (Sinopharm)

Parallel text:

Our company by the numbers	74k employees
Research and development investment in 2020	\$13.6B
Total philanthropy in 2019	\$3.1B

(Excerpted from the Introduction of Merck<sup>8</sup>)

Example 3 shows that the profile of a Chinese company mainly displays the company's honors, awards, rankings, etc. to demonstrate the company's strength. It is worth noting that the update of English profiles of Chinese enterprises is slow. The data for the Chinese profile has been updated to 2020, while the data for the English profile still stays in 2018. The parallel text shows that the U.S. company profile uses specific data to introduce the company's business scope, operating income, number of employees or global business scale, etc., to objectively describe the strength of the company, and to convince the target customers. From the comparison between the English and Chinese profiles of the Sinopharm group, its English profile has deleted a considerable part of honors and awards. It can be seen that some enterprises have noticed the differences between Chinese and English rhetorical strategies and made some adjustments.

### 5.2 Differences in the pathos

Pathos mainly achieves the rhetorical effect of persuasion by adjusting the audience's emotions and making the audience in a certain mood (Liu, 2018). If rhetorical discourse can arouse the emotional resonance of the audience, then the discourse is more likely to be recognized by the audience. Therefore, rhetoricians try to adjust the audience's emotions in the rhetorical interaction, so that they are in a psychological state that is easy to accept persuasion. This does not mean that the rhetorician simply pays attention to whether the discourse is acceptable, but requires the rhetorician to pay attention to whether the judgment is correct from the moral level. Rhetoricians narrow the distance with the audience by seeking common ground. Seeking common ground is to emphasize the commonalities between

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.pfizer.com.cn/about/overview\\_en.aspx](https://www.pfizer.com.cn/about/overview_en.aspx)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.merckgroup.com/en/company/history.html>

<sup>7</sup> Chinese version: <http://www.sinopharm.com/1073.html>

English version: <http://www.sinopharm.com/en/1398.html>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.merckgroup.com/en/company/history.html>

themselves and the audience, such as shared values, common emotional experiences, etc. They become the basis of emotional communication and help both parties build trust.

Chinese corporate profiles usually emphasize national interests and stimulate the audience's emotions to achieve persuasive purposes. American business profiles appeal to pathos by emphasizing consumer interests. Please compare the following example:

Example 4 : Excerpted from the Introduction of Sinopharm<sup>9</sup>

Source text: 中国医药集团有限公司（以下简称“国药集团”）是由国务院国资委直接管理的唯一一家以生命健康为主业的中央企业，是国家创新型企业，是中央医药储备单位，是中国和亚洲综合实力 and 规模领先的综合性医药健康产业集团，拥有集科技研发、工业制造、物流分销、零售连锁、医疗健康、工程技术、专业会展、国际经营、金融投资等为一体的大健康全产业链。（医药集团）

Target text: China National Pharmaceutical Group Co., Ltd. (Sinopharm) is a large healthcare group directly under the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC) of the State Council...The past years witnessed Sinopharm's steady and sound development. From 2009 to 2018, the CAGR of revenue and total assets reached 24.24% and 30.54% respectively. Sinopharm ranked 169th in Fortune Global 500 and the revenue of 2018 amounted to nearly 400 billion yuan...Sinopharm has built up manufacturing and medicinal materials sites for biological drugs, narcotic and psychotropic drugs, anti-infectious drugs, oncology drugs, cardio-vascular drugs, and respiratory drugs. Some of the production lines have been approved by the US FDA and E.U. authorities and prequalified by WHO.

Parallel text: At Pfizer, we apply science and our global resources to improve health and well-being at every stage of life. We strive to set the standard for quality, safety, and value in the discovery, development and manufacturing of medicines for people. Our diversified global health care portfolio includes biologic and small molecule medicines and vaccines, as well as many of the world's best-known consumer. Every day, Pfizer colleagues all over the world work to advance wellness, prevention, treatments and cures that challenge the most feared diseases of our time. Consistent with our responsibility as the world's leading biopharmaceutical company, we also collaborate with health care providers, governments and local communities to support and expand access to reliable, affordable health care around the world.

(Excerpted from the Introduction of Pfizer<sup>10</sup>)

Example 4 shows that the Chinese company profile is used to highlight the company itself, and strive to create an image of a powerful and attractive company in front of readers to win the trust of consumers. It is manifested in the fact that the text is enterprise-centered, frequently uses the company name, and the tone is formal, even slightly stiff. It lacks interaction with the target audience and fails to consider the psychological feelings of the target language readers as potential consumers.

American companies stand on the consumer's side, consider and adapt to consumers' psychological needs, and strive to resonate in the hearts of target audiences to achieve the purpose of persuasion. The discourse subject not only appeals to emotion by emphasizing the interests of consumers but also uses the plural form of first-person pronouns to establish emotional identity with the audience. In the practice of rhetorical discourse, the use of the plural form of first-person pronouns enhances the audience's sense of identity to a certain extent, making the audience unwittingly identify with the subject of discourse. In the parallel text, the American company used the plural form of first-person pronouns such as "we, us, our" to give the audience a feeling of cordiality and equality, to gain the audience's approval.

### 5.3 Differences in the logos

Logos involve consideration of the arrangement of textual structures (Ju, 2013). The discourses of Chinese and American corporate profiles seek rationality through corporate goals, corporate history, and corporate business scope, but there are differences in the order of structure construction. Chinese enterprise profiles usually start with the nature of the enterprise, then introduce the development history of the enterprise, the business scope of the enterprise, and finally put forward the enterprise goal. The American business profile starts with the business goals or founders, and then introduces the business scope and strength of the business. Chinese corporate profile discourse pays more attention

<sup>9</sup> Chinese version: <http://www.sinopharm.com/1073.html>

English version: <http://www.sinopharm.com/en/1398.html>

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.pfizer.com.cn/about/overview\\_en.aspx](https://www.pfizer.com.cn/about/overview_en.aspx)

to the nature of the company, while American corporate profile discourse pays more attention to corporate goals or corporate history for rational appeal. Please compare the following example:

Example 5 : Excerpted from the Introduction of Sinopharm<sup>11</sup>

Source text: 中国医药集团有限公司（以下简称“国药集团”）是由国务院国资委直接管理的唯一一家以生命健康为主业的中央企业，是国家创新型企业，是中央医药储备单位，是中国和亚洲综合实力 and 规模领先的综合性医药健康产业集团，拥有集科技研发、工业制造、物流分销、零售连锁、医疗健康、工程技术、专业会展、国际经营、金融投资等为一体的大健康全产业链。

Target text: China National Pharmaceutical Group Co., Ltd. (Sinopharm) is a large healthcare group directly under the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC) of the State Council, with 128,000 employees and a full chain in the industry covering R&D, manufacturing, logistics and distribution, retail chains, healthcare, engineering services, exhibitions and conferences, international business and financial services. (Sinopharm)

**Parallel text:** Our business is organized to deliver our strategic priorities sustainably, supporting continued scientific innovation and commercial success. We focus on the discovery, development, and commercialization of prescription medicines in Oncology and BioPharmaceuticals, including Cardiovascular, Renal & Metabolism, and Respiratory & Immunology. (Excerpted from the Introduction of AstraZeneca<sup>12</sup>)

Example 5 and the parallel text are selected from the first sentence of the corporate profile texts of the Sinopharm and AstraZeneca respectively. The Chinese company first emphasizes the nature of the company, while the latter focuses on the goals of the company. Second, the Chinese and American business profiles use different discourse constructions to introduce business operations. Chinese enterprises mainly use the means of ranking to introduce their products or services. American companies introduce their business scope by constructing business facts. Appealing to facts that are relevant to people's daily lives is the rational material often used by U.S. business profiles to persuade audiences. Speaking with facts and reasoning with facts is not simply a list of facts. In the practice of rhetorical discourse, the subject of rhetorical discourse expresses its implicit views or attitudes, that is, its rhetorical purpose, through careful selection and arrangement of facts in the process of stating facts. Please compare the following example:

Example 6 : Excerpted from the Introduction of Sinopharm<sup>13</sup>

Source text: 中国医药集团有限公司（以下简称“国药集团”）是由国务院国资委直接管理的唯一一家以生命健康为主业的中央企业，是国家创新型企业，是中央医药储备单位，是中国和亚洲综合实力 and 规模领先的综合性医药健康产业集团，拥有集科技研发、工业制造、物流分销、零售连锁、医疗健康、工程技术、专业会展、国际经营、金融投资等为一体的大健康全产业链。（国药集团）

Target text: China National Pharmaceutical Group Co., Ltd. (Sinopharm) is a large healthcare group directly under the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC) of the State Council, with 128,000 employees and a full chain in the industry covering R&D, manufacturing, logistics and distribution, retail chains, healthcare, engineering services, exhibitions and conferences, international business and financial services. ( Sinopharm )

**Parallel text:**

Every day, Pfizer colleagues all over the world work to advance wellness, prevention, treatments and cures that challenge the most feared diseases of our time. (Excerpted from the Introduction of Pfizer<sup>14</sup>)

Our business is organized to deliver our strategic priorities sustainably, supporting continued scientific innovation and commercial success. We focus on the discovery, development, and commercialization of prescription medicines in Oncology and BioPharmaceuticals, including Cardiovascular, Renal & Metabolism, and Respiratory & Immunology. (Excerpted from the Introduction of AstraZeneca<sup>15</sup>)

In Example 6, Sinopharm mainly conveys its business information and business philosophy to the audience by employing ranking and listing. In the parallel text, Pfizer communicates the importance of its products to audiences by

<sup>11</sup> Chinese version: <http://www.sinopharm.com/1073.html>

English version: <http://www.sinopharm.com/en/1398.html>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.astrazeneca.com.cn/zh/about-us.html>

<sup>13</sup> Chinese version: <http://www.sinopharm.com/1073.html>

English version: <http://www.sinopharm.com/en/1398.html>

<sup>14</sup> [https://www.pfizer.com.cn/about/overview\\_en.aspx](https://www.pfizer.com.cn/about/overview_en.aspx)

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.astrazeneca.com.cn/zh/about-us.html>



stating that its products touch almost every aspect of the disease. AstraZeneca uses more disease-related and professional terms as rational material to convince the audience. The construction of business facts that are close to daily life is easy to meet the psychological needs of the audience, so it is easier to get the recognition of the target audience.

In a word, different countries have different social histories and cultural backgrounds, which has caused the difference between Chinese and Western rhetorical cultures. After conducting a parallel text comparative analysis of the profiles of Chinese and American pharmaceutical companies, it is found that there are significant differences in the appeal of rhetorical resources between the two. Therefore, appropriate rhetorical strategies should be adopted in the face of audiences from different backgrounds. Through comparative analysis to identify these differences, this study hopes to provide some inspiration on how to make Chinese pharmaceutical company profiles more suitable for foreign clients.

## 6. Results and Discussion

The comparison of rhetoric will examine and summarize how English and Chinese can successfully influence and persuade the intended audience in their respective native discourses with similar communicative purposes, using the overall linguistic symbolic resources including discourse content, appeal strategies, construction methods, and aesthetic figures of speech (Fan, 2014). By comparing the rhetorical differences between China and America, enterprises can understand the needs of Western audiences more clearly and intuitively, make appropriate rhetorical adjustments to the words of the company profile, and persuade the audience in a way they like to see.

In terms of ethos, Chinese enterprise profiles often contain information such as the state-owned nature of the enterprise, national political and economic policies, and leader care. They enhance the credibility of products and services through the character building of state and political authority. In order to highlight the corporate value and attract customers, Chinese corporate profiles are often stacked with data and awards. While English corporate profiles are mostly consumer-centric, they adopt an approach from the audience's point of view, and rarely resort to state authority. With the help of specific descriptions of products and services, the U.S. profile texts rationally and objectively publicize their use value and give information that is most directly beneficial to customers.

In terms of pathos, Chinese corporate profiles are accustomed to highlighting national interests and strive to create an image of a powerful and appealing company in front of readers to win the trust of consumers. It is manifested in that the Chinese company profile is written in the third person, frequently uses the company name, and has a formal tone. The profile lacks engagement with the target audience. American corporate profiles put consumer interests first. Their texts are narrated from a first-person perspective, and they make extensive use of first-person pronouns such as "we, us, our", thereby narrowing the sense of distance with the reader. To avoid repetition, they often use words such as "the group, the company" to replace the company name. This also enriches the expression.

In terms of logos, Chinese enterprise profiles usually emphasize the nature of the enterprise and national interests to enhance the corporate image. It generally has a relatively fixed format, which can be roughly summarized in the following order: company nature-establishment time-business scope-research and development strength-company performance-vision, and goals. The information is displayed in a mixed manner and is not categorized by headings or subheadings. The profile of American enterprises focuses on presenting the business scope or business goals to the audience first. It generally does not have a fixed mode, and often uses large titles and subtitles to classify and display various aspects of information to avoid information mixing. In addition, there are many parallel sentences or four-character sentences in the Chinese company profile, focusing on the beauty of the writing style. In contrast, American company profiles use more simple sentences and words.

To sum up, due to different ways of thinking and language expression habits, Chinese and American corporate discourse subjects use different discourse forms to achieve three aspects of the appeal. Through comparative analysis, the study found that there are three main differences in the rhetorical means of appealing to ethos, pathos, and logos in the profile of Chinese and American pharmaceutical companies: emphasizing different objects of interest, different subject personal forms, and different structural construction sequences. Chinese enterprise profile discourse revolves around national interests, adopts a third-person singular form, and makes rhetorical appeals with the nature of the enterprise as the core. American enterprise profile discourse revolves around consumer interests, adopts first-person pronoun plural form, and focuses on corporate goals to make rhetorical appeals.

## 7. Conclusion

Werlich (1982) argues that two principles affect all text construction and text analysis. One is the external constraints of the text, such as context and genre. The second is the internal composition rules of the text, and the basic text composition factors include the beginning, the order form, the text structure, the text unit, and the end. As far as the external constraints of the text are concerned, the Chinese and American corporate profiles have similar contexts and genres, and the purpose of writing is to promote and promote the company, build a good corporate image, and attract potential target customers. The text has both the function of information transmission and infection persuasion. As far

as the internal composition rules of the text are concerned, the text composition elements of the Chinese and American corporate profiles are the same, but they are different in the specific beginning and end, text structure, text content, and rhetorical style. This paper helps people understand the persuasive function of corporate profiles by examining and comparing the rhetorical processes of Chinese and American corporate profiles resorting to rhetorical means such as ethos, pathos, and logos. Furthermore, it is helpful for enterprises to deeply understand the rhetorical construction of corporate profile texts from different cultural backgrounds. In the practice of Chinese enterprises' external communication, rhetorical awareness should be strengthened. Enterprises should adjust the original text, reconstruct the discourse of the introduction text, and strive to be close to the thinking mode of the audience. This is expected to increase the audience's recognition of the enterprise profile discourse and improve the external publicity effect of the enterprise.

However, this paper still has certain limitations. First, due to space and time constraints, this paper only collects 6 representative profiles of Chinese and American pharmaceutical companies, which cannot represent all Chinese and American companies. Secondly, this study only classifies the industry of the company, comparing the profiles of Chinese pharmaceutical companies with those of the U.S. pharmaceutical companies, and does not distinguish other variables of the company, such as the size of the company, the history of the company, whether the company is state-owned or private, and so on. These variables may, to a certain extent, influence the strategic choice of corporate rhetorical appeal. Third, qualitative methods used in text analysis are inevitably subject to a certain degree. It is suggested that future research can conduct text analysis from different dimensions, such as using quantitative analysis methods to analyze which words are used for rhetorical appeals in Chinese and American business profiles, and the frequency distribution of words. At the same time, it is recommended to increase the size of the corpus in future research, and Chinese and American companies in the same industry can find more examples for comparison. In addition, future research can consider more variables when collecting corpora, such as a stratified comparison of corporate profiles of large, medium, and small pharmaceutical companies. The findings would be more convincing if these variables were taken into account.

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