

# Contrastive Study on the Publicity Materials of Cross-border E-commerce

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**Abstract:** *The development of cross-border e-commerce is an important part of the internationalization of private enterprises. The publicity materials on the website of private enterprises, however, serve as an essentially critical media in building their international image and promoting business development. This paper conducts a research on 50 private enterprises in Jiangsu Province of China. And it employs textual analysis to study the main characteristics of the publicity materials so as to explore the reasons for their success or failure. The findings will provide suggestions for the publicity of private enterprises in improving international reputation.*

**Key Words:** *private enterprise; publicity; textual analysis; suggestion.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

As domestic cross-border e-commerce sees rapid development, an increasing number of entities join online dealing of foreign trade. Against the backdrop of private enterprises as an important power for domestic economic development, they are still facing challenges from international enterprises.

In the past 15 years, some research has been made by domestic scholars on publicity materials of different fields. Therefore, many research achievements have been made. Lu Xiaojun (2012) discovered that the English version of corporate profile is mostly translated word-to-word from the original Chinese text, ignoring practical communicative function, cultural differences and the recognition and sense of value of the target audience through contrastive study of "Chinese and English Corporate Profile" and "The Translation of Publicity Materials". There are various kinds of mistranslation, omission and even missing of important information in the publicity materials of enterprises, which to a large extent damages the quality of translation. The previous study focus mostly on the translation skills of corporate profiles. This paper, however, will illustrate the difference of Chinese and English corporate profiles from the perspective of information processing. Thus it is unique and original.

The quality of publicity materials will have a direct influence on the market image and publicity of enterprises, thus affecting the profitability of enterprises. At present, many Chinese enterprises have realized the importance of foreign publicity and prepared and enriched their own publicity materials in bilingual or even multilingual enterprises. This demonstrates that China witnesses rapid development. But due to lack of relevant theoretical guidance and practical support and not considering cultural differences, foreign publicity may exert negative influence on the construction of international image.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

### 2.1 The collection of corpus

First, private enterprises topped 100 in Jiangsu Province are selected. From these enterprises, enterprises with an English website are further selected. Finally, 50 enterprises with foreign publicity are determined. Then the publicity materials of these enterprises are gathered and the Chinese and English corporate profiles are put in a separate document to form the following two small corpus.

Corpus 1: The Chinese corporate profile of 50 private enterprises

Corpus 2: The English corporate profile of 50 private enterprises

### 2.2 Research instrument

In this paper, Lanksbox and online corpus software are employed for retrieval of the existing corpus. The two software can deal with corpus information accurately. They are easy and convenient to use. Therefore, corpus 1 and corpus 2 are imported into the corpus software to get the corresponding word frequency statistics.

## 2.3 Characteristics of corpus

### 2.3.1 Corpus size

The total amount of words for the two corpus is as follows:

Corpus 1: The Chinese Corporate Profile, 56308 words

Corpus 2: The English Corporate Profile, 23951 words

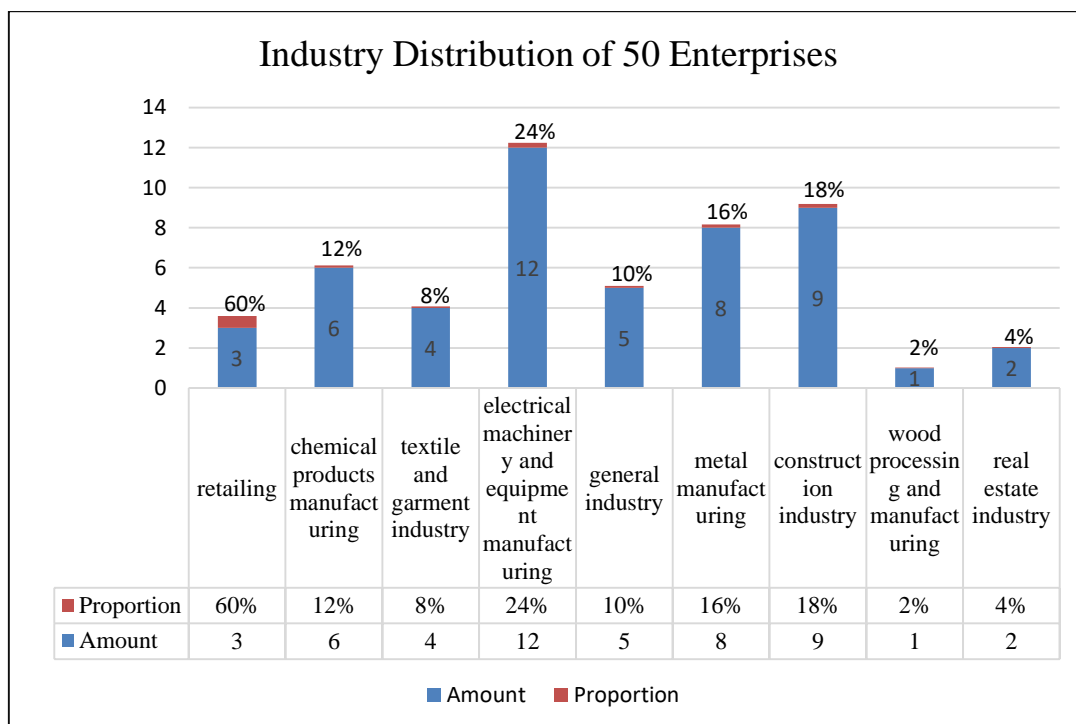
### 2.3.2 Industry distribution

The 50 private enterprises cover 9 industries, including retailing, chemical products manufacturing, textile and garment industry, electrical machinery and equipment manufacturing, general industry, metal manufacturing, construction industry, wood processing and manufacturing and real estate industry. Besides, the proportion of each industry is different (see Table-1 and Figure-1).

Table-1 Classification of Industry

Sr. No.	Classification of industry	Amount of industry	Proportion
1	retailing	3	60%
2	chemical products manufacturing	6	12%
3	textile and garment industry	4	8%
4	electrical machinery and equipment manufacturing	12	24%
5	general industry	5	10%
6	metal manufacturing	8	16%
7	construction industry	9	18%
8	wood processing and manufacturing	1	2%
9	real estate industry	2	4%

Figure-1 Industry Distribution of 50 Enterprises



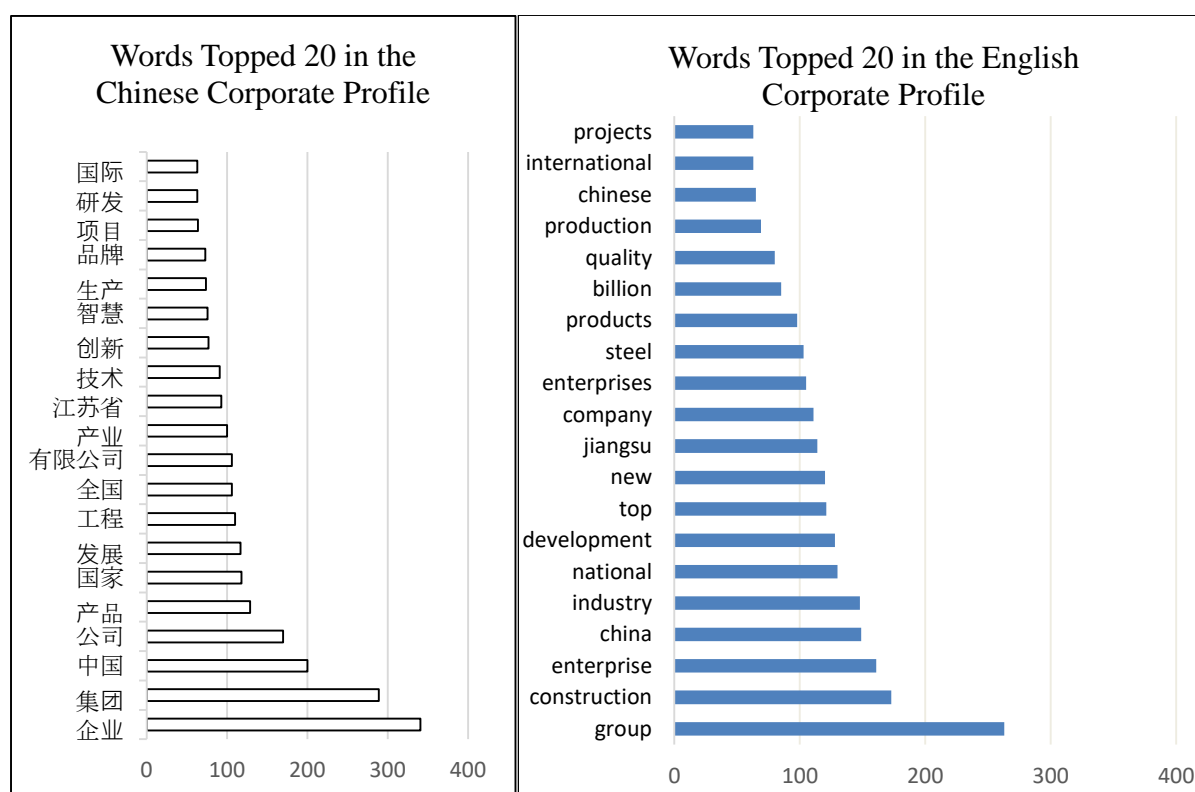
### 3. MAJOR FINDLINGS:

#### 3.1 Non-equivalence of information ranking for the Chinese and English profile

According to the international translation criterion for business English released by iBS School of Foreign Languages, semantic information equivalence and stylistic equivalence are the basic-level of equivalence for the international business English translation. Information equivalence can help target readers learn and access information more effectively. In the process of foreign publicity, information equivalence for the Chinese and English profile takes the cognitive needs of readers into consideration, so that the information can be conveyed more clearly and desired publicity effects can be achieved. According to word frequency retrieved in Lancsbox and online corpus software, the paper presents content words of the Chinese and English corporate profiles that topped 20 (see Figure-2, Figure-3).

**Figure-2 Words Topped 20 in the Chinese Corporate Profile**

**Figure-3 Words Topped 20 in the English Corporate Profile**



By comparing the word frequency of the two versions, it is discovered that there is non-equivalence of information ranking for the Chinese and English profile. The words topped 3 in the Chinese corporate profile are separately “企业”, (enterprise), “集团” (group) and “中国” (China). However, the words topped 3 in the English corporate profile are separately “group”, “construction” and “enterprise.”

#### 3.2 The missing of information for the Chinese and English profile

In the process of translation, it is easy to miss important information, thus leading to semantic non-equivalence. Meanwhile, the content and style of some English corporate profiles are totally different from their Chinese version, thus leading to stylistic non-equivalence. The main reason for the missing of information is that foreign publicity of enterprises lack of the sense of target audience and ignore the cognitive needs of readers, leading to information not conveyed clearly and undesired publicity effects. In this research, there are high-frequency words in the Chinese corporate profiles, such as “技术” (technology), “创新” (innovation), “品牌” (brand), “研发” (R&D), etc. On the contrast, there are high-frequency words in the English corporate profiles, such as “construction”, “top”, “new”, “billion”, “quality”, etc. The Chinese corporate profiles attach more importance to “技术” (technology), “创新” (innovation), “品牌” (brand), “研发” (R&D), etc. However, the missing of information appears in the English version.

### 3.2.1 The missing of information for the English corporate profile

For the publicity materials gathered, the missing of information, on the one hand, is illustrated in the missing of English information. In the process of translation, the key information in the Chinese materials is not illustrated in their English translation when semantic equivalence is not achieved.

Among the 50 corporate profiles, 14 never mentioned “创新” (innovation), 36 mentioned “创新” (innovation) only once in the Chinese corporate profile. Among the 36 Chinese corporate profiles, 14 have no key words like “innovation” in their English version; Besides, among the 50 corporate profiles, 15 never mentioned “品牌” in their Chinese and English corporate profiles and 35 mentioned. But among the 35 mentioning “品牌”, 13 have information missing in their English version.

A. 公司将在追求电网平价 (grid parity) 的同时, 继续秉承锐意创新、狠抓质量、增进效率的宗旨, 以壮大全球太阳能光伏产业。(天合光能有限公司 (TSL) )

[A1. Through constant innovation, we continue to push the PV industry forward by creating greater grid parity of PV power and popularizing renewable energy. Our mission is to boost global renewable energy development around the world for the benefit of all of humanity. (Trina solar)]

B. 坚持观念创新、管理创新、科技创新和营销创新, 加速推进企业标准化建设, 全面推进产品智能化、生产自动化、管理信息化、服务网络化, 实现“智能制造”的转型升级, 朝着世界先进制造企业的目标迈进。(大全集团)

[B1. Based on the research and introduction of advanced technologies, Daqo offers a full range of products and services that meet all safety, speed and capacity requirements. (Daqo Group)]

As is illustrated in example A and B, example A used “创新” (innovation) and “innovation” in the Chinese and English corporate profile respectively, presenting clearly to readers. However, in example B, the Chinese corporate profile stresses “创新” (innovation) but it is not mentioned in the English version in example B1. The missing of key information is thus made. By comparing the corporate profile of Trina solar and Daqo Group, it is discovered that the Chinese and English profile of Trina solar has only two passages. It can be observed that its English version is translated from the Chinese corporate profile. Its very brief profile includes the nature of enterprise, historical development, date of establishment and goals and expectations. It is obviously not enough for Chinese corporate profile that usually demands overall consideration. The English profile of Trina solar includes the nature of enterprise, product management, goals and visions and achievements. The Chinese profile of Daqo Group includes enterprise spirit, the nature of enterprise, achievements, business scope, glory and visions. It is richly illustrated, belonging to typical Chinese corporate profile. Its English version, however, is more disordered and lack of focus and misses key information.

C. 登陆资本市场, 打造国际品牌。众泰汽车将持续加大产品研发投入, 形成全新设计语言和 DNA 元素的众泰汽车家族脸谱, 产品品质争取能比肩国际品牌。(众泰汽车)

[C1. Zotye Auto regard “artisans spirit ”as the background and focus on innovation, devote themselves to consumer to create “healthy and happy vehicle life ”and achieved in the product power and brand power promotion. (Zotye Auto)]

D. 集团崇尚“厚待员工、博奉品牌”的理念, 坚守“方毅、刚勇; 柔韧、圆通”的标准, 成就“荣誉、善勇、智勤”的品质; 秉承“以社会为已任, 以企业为本位, 牛羊结群, 创造财富, 完善自我, 赢得共赢”的企业宗旨, 以“完善的法人治理结构, 健全的现代企业制度, 特具竞争的产业优势, 不断创新的企业文化”推动企业的快速发展, 成为“私有公用、私营共有、权力公众化、资产社会化”的国人办的新国企。(太平洋建设)

[D1. On May 25th, 2011, Pacific Construction Group has signed a framework of infrastructure construction that worth 4 billion with the member of the managing committee of Pingxiang Economic and Technological Development Zone. (Pacific Construction Group) ]

However, example C and C1 show the key information in its foreign publicity—brand, thus effective foreign publicity is made. In example D, “崇尚……的理念” (advocate the idea of), “坚守……的品质” (insist on the quality of) and “秉承……的企业宗旨” (behold the corporate purpose of) have typical characteristics of Chinese writing. When translating, merely insisting on literal translation can only result in redundancy of content so that readers can hardly understand what the corporate profile conveys.

### 3.2.2 The missing of information for the Chinese corporate profile

For the publicity materials gathered, the missing of information, on the other hand, is illustrated in the missing of Chinese information. In the process of translating, the key information in the English profile is not shown in the Chinese profile. By contrast, it is found that this is as a result of re-translation or rewriting. This is in accordance with André Lefevere's Rewriting theory. As Chinese corporate is an integrated whole, it usually consists of the nature of enterprise, glory and achievements, historical development, date of establishment, scale of production, services available, number of employees, corporate culture and goals and expectations. The English corporate profile, however, is usually very brief. It is in line with the characteristics of English culture, including the nature of enterprise, date of establishment, number of employees, product categories, business scope and goals and visions.

E1: 龙信集团在龙馨家园乐颐荟采用目前世界上最受欢迎的养老模式——社区亲情居家养老模式，为长者提供餐饮、娱乐、文化、养生、保健、健康管理等全方位的温馨服务，打造一站式的养老服务平台，实现“一碗汤”的亲情距离。（龙信集团）

[E: In recent years, LXCC has been focusing on technological innovation as well as transformation upgrading, and has been taking attempts in residence detailed decoration industrialization since 2002. (Longxin Construction Group)]

F1: 坚定不移实施“五大战略”，加强“数字大亚”的建设与应用，打造覆盖全产业链的垂直电商落地平台，推动“互联网+制造+服务”的创新融合，矢志将大亚建设成为全球知名的跨国企业集团。（大亚科技）

[F: Adhered to the principle of “revitalizing the stock, controlling increment, adjusting the structure, improving efficiency”, Transformation industry makes a large manufacturing enterprise integrate the global element resources and markets by collaboration of brand and channel and optimization of enterprise assets and the resources, making it completely rely on the brand and the reputation. (Dare Science & Technology Group)]

The “innovation” that is stressed in example E is not mentioned in example E1 and even the whole corporate profile of Longxin Construction Group. And the “brand” that is stressed in example F is not mentioned in example F1 and even the whole corporate profile of Dare Science & Technology Group. But through the comparison of the Chinese and English corporate profiles of Longxin Construction Group, it is discovered that the Chinese corporate profile is detailed, about 1447 words. Its English profile is summarized, about 510 words. But, although the English corporate profile is summarized, it has more generalization and attraction so it can attract readers and can benefit them in finding the key information of the enterprise.

### 3.2.3 Complete non-equivalence of information

Due to different ways of thinking between westerners and Chinese, Chinese is more abstract and English is more concrete. Chinese corporate profile tends to use big words that are concrete in meaning, general in content and solemn in style and fixed models when a sense of airs and graces are conveyed to the readers. Then the subjective assessment of website viewers and potential customers may be affected. On the contrast, foreign enterprises pay more attention to innovation. This is mostly information non-equivalence brought by stylistic non-equivalence.

G: “精”，精益，精致，精神。范晔在《后汉书》中有云：精思傅会，十年乃成。体现在生产经营领域，就是精益求精，一丝不苟；体现在思想领域，就是要有崇高的精神境界。（中天科技）

[G1 : ZTT Group entered the field of optical fiber communication in the early 1990s. With decades of experience and a strong positioning in high-tech market segments, ZTT is active in the development, design, production, supply and installation of wide application ranges in telecom, power, renewable energy and oil & gas. (Zhongtian Group)]

The English corporate profile of some enterprises, however, are completely different with another style, resulting in the complete non-equivalence of information. Example G and G1 can be traced back to the Chinese foreign publicity of Zhongtian Group. Its foreign publicity cites the famous saying written by Fan Ye in Book of the Later Han to reveal the cultural connotation and historical charm of “精”，meaning “spirit” in English. Then it connects “精” with “keep improving”，showing that Chinese is more abstract and usually four-character words are applied. Nevertheless, the author found that the famous saying is not mentioned in its English version but its spiritual connotation is summarized and extracted, which demonstrates that English is more concrete and innovation is stressed.

## 4. CONCLUSION:

From the publicity materials gathered, the focus of Chinese and English corporate profile is close. But on the different expressions, the cognitive needs of readers are not considered. As such, key information is not formally



conveyed and desired publicity effects are not achieved. "When Chinese enterprises integrate with the international market, their English website should also be in line with the international standard and international image," (Lu Xiaojun, 2012). Therefore, the following suggestions are given:

#### 4.1 Avoiding word-to-word translation

As Chinese corporate profiles focus on all sidedness while English corporate profiles are more brief and concise, word-to-word translation can only lead to redundancy of English profile when the key characteristics of English profile are not maintained. As a result, it is difficult for readers to understand and the publicity effects cannot be achieved. Hence, translators must have cross-cultural awareness in the process of foreign publicity and its foreign materials must avoid word-to-word translation to reveal the different features of Chinese and English.

#### 4.2 Focusing on core information to avoid mistranslation and omission

In the process of translating the Chinese profile into English version, core information is not given much attention and semantic non-equivalence of information is made. As the media for foreign publicity, corporate profiles should demonstrate core content of enterprises which is the spirit of corporate enterprises. Therefore, enterprises and translators should pay more attention to convey the core information and extract key information and then translate the Chinese corporate profile so as to not lose the "spirit."

#### 4.3 Innovating on re-translation and rewriting

English corporate profile can be innovated to re-translation and rewriting on the basis of the Chinese corporate profile, thus desired publicity effects can be achieved. When considering re-translation and rewriting, translators need to fully considerate the difference in Chinese and English translation to make the focal points stand out. The translation will also fit the expression habits of English. In the process of translation, translators can handle more flexibly.

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