

# A Corpus-Assisted Transitivity Analysis Of Corporate Image Constructed In CEO Statements From China Mobile's And Vodafone's CSR Reports

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**Abstract**— Corporate image serves as a tool for publicity, shaping how a company presents itself to the outside world. This study compares the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) statements in the corporate social responsibility (CSR) reports of China Mobile and Vodafone. By integrating Transitivity analysis from Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) with an examination of high-frequency nouns, verbs, and keywords, the study explores the similarities and differences in the corporate images portrayed in the CEO statements of both companies. As leaders in the telecommunications industry, China Mobile and Vodafone provide a compelling basis for comparison. The findings reveal that: 1) Both China Mobile and Vodafone prefer positive terms like “improve,” “support,” and “service” to project responsible and approachable corporate images, emphasizing environmental sustainability and societal well-being; 2) China Mobile's CEO statements prominently feature the keywords “poverty,” “alleviation,” and “China,” indicating a focus on active collaboration and social responsibility; 3) Vodafone's CEO statements include keywords such as “climate,” “women,” “global,” and various country names, highlighting its commitment to globalization and the welfare of women and the environment; 4) These discursive strategies may aid both companies in achieving their objectives by constructing specific corporate

images. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of CEO statements in CSR reports and offers insights for further research on corporate image.

**Keywords**—CEO statements, Transitivity, corporate image, corpus-assisted discourse analysis

## I. Introduction

Corporate communication plays a crucial role in establishing desired relationships between enterprises and stakeholders. The Chairman's or Chief Executive Officer (CEO) statement is the opening section of CSR reports, offering an overview of other sections, thereby becoming a focal point of these reports. In corporate communication, the CEO statement is a key instrument for projecting the corporation's image, reflecting “the tone at the top” (Amernic et al., 2010). Numerous studies have examined impression management in CEO statements, aiming to project a positive corporate image (Conaway & Wardrope, 2010; Barkemeyer et al., 2014; Aerts & Yan, 2017; Boudt & Thewissen, 2019). As an independent section at the beginning of annual and CSR reports, the CEO statement typically outlines a company's major performance plans and missions for the year, reflecting the CEO's perspective on the corporation's CSR activities. Given its significance, the CEO statement has been a topic of interest across various fields, including management and applied linguistics.

Any research on CEO statements should acknowledge their multi-semiotic nature, encompassing both image and language (Rajandran & Taib, 2014b: 304).

Different stakeholders have varying expectations and interests, leading Pirson and Malhotra (2011) to suggest that corporate leaders should tailor information disclosure to meet the diverse needs of shareholders, thereby building a trustworthy image. Since CEO statements are voluntary and unaudited, CEOs have significant discretion in content selection (Boudt & Thewissen, 2019). Therefore, identifying recurring themes in CEO statements is crucial, as it reflects the attention of corporate leaders (Amernic et al., 2010). This study aims to explore how the corporate images of China Mobile and Vodafone are constructed by analyzing the interpersonal and ideational differences in their CEOs' statements. Using the AntConc 3.5.8 software (Anthony, 2019) to identify frequently repeated words in these statements, the analysis strives for greater accuracy and objectivity. The study investigates the linguistic features and corporate images represented in the CEO statements of China Mobile's and Vodafone's CSR reports.

## II. Literature Review

### *Previous Studies on CEO Statements*

Existing research has explored how companies legitimize CSR activities from various perspectives, such as firm performance (Saha et al., 2020; Suler et al., 2021), stakeholder engagement for green products (Ionescu, 2021), and the financial behavior of retail investors (Priem, 2021). In recent years, corporate communication has garnered significant academic attention, particularly in how companies depict their financial and sustainable performance and activities to various stakeholders. CEO statements in CSR reports, however, have received less attention compared to their counterparts in annual reports, despite the growing importance of CSR reports in evaluating corporate reputation (Goodman et al., 2011). Given their significance, CEO statements in CSR reports merit more scholarly exploration.

Previous research on CEO statements primarily derives from annual reports (Hyland, 1998; Bhatia, 2008; Amernic et al., 2010; Conaway & Wardrope, 2010; Boudt & Thewissen, 2019). Only a few studies have investigated CEO statements in CSR reports (Barkemeyer et al., 2014; Rajandran & Taib, 2014b). Although annual and CSR reports are related genres that address different stakeholders and serve different communicative purposes (Fuoli, 2018), both are crucial for understanding how CEOs employ discursive strategies in corporate communication. This study is motivated by the need to explore these similarities and differences, particularly in the under-researched area of CEO statements in CSR reports.

### *Researching CEO Statements from Discourse Analytical Approach*

Some studies have applied critical discourse analysis (CDA) to examine the rhetorical strategies that the CEOs use to portray corporations as agents of positive change to different stakeholders of the companies (Rajandran & Taib, 2014a,b). For example, Rajandran and Taib (2014b) used a sample of 27 CEO statements in CSR reports of Malaysian companies and identified six themes, i.e., achievement, identification, aspiration, disclosure, recognition, and appreciation. Using the same sample of Malaysian companies, Rajandran and Taib (2014a) investigated the language strategies of CEO statements in disclosing CSR performance. This study proposed three strategies in portraying corporations as compliant and responsible agents, namely, the categorization of participants in CSR events, types of evaluation, and temporal representation of CSR performance. Rajandran (2018) identified the main stakeholders in the Malaysian CEO statements from CSR reports and examined CEOs' communicative strategies through language and image in interacting with these stakeholders.

Other researches (e.g. Koller, 2011) focused on examining the relationship between CEO rhetorical strategies and firms' corporate social performance by adopting Aristotle's classification of rhetorical strategies (pathos, ethos, and logos) to divide CEO

statement strategies while using the text analysis method. Marais (2012) employed a content analysis of various CEO discourses from the areas of press articles in order to identify the nature of stakeholder pressures. Covariance analyses have also been conducted to study how CEOs CSR rhetorical strategies vary between communication channels dedicated to specific stakeholders. Researches aiming to examine whether corporate sustainability reports can serve as accurate and fair representations of corporate sustainability performance carries out a sentiment analysis of CEO statements in corporate sustainability reports and corporate financial reports between 2001 and 2010 (Barkemeyer et al., 2014). The analysis shows that the rhetoric in the CEO statements of sustainability reports is indicative of impression management rather than accountability, despite increasing standardization of sustainability reporting.

CSR report usually includes its company's sustainable strategies, policies, management, and revenues through three aspects: economy, society, and environment to indirectly communicate with stakeholders. In the past few decades, CSR report has attracted increasing interest of many scholars and institutions around the world. Lock and Seele (2016) also look into the credibility of CSR reports, but it is an empirical study. It analyzed 237 CSR reports from 11 European countries. Xia and Xu (2020) conducted an eco-discourse analysis of CSR reports of Geely and Daimler from the perspective of systemic functional linguistics. Hu and Sheng (2020) studied a wide range of the linguistics in CSR reports of Huawei, BT and Telstra, such as high-frequency nouns and verbs, keywords and their collocates. Differing from the previous researches, the author uses Transitivity system from Systemic-Functional Grammar, while combining corpus tools. Since scarce research (Chen & Xu, 2022) has focused on telecommunication industry, this study will analyze the language features embedded in CEO statements from China Mobile's and Vodafone's CSR reports.

Previous studies of the CEO statements are mainly extracted from annual reports (Hyland, 1998; Bhatia, 2008; Amernic et al., 2010; Conaway & Wardrope, 2010; Boudt & Thewissen, 2019). By now, only a few studies have investigated the CEO statements in CSR reports (Barkemeyer et al., 2014; Rajandran & Taib, 2014b). In fact, annual reports and CSR reports can be seen as two related genres that address different stakeholders and convey different communicative purposes (Fuoli, 2018). In annual reports, the main stakeholders are investors and shareholders. By contrast, the stakeholders in CSR reports are more diverse and less concentrated. As the CEOs release statements in both the annual reports and CSR reports, the exploration of how the CEOs employ discursive strategies and content in CSR reports shall under no reason to be left behind. Aiming at such, the notice of similarities as well as differences of CEO statements placed in annual reports and CSR reports of the same company has provided this study with major inspiration and motivation.

### III. Methodology

#### *Corpus Description*

China Mobile and Vodafone are prominent telecommunications enterprises with significant global influence, making them ideal subjects for this study. China Mobile is one of the largest telecommunication service providers in China, while Vodafone is a major telecommunications company based in the United Kingdom. Comparing these two companies offers valuable insights into the impact of business performance and cultural differences. English versions of CSR reports from both companies were obtained from their official websites via Google search. Ten CSR reports from each company, covering the period from 2012 to 2021, were selected for analysis, forming two small sub-corpora. The reports were converted from PDF to text format, and CEO statements were extracted to create two text files. The compiled corpora consist of 14,174 tokens (8,940 for China Mobile and 5,234 for Vodafone). The analysis was conducted using the AntConc 3.5.8 tool developed by Laurence Anthony (2019).

### *Analytical Framework*

This research utilizes Halliday's (1994) Transitivity System theory to analyze the corporate images of China Mobile and Vodafone as conveyed through their CEOs' statements. The qualitative analysis, based on Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), employs simplified elements to enhance the examination of these statements.

The corpus-assisted analysis identifies frequently recurring words and collocates that reinforce the constructed corporate images. The supplementary qualitative analysis draws on SFG, which posits that speakers and writers make meaning by choosing from various language options (phonology, morphology, lexicogrammar, discourse semantics). Language serves as a resource, offering choices among alternatives (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Eggins, 2004). Each instance of language use simultaneously realizes three types of meaning: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. This study focuses on ideational and interpersonal meanings, particularly how social actors and processes are represented through transitivity. The analysis classifies processes into three main types—material, mental, and relational—and three intermediate types—behavioral, verbal, and existential (adapted from Matthiessen & Halliday, 1997).

Transitivity analysis is employed to illuminate how CEOs represent their corporations and actions, and how they position these in relation to other stakeholders. The analysis follows a systematic procedure: after collecting and converting text formats, AntConc is used for descriptive analysis. The processes involve generating word lists to obtain tables of high-frequency nouns and verbs, comparing keywords between China Mobile and Vodafone, and combining these with qualitative analysis based on the Transitivity System to uncover discursive practices in the CEO statements that reflect corporate images.

#### **Main process types**

**material:** a process that requires some input of energy to occur and where one participant is likely to

undergo a change, for example 'The Group manufactures display materials and components';

**mental:** a process involving a participant endowed with consciousness and typically a participant entering into or created by that consciousness, concerning thinking, feeling and perceiving, for example 'We believe that by genuinely committing ourselves to these values we achieve our target to be the best in our field', 'Enjoy your work', 'Itochu Corporation has seen its own evolution follow the same trend';

**relational:** a process with one participant having or developing an attribute or having a possession, for example 'ConocoPhillips is an international, integrated energy company', 'We are becoming more international', 'the Group has the world's top-level technologies'.

#### **intermediate process types**

**behavioral** (between material and mental): a process that requires some input of energy to occur but where participants do not undergo change, for example 'Our values are the basis on which we stand';

**verbal** (between mental and relational): a process with participants communicating, for example 'As we often say, "There's no right way to do the wrong thing"';

**existential** (between relational and material): a process of participants existing, for example 'And yet there is room for variety, entrepreneurship and local culture'.

In this analysis, Transitivity theory is employed to further elucidate how CEOs present their corporations and actions, as well as how they position them in relation to other stakeholders. The analysis procedure involves several steps: after collecting and converting the texts into the appropriate format, AntConc will be used for descriptive analysis. This includes generating a 'wordlist' in the tool to create tables of high-frequency nouns and verbs, allowing for a comparison between China Mobile and Vodafone by examining 'keywords'. By integrating this with qualitative analysis based on the Transitivity System, the study aims to uncover the



*Material Process Presented in High-frequency Verbs*

As Halliday (1997) described, a material process is "a process that requires some input of energy to occur and where one participant is likely to undergo a change." This section, therefore, selects high-frequency verbs identified through AntConc's automated calculation to uncover the characteristics of the material processes represented. Additionally, to identify the representative actions of the two companies, the top 20 most frequent verbs are analyzed for their keyness ratio and impact.

Rank	Frequency	High-frequency verbs	Keyness	Effect (P)
1	19	impact	+ 93.47	0.0121
2	16	help	+ 48.05	0.0095
3	14	ensure	+ 72.09	0.0091
4	9	change	+ 17.58	0.0053
5	9	provide	+ 29.79	0.0057
6	8	improve	+ 35.66	0.0052
7	8	play	+ 24.41	0.005
8	8	reduce	+ 35.5	0.0052
9	8	work	+ 18.43	0.0049
10	7	act	+ 19.23	0.0044

Table 4.1 High-frequency Verbs in Vodafone Corpora

Rank	Frequency	High-frequency verbs	Keyness	Effect (P)
1	31	support	+ 90.36	0.0103
2	21	build	+ 88.64	0.0073
3	19	promote	+ 112.4	0.0067
4	15	create	+ 66.27	0.0053
5	15	launch	+ 79.33	0.0053
6	13	win	+ 51.28	0.0046
7	12	provide	+ 43.66	0.0042
8	10	implement	+ 68.79	0.0036
9	9	fulfill	+ 84.6	0.0032
10	9	strive	+ 72.91	0.0032

Table 4.2 High-frequency Verbs in China Mobile Corpora

As shown in Table 4.1 and Table 4.2 above, the top 10 high-frequency verbs for the two companies, identified by the corpus tool, exhibit clear differences. However, a general observation from these lists reveals that the verbs are predominantly positive, suggesting that both enterprises strive to project a positive image, emphasizing their commitment to serving the public and effecting change through their actions. A qualitative analysis will then be conducted by selecting sample texts from the compiled data. The focus will primarily be on the high-frequency verbs identified earlier, without other verbs being

disregarded. The analysis will begin with the CEO statements of China Mobile.

(1) We were actively engaged in building a national-level mass entrepreneurship and innovation demonstration base and made an all-out effort to inspire entrepreneurship and innovation, both internal and external, through a series of initiatives, including the And-Creation Space, independent development competitions as well as employee entrepreneurship and innovation activities, and to **support** and **empower** SMEs and individual entrepreneurs. (China Mobile CEO statement 2018)

(2) With the fast development of 4G, China Mobile has **acted** to show our sustainability core competence and our contribution to economic and social sustainability and backbone telecommunications operator, namely, to **build** the new generation of fast, ubiquitous and secure network infrastructure, and to **provide** state-of-art information and communication services for the great mass of population. (China Mobile CEO statement 2015)

(3) As a community member, we **fulfill** our long-term commitments to **support** social welfare, and continuously **implement** key programmes to **help alleviate** poverty, **care** for vulnerable groups, **promote** education development as well as volunteering service, and **share** our company's development achievements with a wide range of people within the community. (China Mobile CEO statement 2012)

(4) In the future, China Mobile will continue to **fulfill** its responsibilities, proactively take part in the "CyberPower" construction of China, fully **support** the "Internet+" development and go forward hand in hand with stakeholders to jointly **create** a shared digital society benefiting the most people. (China Mobile CEO statement 2016)

(5) We continuously **strive** to **maintain** a reliable network with comprehensive coverage for our customers, **address** our customers' greatest concerns, and **protect** their interests through a range of methods, from the optimization of tariffs, accurate billing and

prompt services reminders to the strict protection of customer privacy and information security. (China Mobile CEO statement 2012)

(6) We **help** millions of consumers **manage** the increasing complexity of their digital lives, **enabling** people to **work** smarter, more flexibly and remotely, **enhancing** individual quality of life while **reducing** carbon emissions from travel. (Vodafone CEO statement, 2013)

(7) In doing so, our intention was to **ensure** an even closer alignment between the core commercial goals of our business and the maximum possible social and economic benefit achievable as a consequence of those goals. (Vodafone CEO statement, 2016)

(8) We also **provide** details of our new approach to the reduction of greenhouse gases including a goal to **use** our technologies to **help** our customers **reduce** their carbon emissions by twice the amount generated by our own business by 2018. (Vodafone CEO statement, 2015)

(9) Our mHealth solutions **are helping** medical centres across Tanzania and the Gambia, **making sure** they don't **run out of** essential medicines; and our mobile information service **has enabled** Turkish farmers to **improve** their productivity by an estimated 100 million. (Vodafone CEO statement, 2019)

(10) Smart working and machine-to-machine (M2M) connections **offer** the biggest potential here by **enabling** people to live and work more sustainably, and businesses to **operate** more efficiently. (Vodafone CEO statement, 2020)

In the context of material processes, notable features emerge from the selected texts. The CEO statements from China Mobile exemplify corporate self-centeredness, as the company is frequently positioned as the primary social Actor, more so than other entities such as customers and the public. Moreover, China Mobile is depicted as being exclusively active. The material processes are primarily directed, as seen in the sample discourse, where the CEO uses verbs like "empower," "support,"

"build," "create," "strive," and "protect" to portray China Mobile as a company whose actions significantly impact the Goals. Various Goals, including entrepreneurs, employees, the public, community members, and customers, are emphasized throughout the speech. This presentation positions China Mobile as the dominant social Actor in the identified material processes, underscoring its central role and capabilities in its operations.

In contrast, as illustrated in examples 6 to 10, the CEO of Vodafone tends to use verbs such as "enable," "make," "help," and "offer," while keeping the Goals influenced by Vodafone explicit, reflecting a more humanistic approach. The texts reveal that a wide range of Goals benefit from Vodafone's performance and development. Different from China Mobile's emphasis on the well-being and sustainability of its stakeholders, society, and itself, Vodafone focuses more on its employees, climate change, and globalization, with numerous countries specifically mentioned in the CEO's statement. Vodafone also highlights the impact it has on individuals, drawing a contrast between the large corporation and the individual, thereby emphasizing the company's benevolent actions.

#### *B. Mental Process Presented in Content Verbs*

Mental process is a process involving a participant endowed with consciousness and typically a participant entering into or created by that consciousness, concerning thinking, feeling and perceiving. Following the sequence of analysis, this section also starts by looking into China Mobile CEO statements.

(1) "New Dream With You" also symbolises a new harmonious and win-win industry ecosystem that we **wish** to create with our value chain partners, where we shoulder responsibilities and share values together in a sustainable way. (China Mobile CEO statement 2013)

(2) Never **forget** why you started, and your mission can be accomplished. (China Mobile CEO statement 2017)

(3) We inherently **believe** that a company should leverage its core competence and take its responsibility to contribute to its stakeholders and the greater society. (China Mobile CEO statement 2012)

(4) Although encouraging progress has been made, we **know** very well that the journey of "Big Connectivity" has just begun. (China Mobile CEO statement 2016)

(5) We deeply **understand** that China Mobile could never achieve any of these without the attention, confidence, support and help from all our stakeholders. (China Mobile CEO statement, 2015)

(6) We **believe** all incidents are preventable and have put in place a number of programs to seek to ensure that everyone goes home safely to their families at the end of each day. (Vodafone CEO statement, 2018)

(7) We **believe** a commitment to enhancing lives and livelihoods should be integral to our duty to maximise returns to our shareholders. (Vodafone CEO statement, 2017)

(8) And it has led to the inclusion of a new chapter in this Report setting out our total economic contribution, a country-by-country basis, which we **hope** will provide greater insight and clarity amid the current public debate on corporate taxation. (Vodafone CEO statement, 2014)

(9) Our sustainable business strategy focuses our efforts in areas where we **believe** Vodafone can make the greatest impact: women's empowerment; energy innovation; and youth, skills and jobs. (Vodafone CEO statement, 2016)

(10) We **believe** we have good cause to be optimistic and excited about the future as the digital economy drive global progress but we recognise that the continues to face a number of significant challenges. (Vodafone CEO statement, 2019)

When the company expresses belief in its partners, terms such as "wish" and "believe" both interpersonally and ideationally position the company as a benevolent initiator and trustworthy collaborator. It

is noteworthy that the text includes a rare instance where other entities are listed before stakeholders ("our partners, our communities, our customers"). China Mobile is presented as engaging with stakeholders, albeit subtly ("wish to cooperate with partners," "receive help and support from stakeholders"). Overall, China Mobile conveys a strong belief in itself and its stakeholders, emphasizing their collective effort to create a better future.

From sample texts 6-10, it is evident that the CEO of Vodafone prefers to use optimistic verbs like "believe" to express confidence in the company's ability to achieve its core objectives: women's development, energy saving, and youth care, all of which highlight its focus on specific humanistic initiatives. While China Mobile addresses social charity more broadly through poverty alleviation, Vodafone takes a different approach, focusing on more specific needs of disadvantaged groups within society.

### *C. Relational Process Presented in Sample Texts*

Relational process, by definition, is 'a process with one participant having or developing an attribute or having a possession'. Relational processes describe the relationship between two parts: something is said to be something else. They are about what things are, what they are like, where they are, what they possess etc. (Halliday 1994/2000: 119; Halliday & Matthiessen 2004: 210). As the words related to this process are diversified, the author decides to identify sample texts manually.

A relational process is defined as "a process in which one participant possesses or develops an attribute or holds a possession." Relational processes describe the relationship between two elements, where one thing is identified or described as being something else. They address what things are, what they are like, where they are, what they possess, and so on (Halliday 1994/2000: 119; Halliday & Matthiessen 2004: 210). Given the diversity of words associated with this process, manual identification is opted.



(1) We **are committed to** ensuring the realisation of our vision of “Mobile Changes Life”, and the promotion of new technology such as TD-LTE. (China Mobile CEO statement, 2016)

(2) The year of 2014 **is** a crucial year for our 4G deployment. (China Mobile CEO statement, 2014)

(3) Employees **are** our most valuable asset. (China Mobile CEO statement, 2015)

(4) This **was** the 4G Chinese Speed created by all China Mobile employees with our responsibility, endeavor and passion. (China Mobile CEO statement, 2015)

(5) Examples include our inclusion in the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index for the fifth consecutive year, which **is** an accomplishment that no other companies from Mainland China has managed to achieve. (China Mobile CEO statement, 2012)

(6) As we explain in this report, the protection of our customers’ privacy **is** one of our highest priorities. (Vodafone CEO statement, 2015)

(7) M-Pesa **is** also the platform for many of our health and agricultural initiatives in emerging markets, demonstrating the power of mobile to protect vulnerable people from disease. (Vodafone CEO statement, 2014)

(8) The outcome from our work during 2015-16 **is** a new sustainable business strategy for Vodafone. (Vodafone CEO statement, 2016)

(9) Financial results **are** not enough: a commitment to behave ethically and responsibly at all times **is** integral to ensuring the long-term sustainability of our businesses. (Vodafone CEO statement, 2013)

(10) The social consequences **are** significant: for example, as we explain in a new section in this report, mobile can **be** enormously empowering for many women in emerging markets.

On the whole, China Mobile seems more focused on its credibility, as reflected in its own achievements, the significant contributions it has made to society, and

the value it places on its employees. For China Mobile, employees appear to be a means to an end; they are portrayed as beneficial to the company and other stakeholders, but their influence on the company is limited primarily to enhancing its credibility. In contrast, as a company deeply rooted in globalization and reputation, Vodafone’s CEO highlights the company’s technological achievements and its impact from a global perspective. Not only is Vodafone’s powerful platform mentioned, but so is the company’s key concern: customer privacy. In summary, Vodafone seems more concerned with its overall reputation as a benevolent corporation with a strong commitment to societal issues.

#### *D. Other Intermediate Processes Presented in Sample Texts*

Other intermediate processes in the Transitivity System include the behavioral process (a process that requires some input of energy but does not result in a change in participants), the verbal process (a process involving communication between participants), and the existential process (a process of participants existing). Given the relatively small presence of these three processes in the data, this research has chosen to analyze them together in this section. Manual identification remains the primary method for the qualitative analysis of the sample texts.

(1) It is our belief that **there are** changes happening everywhere, and “Mobile Changes Life” is becoming so close to reach” (**existential process** from China Mobile CEO statement, 2014)

(2) We **are pleased** to witness that “Mobile Changes Life” has embarked on a fast track in the 4G era as high-speed 4G network is making mobile Internet applications increasingly popular and deeply integrated into society, business, and personal lives. (**behavioral process** from China Mobile CEO statement, 2014)

(3) While **there is** no simple global solution, I **am pleased** with the progress we have made this year to ensure that we will meet our targets in a credible and

sustainable way. (**existential and behavioral process** from Vodafone CEO statement, 2020)

(4) We **exist** to help more than 430 million customers in more than 27 countries communicate, share, create, learn and grow. (**existential process** from Vodafone CEO statement, 2013)

Major differences are evident in the intermediate processes. China Mobile highlights the impact of its "Mobile Changes Life" mission to demonstrate its commitment and hope to improve the lives of an increasing number of people. In contrast, Vodafone asserts its existence as a corporation driven solely by goodwill for all of humanity. Through these emphatic statements, both companies convey their ambition to be influential leaders in the global telecommunications industry.

## V. Discussion And Conclusion

Owing to the self-built corpora of China Mobile and Vodafone, and the application of Halliday's Transitivity analysis framework, this research analyzes the corporate image represented in the CEO statements of the two companies' CSR reports, finds out the similarities and differences among these reports, and reveals the major concerns of each company. The findings manifest the similarities: two companies are all sustainable, optimistic, and confident in themselves as leaders within the industry. While the differences are that, as a state-owned enterprise, China Mobile pays more attention to its effort to solving the disadvantaged people's poverty issue; Vodafone tends to help women gain empowerment and has the ambition to more the company more globalized.

This is not to say, however, that corporations are actively constituted in their image construction by the identification options given in CEO statements in CSR reports. Even if we disregard the usually limited reception of CEO statements within organizations, various readers certainly have leeway for resistance, ranging from alternative or oppositional images to general cynicism about the genre. Such future, more large-scale research will have to combine textual analysis with ethnomethodological investigations to

compare and contrast corporate images as constructed in corporate genres and as co-constructed in workplace interactions. Other ways in which this study could be extended include using a corpus that is more differentiated for industries and cultures. Also, the findings could be further corroborated by engaging in a qualitative analysis of a larger number of sample texts.

The results have implications for the study of corporate image more generally, both across disciplines such as sociology, psychology and linguistics, as well as across different areas within linguistics. Most notably, a mixture of quantitative and qualitative corpus and text analysis as demonstrated in this chapter could fruitfully be combined with conversation analytical approaches that investigate how corporate image is co-constructed by other people relating to corporations, for example, feedbacks from customers.

## VI. Funding Statement

This work was supported by the Guangdong Planning Office of Philosophy and Social Science under Grant GD23XWY14.

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