

Corporate Cautionary Statement: A Genre of Professional Communication

Authors : Chie Urawa

Abstract : Cautionary statements or disclaimers in corporate annual reports need to be carefully designed because clear cautionary statements may protect a company in the case of legal disputes and may undermine positive impressions. This study compares the language of cautionary statements using two corpora, Sony's cautionary statement corpus (S-corpus) and Panasonic's cautionary statement corpus (P-corpus), illustrating the differences and similarities in relation to the use of meaningful cautionary statements and critically analyzing why practitioners use the way. The findings describe the distinct differences between the two companies in the presentation of the risk factors and the way how they make the statements. The word ability is used more for legal protection in S-corpus whereas the word possibility is used more to convey a better impression in P-corpus. The main similarities are identified in the use of lexical words and pronouns, and almost the same wordings for eight years. The findings show how they make the statements unique to the company in the presentation of risk factors, and the characteristics of specific genre of professional communication. Important implications of this study are that more comprehensive approach can be applied in other contexts, and be used by companies to reflect upon their cautionary statements.

Keywords : cautionary statements, corporate annual reports, corpus, risk factors

Conference Title : ICCLM 2018 : International Conference on Corpus Linguistics and Methodology

Conference Location : Venice, Italy

Conference Dates : April 12-13, 2018