

A Corpus-based Comparative Study on the Chinese-English Translation of *The Report on the Work of the Government* via a Comparison with *The State of the Union Address*

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Abstract

The Report on the Work of the Government is an annual report by the Chinese Premier, stating the work that has been done in the previous year and the work plans for the following year. In its English version, it is easy for Chinglish to appear due to the large number of expressions with Chinese characteristics. On the other hand, *The State of the Union* is an annual address delivered by the American President to look back on the past and look forward into the future. Their genre, content, function, delivery frequency, and impact are highly comparable and become a valuable source for contrastive studies. This paper examines Chinglish at a lexical and phrasal level based on two self-made monolingual comparable corpora: Corpus 1, which collects the English version of *The Reports on the Work of the Government* from 2006 to 2011; and Corpus 2, which comprises *The State of the Union* addresses from 1997 to 2011. First, every type of Chinglish expressions in the *Report* of 2011 is examined. Then, the same expressions are described and analyzed in the *Reports* from 2006 to 2010 at the macro level. Finally, they are examined in *The State of the Union* delivered in

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the last 15 years, and a contrastive study is conducted. Based on statistics and analysis, it is found that “redundant nouns,” “unnecessary verbs,” “redundant modifiers,” “intensifiers,” “redundant twins,” and “saying the same thing twice” identified in *The Translator’s Guide to Chinglish* (Pinkham 2000) all appear in Corpus 1. Besides, it is also found that those words and expressions are differently used in Corpus 2. Chinglish not only makes itself salient in terms of word frequency, but also in the overused and unusual collocates of these words or phrases. In the concluding part, reasons behind this are discussed.

Keywords

corpus, comparative study, Chinese-English, translation