

CORPORATE ONLINE PRESENCE:
A study of eight Finnish exporting companies' corporate
websites

Master's thesis
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English
July 2012

JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

Tiedekunta – Faculty Humanistinen tiedekunta	Laitos – Department Kielten laitos
Tekijä – Author Anniina Tauriainen	
Työn nimi – Title Corporate online presence: A study of eight Finnish exporting companies' corporate websites	
Oppiaine – Subject Englanti	Työn laji – Level Pro gradu
Aika – Month and year Heinäkuu 2012	Sivumäärä – Number of pages 118 sivua + 9 liitettä
Tiivistelmä – Abstract	
<p>Yritykset käyttävät verkkosivujaan tuotteiden ja palveluiden markkinoinnin ohella myös yrityksen mainostamiseen ja verkkoidentiteetin luomiseen. Verkkoidentiteetti heijastaa kielen ja visuaalisen ilmeen kautta yrityksen identiteettiä sekä tavoiteltua yrityskuvaa. Tutkimuksen tavoitteena oli selvittää kriittisen diskurssianalyysin avulla millä tavalla suomalaiset vientiyritykset ilmentävät verkkoidentiteettiään sekä kielellisesti että visuaalisesti yritysprofiileissaan. Yritysprofiilit rakentuvat yritystarinoista, joiden tehtävänä on esitellä keskeisiä asioita yrityksestä ja samalla rakentaa tietynlaista kuvaa yrityksestä. Verkkoidentiteetin lisäksi tarkoituksena oli selvittää onko yritystarinoilla tyypillisiä kielellisiä ja visuaalisia piirteitä ja millaisia tekstityyppejä tarinoissa käytetään.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen kohteena olivat kahdeksan suomalaisen vientiyrityksen verkkosivujen yritysprofiilit. Analyysi koostui kahdesta osasta, joista ensimmäisessä tarkasteltiin kielellisiä käytänteitä ja toisessa kuvien ja sommitelman roolia verkkoidentiteetin luomisessa. Tuloksista kävi ilmi, että niin kielelliset kuin visuaalisetkin käytänteet vaikuttavat verkkoidentiteettiin. Yritykset käyttävät samanlaisia kielellisiä resursseja verkkoidentiteettinsä rakentamiseen, tosin toimialakohtaisia erojakin löytyi. Lisäksi aineistosta kävi ilmi, että yritykset useimmiten korostavat enemmän tuotteitaan kuin yritystä. Visuaalisuuden näkökulmasta yrityksille on tärkeää tulla tunnistetuksi, ja siksi lähes kaikilla yrityksillä yrityksen logo on sijoitettu keskeiselle paikalle. Yritysprofiilien kuvat taas useimmiten sisältävät tuotteeseen tai toimialaan viittaavia tekijöitä. Tutkimustulokset osoittivat, että yritysprofiilit muodostavat oman genrensä tiettyine kielellisine sekä visuaalisine piirteineen ja tyyliltään yritystarinat muistuttavat eniten informatiivista tekstityyppiä.</p> <p>Tutkimuksessa korostuu sekä kielen merkitys yritysviestinnässä että visuaalinen puoli diskurssien tutkimuksessa. Tulokset myös viittaavat siihen, että verkkosivut ovat olennainen osa yritysten maineenhallintaa, ja sen vuoksi yritysten tulisi kiinnittää huomiota kielen laatuun verkkosivuillaan. Tulevissa tutkimuksissa kielellisten ja visuaalisten käytänteiden analysoinnin lisäksi olisi tärkeää ottaa huomioon myös verkkosivujen vierailijoiden näkökulma.</p>	
Asiasanat – Keywords Corporate online presence, corporate website, corporate identity, corporate image, corporate visual identity, critical discourse analysis, genre analysis, multimodality.	

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Internet has steadily integrated into people's daily lives and nowadays it is almost as if people had a certain need to create an online presence of some sort. This is not a phenomenon that only concerns individuals, but also organisations and companies create online identities on their websites. In fact, today it is expected that every company should have a website (Cheney et al. 2004: 356-357). Boardman (2005: 21) even argues that it might be perceived negatively if a company does not have a website.

Corporate websites offer such an easy and low-cost option for marketing that companies rarely want to miss the opportunity to be seen online (Stein 2006: 1). For example, in the year 2010 already 87% of the Finnish companies with at least 10 employees had a website and 87% of these companies used the websites for marketing operations and 17% used for selling products (Suomen virallinen tilasto 2010). As the statistics show, many corporate websites solely focus on marketing the company itself and what it does, implying that usually it is only about being online that matters. Indeed, according to Marconi (2002: 88) corporate websites are especially focused on building "Internet presence" for companies, whereas Boardman (2005: 10) and Winter, Saunders and Hart (2003) use a term "web presence". Nevertheless, they all refer to the fact that companies establish a presence on their websites that reflects an image companies want to pursue.

Heinze and Hu (2006: 313) argue that "a strong online presence is generally considered an important component of most large organisations", however, I believe that also smaller companies can benefit from having a well established online presence. Indeed, according to Christensen and Cheney (2000: 252) many organisations do "feel a strong need to 'be' on the Internet", and thus, I think it is important to examine the companies' *being* online and especially the *being* on their websites. In the present study I will call this phenomenon *corporate online presence*. Corporate online presence is created through the multimodality of online environment, using language, images, colouring, different font types and sizes, even video and sound. This is based on the idea of corporate visual identity, which emphasises the role of visual form of the publications in the construction of corporate identity (van den Bosch, de Jon and Elving 2006: 138).

Although the Internet is a highly multimodal medium, lots of the information still relies on textual features (Boardman 2005: 20). Thus, language and language choices are central parts of the creation of corporate online presence. Indeed, the companies face an important decision on which language choices to provide on their websites (Aaltonen 2006: 191). According to Aaltonen (2006: 205-206) many Finnish companies resort to English regardless whether they have English speaking customers or not. Another issue besides the language choice, is the quality of the language. In fact, Stein (2006: 3) suggests that people should pay attention to the quality of English on corporate websites as it is not always that good. Moreover, Stein (2006: 3) argues that the texts are usually "simply paper texts put on the Internet", which according to him are not appropriate in the Internet as they are, but instead need to be adjusted to fit the new medium.

Because the companies face an increasing demand to be online and there is an increasing interest towards the quality of corporate websites, I believe it is reasonable to examine the genre of Finnish corporate websites more thoroughly. In fact, Burn and Parker (2003: 1) claim that

We need to develop form of semiotic analysis which recognize the particular properties of digital media texts such as web sites and computer games. We need to explore how such texts are quite different in some ways from their pre-digital predecessors; but also how they represent certain kinds of continuity.

In addition, Heinze and Hu (2006: 314) point out that "what has been rare in the literature is a more systematic and objective study of what the corporate world is actually doing in terms of building an effective web presence". Stein (2006) agrees with the others as he believes it is very important to look at the genre of corporate websites from the linguistic point of view. Therefore, the present study will focus on how the eight chosen Finnish exporting companies construct their corporate online presences in English. I also want to explore the multimodality of the corporate websites and especially the role of visual form in the construction of corporate online presence. Thus, I will also examine the images and layout of the websites.

I will use critical discourse analysis in order to examine the companies' corporate online presences. As the unit of analysis I have chosen the sections introducing the companies, which can also be called as "about us" pages or company profiles. According to Bloor & Bloor (2007: 2) "critical discourse analysts are interested in the way in which language and discourse are used to achieve social goals and in the part this use plays in

social maintenance and change”. Indeed, critical discourse analysis helps to define the social aspects of the company profiles and explore whether there is a genre of corporate websites. For the analysis of visual features I will use Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006; 2001) model for image and layout analysis and the concept of multimodal discourse analysis.

The present study starts with two introductory chapters, one introducing the basics of corporate communication and the other focusing on determining the concept of corporate online presence. These chapters are followed by the framework of the present study, that is, the multimodal discourse analysis and the research design, which introduces the research questions, data and methods of the present study. The analysis consists of three chapters, the first focusing on the company profiles, the second on the text analysis and the third on the images and layout. The final chapter focuses on elaborating the findings of the present study and giving suggestions for further studies.

2 MANAGING REPUTATION THROUGH COMMUNICATION

In this section I will first briefly outline the similarities and differences of marketing and public relations in terms of communication. I will then move on to describe corporate communication especially as a part of reputation management. Furthermore, I will introduce the concepts of corporate identity, corporate image and corporate visual identity, which are important concepts in the field of reputation management. I will also give insights on how these concepts relate to linguistics and text analysis.

2.1 Communicative perspective on marketing and public relations

Marketing and public relations (PR) are separate fields of studies and they both have their own practitioners and own set of functions to fulfil. However, the difference between the two fields is not always that clear cut. PR is linked to many marketing functions, especially the ones dealing with communication (Henslowe 2003: vii). According to Edwards (2009: 4-7) there are variations between the different definitions of PR, however, all these definitions highlight the fact that PR relates to communication between a company and its publics, often focusing on influencing the audiences (Edwards 2009: 16). The audiences include both the external and internal publics, which entail not only customers and business partners but also employees and others working with a company. Henslowe (2003: vii, 1-4) goes even further with his definition by claiming that “it is all about communication”.

There are also several ways to define marketing. According to Kotler and Keller (2006: 6) the American Marketing Association defines marketing to be “an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stake holders”. To put it simply, marketing is something that happens between production and consumption of a product (Grönroos 2007: 264-267). Marketing is both a societal process of exchanging goods and services between individuals and companies and a managerial process including the processes of planning and executing all the different steps involved in creating the exchange (Kotler and Keller 2006: 6, 31). Varey (2002: xxiii) emphasises the societal definition by claiming,

“all marketing activity is intercultural social communication”. Varey (2002: xxiii) sees marketing as a means of promotion and an attempt to persuade people to purchase.

When considering further Varey’s claim of marketing being communication and considering the perspective of PR being interaction between an organisation and its public, one can trace a clear link between the two fields. Graham (1997: 278) argues that it is the target audience that sets PR and marketing apart, as marketing is targeted at customers and PR instead is targeted at a more diverse audience, including all stakeholder groups. Nevertheless, both PR and marketing deal with communication that is meant to inform people about a company or products they sell and to influence people and even pursue them to act and think one way or another (Edwards 2009: 16, Kotler and Keller 2006: 536). Indeed, there is an increasing interest to combine these two fields under same headline, marketing public relations (MPR) (Kotler and Keller 2006: 594-597, Harris 1997: 90-104). The goal of MPR is to promote both a product and corporate image, which in turn promote each other (Kotler and Keller 2006: 594).

As both of the fields of marketing and PR are linked to communication, these both have also communicative functions which have different goals, i.e. marketing communication is involved with products and/or services, when corporate communication focuses on the entire image of a company (Kotler and Keller 2006: 536-537, 593). I will elaborate the concept of corporate communication and corporate image in more detail in the next sub-chapter.

2.2 Corporate communication

Cheney et al. (2004: 7-8) argue that organisations are all about communication and their functions and goals are achieved through the use of symbols, messages and discourses. Furthermore, Gray and Balmer (1998: 699-700) claim that corporate communication includes all the names and brands that are connected to an organisation, graphic design that encompasses “the overall visual presentation of the organisation”, formal statements such as slogans and annual reports, architecture, media relations and routine interactions such as the customer service style of an organisation. Also Cheney et al. (2004: 440) provide a list of elements of corporate communication including symbols, structures, patterns of practices, discrete messages, interactions, relationships,

narratives, meetings, networks, rituals, campaigns, myths and broad discourses. Nevertheless, they all agree that everything that is related to an organisation and said about an organisation, whether it is targeted to internal or external audiences, is part of corporate communication (Cheney et al. 2004: 123, Gray and Balmer 1998: 699-700).

Moreover, van Riel and Fombrun (2007: 2) argue that communication enables organisations to conduct business and that the quality of communication and business success go hand in hand. Indeed, corporate communication not only entails what is said about an organisation, but also how something is said or done, i.e. “how an organisation presents itself to all its key stakeholders, both internal and external” (Cornelissen 2008: 3). This relates to an important function of corporate communication, that is, reputation and reputation management, which will be discussed in more detail below. In addition, I will discuss corporate advertising and introduce the concepts of corporate identity and corporate image as part of reputation management. Lastly, I will consider the concept of corporate visual identity.

2.2.1 Reputation management and corporate advertising

Corporate communication has two sets of functions, on one hand it acts as a management tool, and on the other hand, it works as a marketing tool (Bernstein 1985: 173). It is important for companies to manage their communication and define the way they want to be seen, because successful management of corporate communication is crucial for creating a consistent image of a company and establishing good relationships with customers (Gray and Balmer 1998: 699; Grönroos 2007: 303-304). Furthermore, the goal of corporate communication is to build, maintain and protect a company's reputation (Cornelissen 2008: 3). Thus, it is both about informing the stakeholders and about representing a company in a positive light. Indeed, unsuccessful communication may result in negative image, which also harms reputation (Grönroos 2007: 305-308). Therefore, managing communication is also about managing corporate identity and corporate image because good reputation is established when a company integrates the intended image into its performance consistently through time (Gray and Balmer 1998: 696). Corporate identity and corporate image will be discussed in more detail below.

When managing corporate communication, companies deal with a reputation the public has formed based on a company's performance and image. Indeed, reputation is about the public's perception and overall estimation of the company in question (Bernstein 1985: 18; Fombrun 1996: 37; Fombrun and Rindova 2000: 78). For example, Fombrun (1996: 11) sees reputation on one hand as “a reflection of company's identity” and, on the other hand, as a consequence of all the persuasive messages of the excellence of a company. Furthermore, Graham (1997: 284, 277) argues that reputation depends greatly on the way companies communicate with their different publics and that corporate reputation is “an asset that must be managed carefully”. Fombrun (1996: 206) agrees with Graham that successful reputation management must take into consideration all the publics involved with a company.

Reputation management relates to corporate advertising, which is basically the same as branding, but in this case branding concerns companies themselves. According to Kotler and Keller (2006: 274-303) in branding a product or service is given an identity that reflects the traits associated with that particular product or service. When considering branding from corporate advertising point of view, Bernstein (1985: 13) suggests that companies should be treated as if they were persons. In addition, Bernstein (1985: 175) argues that “corporate advertising has several objectives: to educate or inform any or all of its [nine] publics about the company's policies, operations, capabilities, objectives, beliefs and standards”, which in turn aims at impressing the public to form a positive opinion of a company and encourages them to purchase products and/or services a company provides. In short, corporate advertising focuses on selling a company and projecting a company's identity in a positive light (Bernstein 1985: 12).

2.2.2 Corporate identity

First of all, it is important to make a distinction between corporate identity and organisational identity, as these two concepts are not the same. According to Hatch and Schultz (2000: 12) corporate identity is marketing based, when organisational identity instead comes from organisation studies. In addition, when referring to corporate identity, the concept entails a company's self-presentation and differentiation from others, that is, “how an organisation expresses and differentiates itself in relation to its stakeholders” (Hatch and Schultz 2000: 13). Whereas when referring to organisational

identity, the concern is more in the perception and understanding of an organisation by its members (Hatch and Schultz 2000: 15).

On the other hand, van Riel and Fombrun (2007: 70, 89-90) see organisational identity comprising of four different dimensions: 1) perceived identity, 2) projected identity, 3) desired identity and 4) applied identity. The first dimension means an identity perceived by the members of an organisation (van Riel and Fombrun 2007: 70, 85). This can be viewed also as organisational identity discussed by Hatch and Schultz (2000:13). The second constitutes organisation's self-presentation to internal and external audiences through communication (van Riel and Fombrun 2007: 70, 89-90), which in turn is more marketing based and relates to Hatch and Schultz's definition of corporate identity. The third consists of top management's idea of an ideal identity of an organisation (desired or intended identity) and the fourth combines the ideas of perceived and projected identity, meaning that the values an organisation has are applied and seen in the behaviours of an organisation (van Riel and Fombrun 2007: 70, 82, 88). In the present study, I will examine how corporate identity is projected on corporate websites through language and visual manifestations, thus, the focus is on the marketing based view.

There are also other definitions for corporate identity. For example, Vos and Schoemaker (2006: 45-47) categorise corporate identity into five different sections: corporate identity as the envisaged goal of the company, an instrument of management, an effect on public, the total of characteristic properties or a complex cohesion of corporate behaviour, company logo, communication with the drafted mission statement as the manifested conception of the company. From these definitions closest to projected identity is the last definition, in which the emphasis is on the communication targeted at a company's publics. As can be seen from the list made by Vos and Schoemaker and the definition of van Riel and Fombrun, corporate identity is very multi-layered and companies express their identities in many different ways. Moreover, the creation of a self-presentation that sets a company apart from others and makes it both recognisable and distinguishable is important in the construction of corporate identity (Marwick and Fill 1997: 397).

Gray and Balmer (1998: 695-697) claim that "corporate identity is the reality of the corporation" and it includes all the characteristics relating to the corporation such as strategy, culture, design and philosophy, which together create the brand of a company.

Indeed, Cornelissen (2008: 11, 66) also discusses the projection of corporate identity with “all forms of communication”, whereas van Riel and Balmer (1997: 341) call this the corporate identity mix, which includes organisational behaviour, communication and symbolism. On the other hand, Cheney et al. (2004: 108) define corporate identity in terms of “something every living system is *doing* – and in fact must do – in order to maintain itself” and that it is not only about individuals but also organisations require the sense of *self* to maintain coherence. Bernstein (1985: 159) also sees that identity is something every company has whether they actually even realise it.

Marwick and Fill (1997: 397) argue that corporate identity is in fact “projected to stakeholders using a variety of cues and represents how the organisation would like to be perceived”. Indeed, van Riel (2000: 167) also mentions “cues” (logo, corporate name), which according to him describe “what the company does, why it does it, and what makes it a preferred partner in business”. In other words, these cues project corporate identity to stakeholders. This is also emphasized by Hatch and Schultz (2000: 17, 19). Furthermore, van Riel and Fombrun (2007: 90) claim that both visual and verbal communication are important issues to consider when analysing projected identity. For example, in companies' online presentations it is important to consider how companies describe themselves in verbal expressions, that is, what word choices they use to express certain meanings (van Riel and Fombrun 2007: 89).

Isaksson (2005: 111) also points out that there is an external demand and pressure for organisations to be recognisable and to have an identity. Graham (1997: 285) agrees with Isaksson and adds that the challenges of future lie in the maintenance of a positive corporate image. Also Christensen and Cheney (2000: 246) claim that markets demand companies to have “well-crafted identities” and simultaneously put pressures for companies to be adaptive to changes. I think this also relates to the expectations for companies to have some sort of presence online (Cheney et al. 2004: 356-357; Boardman 2005: 21).

As a matter of fact, Cheney et al. (2004: 107) claim that “organisations are increasingly involved in the question of who they 'are' and how their different audiences perceive them”. This brings us closer to the definition of corporate image, which is the public's reflection of a company's identity and which is constructed in the minds of the stakeholders (Vos and Schoemaker 2006: 53-57; Gray and Balmer 1998: 696-699;

Bernstein 1985: 25). Cornelissen (2008: 65) discusses the symbolic perspective of corporate image, which means that companies “symbolically construct” and project an image that is particularly chosen by a company. Indeed, companies make the decisions on what sort of image they want to pursue by choosing the signals to use in self-presentation (van Riel and Fombrun 2007: 26). Whether or not the public perceives a company they way the company intended to is a matter of reputation management.

When considering corporate identity and its relation to corporate image, I believe that Bernstein (1985: 25) put it best by saying that “identity provides the information from which the receiver gauges the personality of the transmitter” and this impression the receiver gets from the information is the image. In other words, identity is embedded and reflected in corporate communication, but the image is not formed by the transmitter, instead it appears in the mind of a receiver. Vos and Schoemaker (2006: 53-57) agree with this by stating that corporate identity consists of all the properties that make a company who or what it is and the image is the public's reflection of that identity. It is important to bear in mind that the dimensions of organisational identity introduced by van Riel and Fombrun (2007: 70, 89-90) all may influence corporate image and that it is not only projected identity that creates a perception of a company. Indeed, Bernstein (1985: 13) argues that “image is determined by performance”. Thus, the establishment of projected identity and incorporation of desired identity not only in communication activities but in all levels of company's actions affect corporate image and in turn, influence reputation.

In the present study the focus is on projected identity, but it is important to bear in mind that projected identity has an influence on corporate image. Thus, it is important to consider how a company projects itself to external audiences and not only focus on how it is perceived by the audience. Indeed, it is important to control “the perceptions that others form of an individual or firm by influencing the likelihood that a perceiver will make certain attributions” (Winter et al. 2003: 310). Winter et al. (2003: 310-311) imply that the challenge for companies in creating corporate websites is to establish such cues, which would stand out and impress the visitors. I believe here also language and the quality of the language plays a role. Indeed, also Stein (2006: 2-3) argues that language errors on the screen are very unforgiving and people are prone to make judgements based on first impressions.

2.2.3 Corporate visual identity

When considering the fact that projected identity is the part of identity that is mediated through communication, one needs to consider the levels and modes of corporate communication. As was said above corporate communication consists of not only spoken or written texts, but also graphic designs and symbols (Cheney et al. 2004: 7-8, 440; Gray and Balmer 1998: 695-697, 699-700). Indeed, when considering the definitions of corporate identity, those definitions also include remarks about the visual elements (Marwick and Fill 1997: 397; Bernstein 1985: 10-11, 63, 158-159; Hatch and Schultz 2000: 19; Cornelissen 2008: 11; van Riel and Fombrun 2007: 27, 90). Thus, it can be assumed that also visual forms of corporate communication play an important role in the construction of projected identity. This is called corporate visual identity (van den Bosch et al. 2006: 138).

According to van den Bosch et al. (2006: 140) corporate visual identity not only symbolizes a company but also makes the company visible and recognisable. van Riel and Balmer (1997: 340-341) agree with Bosch et al. that corporate identity is based on the graphic design related to a company and they too recognise that corporate identity is an important part of corporate communication. In addition, Melewar and Saunders (2000: 546) point out that standard corporate visual identity is effective in projecting a company's identity. In many vast organisations every detail is designed to fit together helping people to recognise the organisations (Vos and Schoemaker 2006: 48; van den Bosch et al. 2006: 139). The similar design can be seen in everything related to a company from the abstract visual aids to office supplies and uniforms, even buildings and interior design (van den Bosch et al 2006: 139).

Furthermore, it is important to consider the standardisation of corporate visual identity. For people to be able to identify companies, it is important that all the publications companies produce have certain kind of form that is recognisable and represents a particular company (Huovila 2006: 11). There should be consistency in the use of visual elements, because with the help of consistency people start to recognize companies already from the colours or typefaces (van den Bosch et al. 2006: 139; Cornelissen 2008: 11; Bernstein 1985: 63-64). One good example of corporate visual identity and consistency is the logo that represents a company (van den Bosch et al. 2006: 138; Hatch and Schultz 2000: 17; van Riel 2000: 167; Cornelissen 2008: 11, 66).

According to Winter et al. (2003: 311, 319) the visual elements also carry out meanings and information about a company's identity and therefore, it is important to pay attention to the visual form of corporate websites. In the present study the interest is in the layout and the images presented on the “about us” pages and how these elements together with the texts create corporate online presence. I will elaborate the role of visual elements in the following chapters.

3 THE CONSTRUCTION OF CORPORATE ONLINE PRESENCE

In this chapter I will first introduce what the main functions of corporate websites are. Secondly, I will move closer to the linguistic point of view and consider what sorts of discourses and genres relate to corporate websites. Thirdly, I will introduce the core concept of the present study, that is, corporate online presence, and how it relates to the previously discussed concepts of corporate identity, corporate image and corporate visual identity. I will conclude the chapter by introducing previous studies on corporate websites.

3.1 Corporate websites as an online marketing tool

There are several different ways how to go about marketing one's business online (Chaffey et al. 2009: 16-21). According Chaffey et al. (2009: 217) the typical way for a company to enter Internet marketing starts by allowing the listing of a company on a directory website, such as Fonecta.fi, which is like the online yellow pages. The second stage of creating online presence is done through creation of corporate websites, also known as "brochureware", which usually contains the basic information of a company and its products (Chaffey et al. 2009: 23, 217). Brochureware is sort of an online brochure, created on the basis of the paper version of corporate brochure. After the establishment of corporate website, the interactivity of a website gradually increases, first by accepting enquiries from the customers through email, secondly by offering products for sale online and lastly incorporating other marketing functions to establish a fully interactive site (Chaffey et al. 2009: 218).

Of course, the model introduced above does not necessarily apply to all sorts of businesses, but merely gives guidance on how companies have possibly gone about creating their online presence. Nevertheless, I think Chaffey et al. give indication of the development of corporate websites. Interestingly, the increase of interactivity as part of corporate website development implies that corporate websites are defined at some level in terms of their interactivity. Esrock and Leichty (2000: 340) argue that feedback and email links on corporate websites imply that companies want to allow a dialogue between the visitor and the company. In fact, Heinze and Hu (2006: 320) agree with this and claim that corporate websites are used also as a customer relationship management

tool. In addition, Chaffey et al. (2009: 450) claim that interactivity and creating dialogue are important when considering the Internet as a medium. When considering corporate websites, I believe interactivity is one of the most important factors that separates corporate websites from its non-digital predecessors, company brochures.

Although corporate websites are used for advertising purposes and in customer relationship management, they are also an intrinsic part of organisational communication (Isaksson 2005: 114), helping in creating and establishing corporate image and marketing both a company and the products and/or services it provides (Bolaños Medina et al. 2005: 124; Hwang, McMillan and Lee 2003: 19; Perry and Bodkin 2000: 95). In fact, many studies have discovered that corporate websites are targeted at several audiences, not only at customers (Perry and Bodkin 2000: 96; Esrock and Leichty 2000: 338; Hwang et al. 2003: 11, 16). Esrock and Leichty (2000: 327, 338) found out in their study that corporate websites are targeted at several audiences from which investors, prospective employees and customers are the most important publics. The results clearly imply that corporate websites are also used for public relations practices, as public relations aims to reach several audiences (Graham 1997: 278).

Besides the various audiences, Hwang et al. (2003: 10) argue that corporate websites also include multiple functions from offering a tool for selling and marketing to providing information and setting for image-building. This is also seen in the study conducted by Esrock and Leichty (2000), in which they considered the contents of corporate websites. The five most frequently provided contents included information about products and services, company profile and history, press releases, contact information and information on affiliate companies (Esrock and Leichty 2000: 336). Interestingly, the difference between the information on products and services and the company profile was thin (Esrock and Leichty 2000: 336), which implies that companies consider it important to have an introduction of the company profile on their websites. Indeed, the concept of corporate advertising emphasizes that the focus is on a company rather than in its products (Bernstein 1985: 45). When considering the frequency of introducing a company profile online, one can conclude that corporate websites are also used for corporate advertising.

Chaffey et al. (2009: 22-23) distinguish five forms of online presence that give outlines for the types of websites companies might have and what functions the websites include. According to Chaffey et al. (2009: 22-23) these five forms are transactional e-commerce sites, services-oriented relationship-building websites, brand-building sites, portal or media sites and social network or community sites. Though these categories make a clear distinction between the focuses of different websites, these can also be met simultaneously on one website (Chaffey et al. 2009: 22).

The transactional e-commerce sites are especially meant for purchasing online and informing customers about the products. The services-oriented relationship-building websites focus more on building relations between a company and its customers, and even though this sorts of websites usually entail information about products, those are not for sale online, but meant for encouragement to offline buying. The brand-building sites are created to support a brand and promote offline buying of the brand, usually only informing and creating an online experience around a brand to emphasize its characteristics. Portal or media sites are meant for information sharing. The last category is the social network or community sites, which offer consumers a possibility to interact with each other, such as Facebook. (Chaffey et al. 2009: 22-23.)

Although the five forms of online presence suggest that there can be several ways for companies to use their websites, all corporate websites are used for expressing and projecting corporate identity and pursuing a positive corporate image. In fact, Hatch and Schultz (2000: 19) argue that the Internet is one of the communication channels that companies use to express their identity. The company profiles are especially used for this purpose as they focus on introducing a company through a corporate story. Indeed, van Riel (2000: 179-180) argues that corporate stories are used to achieve “higher degrees of prestige and trust among internal and external stakeholders” and corporate website is one of the media used for sharing corporate stories. According to van Riel (2000: 157) corporate stories are descriptions of organisations, which should include “the distinctive and enduring characteristics of the organisation as a whole”. What is also important in the development of a corporate story is to make sure that it increases stakeholders' understanding of the company in question (van Riel 2000: 179). Larsen (2000: 197) argues that a good corporate story can help an organisation to differentiate from its competitors and defines corporate story as “a comprehensive narrative about the whole organisation, its origins, its vision, its mission.”

3.2 Corporate website as a discourse

As was mentioned above, corporate websites can be seen as part of corporate advertising and corporate stories are an essential part of these websites. Nevertheless, I have only touched the surface of the idea of corporate websites representing a particular discourse or genre. Thus, in this section I will consider corporate websites as discourses and whether there is a genre of corporate websites. This approach gives insights on corporate websites from the linguistic perspective and brings the focus closer to the methodology of the present study.

Initially, I want to clarify briefly what is discourse and what is genre. In fact, discourse can be defined in many ways and that depends greatly on the approach the researcher takes (Bloor and Bloor 2007; Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009, Kress and van Leeuwen 2001: 4-5, 24-34; Fairclough 1992: 3). In the present study I have adopted Kress and van Leeuwen's concept of discourse.

According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2001: 4, 24) “discourses are socially constructed knowledges of reality”, which are both constructed via language and exist in language. In other words, discourses are constructed through language in a particular context. However, what is important to note is that discourses appear also in other modes besides language, that is, they are also realised in design such as images and colours (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001: 21-22, 24-25). Thus, discourses are realised through language and other modes that carry meanings in a particular medium. Medium refers to the materials that produce and distribute discourses (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001: 22). Here the medium is the Internet, whereas the concept of discourse refers to both written language and images involved with the textual elements. Indeed, discourses are constructed through various symbolic forms (Fairclough 1992: 3). This view on discourse according to Bloor and Bloor (2007: 7) is a multimodal approach to discourse, and it is also the approach Kress and van Leeuwen (2001: 25) have adopted in their studies.

When considering the definition of genres, Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009: 79-104) state that genres are socially and discursively organised entities. These entities comprise of discourses that follow certain similar linguistic conventions. Indeed, genres have boundaries and consist of rules and norms that need to be followed (Bhatia 1993: 14; Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 82-83; Bloor and Bloor 2007: 8-9). This means that

text construction follows certain norms and there are rules on what is possible, what is not, as well as what to include and what not (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 83). What is typical for one particular genre is that the discourses belonging to the genre have similar communicative purposes (Bhatia 1993: 13). Thus, corporate websites can be considered a genre as they all are part of corporate advertising and as such have similar communicative functions.

Bhatia (1993: 45-75) introduces aspects of genre analysis in “product and self promotion in business settings” and calls this type of genre “the promotional genre”. The examples used by Bhatia (1993: 47-48, 61-62) include a sales promotion letter and job application letter, however, Bhatia (1993: 74-75) points out that these texts are only part of the promotional genre and that this genre is worth examining further by studying more samples, for example, company brochures. As was mentioned above, corporate websites are sort of online brochures and an important part of company's self-presentation and self-promotion today, thus, it is arguable to consider corporate websites to be part of the promotional genre. Also Stein (2006: 5) acknowledges that corporate websites are part of promotional discourse. What is typical for promotional texts and promotional genre is that these texts are created for promotional purposes (Bhatia 1993: 59). Indeed, the function of corporate websites is the same as any promotional texts, to promote a company and its products and/or services (Bolaños Medina et al. 2005: 124).

Fairclough (1995: 112-127) discusses texts of enterprise discourse, which “express the identities of their producers and address the assumed social identities of their addressees and audiences” and which also “construct imaginary identities for their producers and audiences”. Indeed, corporate websites are also related to enterprise discourse especially in terms of expressing identities of both the producers and addressees. I also want to emphasize the fact that texts express identities, thus implying that texts on corporate websites reflect corporate identity of a company. Indeed, when examining discourses one can analyse how the text producer's identity is reflected through language (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 64; Fairclough 1997: 29-30, 76). I will elaborate this further in chapter 4.

When considering corporate websites and their relation to other websites, one obvious similarity is the medium the websites are displayed in. In fact, there have been studies

on how to categorise websites into genres (Santini 2007; Shepherd, Watters and Kennedy 2004; Montesi 2010). Most often the study of website genres is based on automatic identification, which comes from the analysis of content, form and functionality of websites (Shepherd and Watters 1999). On the other hand, Santini (2007: 1-2) argues that perhaps the boundaries of different website genres is not that explicit and that some of the websites include many sorts of genres. Indeed, when considering for example advertisements as a discourse, there are multiple genres and discourse types used in a single ad (Cook 2001: 39). Santini (2007: 6) explains that “genres are not mutually exclusive”, but instead there is variation inside genres. Indeed, it is important to bear in mind that genres evolve and change through time (Bhatia 2004: 25, 29).

Shepherd et al. (2004) approached the websites from the automatic identification point of view and distinguished websites to home pages and non-home pages. The further study of home pages showed that they can be categorised into personal home pages, corporate home pages and organisation home pages (Shepherd et al. 2004: 237). The results of the study of Shepherd et al. (2004: 249) imply that there is a certain style to corporate home pages. In addition, Montesi (2010) recognised a genre of corporate home pages when studying the genre of websites. What all these studies imply one way or another is the existence of corporate websites as a genre. Indeed, Stein (2006) also considers corporate websites as a genre by pointing out that it is an emergent and a new type of genre of promotional discourse. Stein (2006: 1-3) argues that corporate websites often lack in the quality of English and the texts displayed on many corporate websites are not appropriate to be read from the screen. This is also why I believe it is important to study the language of corporate websites.

3.3 Corporate online presence

Heinze and Hu (2006: 314) claim that previous studies have rarely been concerned with how companies build effective web presence. Thus, in the present study I will examine how companies project their identities on their websites by creating a certain presence with linguistic and visual forms. This presence has been called both *Internet presence* and *web presence* (Marconi 2002; Boardman 2005; Bolaños Medina et al. 2005: 126; Perry and Bodkin 2000; Winter et al. 2003) or *corporate web presence* (Pollach 2011; Heinze and Hu 2006) or *online presence* (Chaffey et al. 2009: 22-23).

In the present study I will use a term *corporate online presence*. I chose to use a different term than the previous studies, because there have not been clear rules which term to use when referring to a company's presence on their website. I feel that corporate online presence is on the same line with terms such as corporate identity and corporate image and as such it emphasises that the focus is on the online presence of a company. In addition, the reason for choosing the term online instead of web or Internet is that I feel that using both Internet and web presence refer to the companies presence in the entire network of world wide web, whereas the term online presence refers to the presence created on a corporate website. Indeed, the focus of the present study is in the “about us” pages of corporate websites, also referred to as company profiles, which comprise of corporate stories already discussed above. The corporate stories project corporate identity and thus, create corporate online presence.

Corporate online presence is based on corporate identity and it is constructed on corporate websites through language, layout and images. In other words, corporate online presence deals with a company's overall self-presentation and how a company projects its identity on its website. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2001: 2) in today's digitalised world one can choose whether one expresses something visually or verbally. Indeed, this is important when considering the concept of corporate visual identity and the multimodality of corporate websites. The construction of corporate online presence is based on the website designer's choices on what elements represent a company best in visual forms and what to include in the written form. Of course, some corporate websites may even include videos and sounds, however, these are not part of the scope of analysis in the present study. Nevertheless, to be able to examine corporate online presence, one needs to take a multimodal approach to the analysis of company profiles and thus, consider also layout and images in addition to language when analysing the content of corporate websites. This is the same remark van Riel and Fombrun (2007: 90) make when discussing the analysis of projected identity.

Heinze and Hu (2006: 313) argue that corporate online presence “increases customer awareness of a company and its products and services, with the desired outcome being a greater likelihood of purchase”. In addition, corporate online presence aims at projecting positive corporate identity and serves as a tool for conducting business online (Heinze and Hu 2006: 315). Indeed, it is important to bear in mind that the companies want to pursue a positive image by describing themselves as positively as possible

(Pollach 2005: 289). On the other hand, the flexibility of the online environment makes it possible for companies to create a strong online presence which may also enhance the corporate image among the publics (Winter et al. 2003: 310).

According to the findings of Winter et al. (2003: 309-311, 314-315, 318) websites' good graphics and layout were likely to improve the visitor's perception of a company, which in turn may influence visitors' buying behaviour. Therefore, people do indeed create perceptions and draw inferences of companies when viewing corporate websites (Winter et al. 2003: 314, 318). Thus, corporate online presence can affect greatly corporate image and reputation and also result in profits if online presence will make visitors more willing to purchase company's products and/or services. As a matter of fact, Winter et al. (2003: 319) suggest that "organisations creating a web presence should consider the opportunities for impression management provided by the Internet". Boardman (2005: 116) agrees with this as he sees that web presence is also used for marketing corporate image.

Corporate online presence differs greatly in terms of the business the company is involved with (Chaffey et al. 2009: 22; Perry and Bodkin 2000: 95-96; Heinze and Hu 2006: 320-322). There are companies that invest heavily on their interactive corporate websites and then there are those who are merely satisfied in being listed on different directory websites. On the other hand, there are companies whose business transactions and functions happen only online without any existing bricks and mortar entities. Nevertheless, corporate online presence is increasingly becoming an important factor in the business world today and companies are facing pressures to be online as never before (Boardman 2005: 21). Also Cheney et al. (2004: 356-357) acknowledge that companies are expected to have websites, which I believe adds pressures for companies to create a convincing and credible presence online.

3.4 Previous studies

In this section I will introduce some of the previous studies on corporate websites and corporate online presence. Most of these studies have already appeared above, but here I want to emphasize the previously used methods in the examination of corporate websites or corporate online presence.

Studies that examine corporate websites from the linguistic point of view focused mostly on linguistic analysis rather than in the social aspects of the discourse in question. For example, Turtiainen (2010) studied the language of environmental programs on several company websites through critical discourse analysis with a very linguistic approach, whereas Laakso (2000) studied the use of adjectives when advertising consumer goods and industrial goods on corporate websites. On the other hand, Pihlaja (2001), in her study on Rautaruukki's corporate image, pursued to combine both the linguistic and social features in her analysis. In her study, Pihlaja (2001) used critical discourse analysis in order to analyse the overall image of Rautaruukki given by all sorts of marketing materials. Although the company's websites were only briefly mentioned in Pihlaja's study (2001: 58), the study showed that critical discourse analysis is useful when examining corporate image.

Bolaños Medina et al. (2005) have been working towards examining corporate websites in terms of linguistic, semiotic and pragmatic properties that relate to functionality and functions of corporate websites. Bolaños Medina et al. (2005) collected a corpus of hardware corporate websites and analysed the data through content analysis to define a genre of hardware corporate websites. Their major findings concluded that images were used for advertising purposes and that the texts were more or less informational in nature. The results also concluded that the language was full of imperative and present simple tenses and impersonal verbs, adjectives were used to highlight the quality of products and the most frequently used pronouns were the first person plural pronouns *we* and *us* (Bolaños Medina et al. 2005: 142-143).

Pollach's (2005) approach to corporate websites was also linguistic as she studied companies' self-presentation on the Internet using content analysis and discourse analysis. Pollach (2005: 286-288) raises important questions of the usability and readability of corporate websites and argues that the quality of the information on corporate websites is related to the visitor's tendency to visit the site again or stay on the site. As the unit of analysis Pollach (2005: 289) used the sections presenting the companies. As a result, Pollach (2005: 299) claims that these sites are not targeted at any particular audience. Indeed, this implies that the company profiles are part of corporate advertising and as such need to be constructed so that they are understood by everybody. The major findings in Pollach's (2005: 297-299) study imply that companies

could improve their online self-presentation in terms of navigation and enhancing credibility.

In the actual analysis of corporate websites, Pollach (2005: 291-297) examined structure, navigation, content, conveying attitudes and relationships on corporate websites. In the analysis of content, Pollach (2005: 291-294) examined the tools companies used for gaining credibility, such as offering information in numbers to impress the visitors, providing third-party evidence, presenting claims as facts, removing agents and humanising the organisation, that is, whether the names or images of the staff were presented on the websites. When considering the findings of linguistic analysis, Pollach (2005: 294-295) found out that companies convey attitudes by referring to themselves both in terms of the size or scope and as leaders (Pollach 2005: 294-296). In addition, companies also use verbs of continuity to emphasise the continuity of the business (Pollach 2005: 293). Relationships were examined through the use of personal pronouns and similarly to the finding of Bolaños Medina et al. the most frequently used were the first person plural pronouns *we* and *our* (Pollach 2005: 296). When it comes to the interactivity of corporate websites, the usual way for companies to offer possibilities for the visitors to be in a dialogue with the company was to offer "contact us" links (Pollach 2005: 296-297).

Next I will briefly introduce the studies that examined corporate websites solely through content analysis. First of all, Esrock and Leichty (2000) studied corporate websites from the *Fortune* 500 list through a content analysis and found out that the websites are targeted at multiple audiences and that the content on the websites most likely includes information on products and/or services, company profile or history, press releases and contact information. Also Perry and Bodkin (2000: 95) found out that the corporate websites have several audiences. Perry and Bodkin (2000) studied 100 company websites from the *Fortune* list through content analysis. However, their results showed that companies focus more on corporate branding and advertising on their websites and that companies have not yet utilized all the possible activities for marketing communications (Perry and Bodkin 2000: 95). In addition, Perry and Bodkin (2000: 96) found out that there is some difference in the direct marketing activities between industries, the retail industry being more direct in its activities. Hwang et al. (2003: 18) came to the same conclusions as Perry and Bodkin and Esrock and Leichty that corporate websites address various audiences and that corporate websites can be

regarded as part of corporate advertising. Hwang et al. (2003) examined 160 websites' functions, audiences and message strategies through content analysis.

Heinze and Hu's (2006) approach differs to some extent from the three studies presented above, as they did a longitudinal study of American corporate websites using a metric system that categorised the information according to eight different features: product advertisement, product information, career opportunities, investor information, online sales, online account access, support contact and customer support. The results indicate that using corporate websites as a customer relationship management tool increased during the six years of study in all industries (Heinze and Hu 2006: 320-321). However, the increase of online sales was prominent in all other industries (finance/insurance, information, retail trade, utilities) except in manufacturing (Heinze and Hu 2006: 321). Heinze and Hu (2006: 321) suggest that this is because manufacturers' products are not that easily sold online. One interesting finding in the study (Heinze and Hu 2006: 323) was the increase in interactivity on the websites, which also Chaffey et al. (2009: 218) suggested would happen when corporate websites develop further.

Winter et al. (2003) also adopted a different approach and studied visitors' impressions of corporate websites through exploratory study. Winter et al. (2003: 309-310) refer to the Internet as being a main street, in which corporate websites are like the windows one sees in a real life when walking down the streets and actually suggest that "websites should be considered 'electronic storefronts' or public work areas providing frames of symbolic representations that create impressions of their sponsoring firms" (Winter et al. 2003: 309). Indeed, the impressions and perceptions visitors get when browsing through websites can affect buying behaviour, thus, implying that it is important to consider what kinds of perceptions visitors make (Winter et al. 309-310). Winter et al. (2003: 311) argue that both texts and images as well as the layout of the websites all create impressions about the products and the company in question. Indeed, this was one of the major findings of the study, although, the respondents could not specify which of the characteristics particularly influenced the perceptions (Winter al. 2003: 318-319).

What all these previous studies show is that corporate websites and corporate online presence are important and can tell a lot about companies and their communication strategies. In addition, as all of the previous studies implied, further study is needed

especially from the discourse point of view. I believe that content analysis alone does not provide a sufficient understanding of corporate websites or corporate online presence. Instead a more thorough multimodal discourse analysis is required to have a deeper understanding of corporate online presence and corporate websites as a genre.

4 MULTIMODAL CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

In this chapter I will introduce the theoretical framework of the present study, that is, elaborate how to go about analysing corporate websites as multimodal discourse through critical discourse analysis. First, I will present a multimodal and genre-based approach to critical discourse analysis. Secondly, I will elaborate what is critical discourse analysis and how this type of analytical approach to text analysis works in practice and how the approach suits the purposes of the present study. Then I will continue to determine the tools that are of importance for the analysis of corporate websites with the emphasis on linguistic aspects. To conclude, I will move towards a more multimodal approach of critical discourse analysis and introduce the ways to analyse the layout and images of online corporate stories.

4.1 Multimodality and genres in critical discourse analysis

In the present study I will examine online corporate stories and corporate online presence reflected in these stories through critical discourse analysis. In addition, I will consider how online corporate stories represent the genre of corporate websites in general. I have already explained above that the approach applied in the present study considers discourses as multimodal entities (see chapter 3.2 page 21). Thus, the approach to critical discourse analysis also comprehends the concept of multimodality. Corporate websites are very multimodal in their nature and corporate online presence is constructed through the combination of texts, images and layout. Therefore, I believe that to fully comprehend how a company creates online presence on its website, one should consider both textual and visual elements displayed on the website. Also Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 14) argue that "analysing visual communication is, or should be, an important part of the 'critical' disciplines" referring to critical discourse analysis in particular.

When considering the multimodal approach on discourse adopted in the present study, it is important to understand that discourse is realised through different modes (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001: 21-22, 24-25). Kress and van Leeuwen (2001: 1) argue that "the 'same' meanings can often be expressed in different semiotic modes". Especially important in terms of the present study is the design of corporate websites. Kress and van Leeuwen (2001: 5) define designs as "means to realise discourses", in which

semiotic resources and modes together in a combination construct the discourse. One of the most essential roles of design is to define the connection and roles between texts and images. This relates to the production, which is the actual material organisation of a discourse through different semiotic modes (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001: 7). When choosing the modes for production, one can choose whether the combination of modes reinforce or complement each other or whether the modes are hierarchically ordered one being in a more dominant part than the other (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001: 20). Indeed, these are essential points to consider when analysing the multimodality of corporate stories and when considering the construction of corporate online presence through the use of different modes.

As said above, I will also consider the genre of corporate websites. Genre analysis can be separated as an independent field of study (Bhatia 1993; Bhatia 2004; Frow 2005), however, it is also related to discourse analysis. In fact, Bhatia (1993: 16) claims that genre analysis is a development of discourse analysis. According to Bhatia (1993: 1) discourse analysis has two functions, description and explanation, the first concerning “the linguistic aspects of text construction and interpretation” and the second concerning the genre and how it is formulated through language use. In the present study, I will use both the descriptive and explanatory functions of discourse analysis as the analysis of websites will concentrate both on how the texts are constructed as well on how the texts together represent a genre of corporate website. Therefore, I will call my approach a genre-based view of critical discourse analysis.

When considering the multimodal approach in relation to the descriptive and explanatory functions of discourse analysis, it is important to bear in mind that in description the focus is not solely on linguistic structures of corporate websites, but also on visual structures. This view is also emphasized in the explanatory approach as the present study aims to consider whether there are norms and conventions in the use of images or in the design and layout of corporate websites. Indeed, when considering the multimodality of corporate websites, it is important to remember that genres also have typical visual manifestations (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 98; Cook 2001: 7). Genres are represented not only through word choices, but also style, grammar, outline of the text, and through the use of colours, images, forms and layouts (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 87), which are particularly important in a multimodal discourse such as websites. This is also true when considering the concept of corporate identity, as all the

elements that represent a company are also part of a company's self-presentation and thus, also part of the identity the company is pursuing (van den Bosch et al. 2006: 138-139; Melewar and Saunders 2000: 546; van Riel and Balmer 1997: 340-341; Marwick and Fill 1997: 397).

4.2 CDA in the examination of corporate online presence

The aim of the present study is to examine how corporate online presence is constructed through the use of both linguistic and visual resources. Thus, it is important to consider what sort of linguistic choices are made on corporate websites and how these linguistic structures both project corporate identity and construct corporate online presence. The appropriate approach for the present study is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The study of discourses is applied in many different fields (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 7, 21; Bloor and Bloor 2007: 1-3) and it has been used before when studying corporate image conveyed through promotional texts (Pihlaja 2001) and also when examining other media texts (Fairclough 1997, Burn and Parker 2003). In addition, discourse analysis acts as a basis for genre analysis (Bhatia 2004: xiv-xv), thus, it helps in defining the genre of corporate websites.

Critical discourse analysis as a concept and as a theory handles language and language use on more than only grammatical and lexical level, also combining language use to the representation of society and to the creation and construction of identities and relationships (Fairclough 1992: 3-4). In fact, it is argued that language use has three functions: first of all, it is a way of interacting and communicating with others, secondly, language makes it possible to represent the world around us and thirdly, we create relationships and construct our identities through language use (Fairclough 1992: 8-9, 137-138; Fairclough 1995: 133; Fairclough 1997: 80-81; Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 12-15). Thus, the language has multiple simultaneous functions.

Fairclough (1997: 55) also identifies three different constitutive aspects that the texts shape; those aspects are social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief. In the present study the focus is on the social identities and how these identities are constructed through language use. Indeed, I am interested in examining how corporate online presence is constructed on the company profiles and how it projects the companies' identities. As the function of company profiles is to introduce the company

and as such pursue a positive image of the company, it is important to consider how the identity is reflected in the texts. This is also important aspect of genre analysis, as Bhatia (2004: 23) claims that one of the main goals of genre analysis is “to understand individual, organizational, professional and social identities constructed through discursive practices”. Indeed, it is the discursive practice of identity construction that CDA helps to discover.

When considering how texts shape social identities, one needs to consider the different levels of texts and how meaning is constructed on these different levels. According to Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009: 16) discourse analysis focuses on three aspects that include the micro level (grammar, lexicon), the discursive level (genres, discourses) and the social level of language (the identity construction, representation). This categorisation is based on Fairclough's (1992: 4; 1995: 97) three-dimensional approach to text analysis, which deals with a discourse as a text, as a discursive practice and as a sociocultural practice. In fact, Fairclough (1992: 1-11) argues that language plays an important role in social changes and that one needs to examine language use on more than only micro level in order to understand how meaning is constructed and how language works on a social level. Fairclough (1995: 97) defines discourse analysis as follows:

The method of discourse analysis includes linguistic *description* of the language text, *interpretation* of the relationship between the (productive and interpretative) discursive processes and the text, and *explanation* of the relationship between the discursive processes and the social processes.

Fairclough (1992: 12) argues that CDA does not only focus on "describing discursive practices" but it also pursues to show the link between language and sociocultural practices, for example, how language shapes identities. In fact, Fairclough (1995: 97) determines discourse practice to be the important mediative link between the text and its sociocultural practice. What Fairclough means by this is that the sociocultural practice of discourse determines the way language should be used, as the underlying norms and conventions of discourses and genres affect the production of texts. The discourse practice again affects how texts are produced and shaped, which in turn influences the interpretation of texts at the discursive and social levels. The key to what makes the analysis of discourse critical lies in the sociocultural practice as CDA aims to explore the link between the discursive and social dimensions analysing the texts from both

point of views (Fairclough 1995: 132-133). Also Bloor and Bloor (2007: 12-13) acknowledge that this level of analysis makes CDA different from the other approaches of discourse analysis.

As I am also interested in the social practices of corporate websites, CDA gives the proper tools for analysing the online corporate stories from more than only linguistic level. Moreover, it is important to consider the concepts of power and ideology, as Fairclough (1997: 20-26) claims these to be factors that are missed in the everyday language use. Indeed, the corporate websites are created for pursuing the companies' own ideas of what they are like and what is their corporate identity. Thus, it is important to bear in mind that CDA may also give insights on how the texts are constructed in order to sell corporate image the companies want people to perceive. Indeed, this is what makes the approach critical in the present study, as I am not only interested in how language is used, but also how it works as a social practice in creating corporate online presence. In other words, the critical dimension is pursued by trying to understand the reasons for companies to depict them in a certain way on their websites.

As said above, in the present study the interest is not only on linguistic choices, but instead, I want to explore what these choices tell about the companies and their identities. In addition, I want to pay attention to the discursive level and examine whether there are certain norms how companies construct their identities. Indeed, Fairclough (1992: 126-130) sees CDA to be connected to analysing genres and thus, to be able to consider both the social and discursive level, I believe this approach to be very suitable. Therefore, the outline of the analysis in the present study follows the three-dimensional approach. I will consider the online corporate stories as texts, that is, I will examine the lexico-grammatical aspects of the texts. The sociocultural level of analysis will be considered throughout the analysis as I will also want to pay attention to how these linguistic choices construct corporate online presence in these different corporate stories. In addition, I will examine how the lexico-grammatical choices reflect the genre of corporate websites and the discourse of online corporate stories, that is, I will explore the norms and rules that direct the language use in the genre of corporate websites.

4.3 Lexico-grammatical features of online corporate stories

As I will start my analysis by focusing on linguistic aspects, I need to first define the lexico-grammatical features that are of importance when considering the construction of corporate online presence. In this section I will briefly introduce the lexico-grammatical features examined in the present study. I will provide a more specific description of the features in the next chapter when introducing the methods of the present study.

First of all, I am interested in finding out how the companies are represented on their websites, that is, what sorts of meanings the language used on the websites creates and how this relates to corporate online presence. According to Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009: 56-57) representation is about creating meanings through language use, and the emphasis is on the way the language gives meaning to something in a particular context. In fact, representation is directly linked to identity construction (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 63-66). For example the ways of reference are an important part of representation (Fairclough 1992: 176). Indeed, it is interesting to explore the way companies refer to themselves in the texts. Bloor and Bloor (2007: 20-22) discuss reference in the construction of identity, which means the analysis of nouns that refer to the persons, or identities discussed in the discourse. In addition, reference refers also to addressing, that is, how the audience is addressed in the texts. Reference is important in the present study, as the aim is to find out how the companies represent themselves online and how they refer to themselves and their audiences.

Fairclough (1992: 27, 177-185) uses the term transitivity, which means the representation of reality through language and especially through certain grammatical choices. Transitivity is directly linked to representation and it focuses on four different process types that are present in English: action, event, relational and mental processes (Fairclough 1992: 180). In short, these processes define what was done and by whom and what was the object of doing (Fairclough 1992: 178-185). These process types are realised in verbs. When analysing process types, one important element is the voice, that is, whether companies use active or passive voice. The action of converting "an active clause into a passive clause" is called 'passivisation' (Fairclough 1992: 27). Passive voice can also be used for omitting the agent (Fairclough 1992: 181-182). Besides passivisation, there is also 'nominalisation', which means "the conversion of a clause into a nominal or noun" (Fairclough 1992: 27, 179). In other words,

nominalisation enables to leave open "who is doing what to whom" by either omitting the agent or other participants of the action (Fairclough 1992: 179, 182).

Besides the representation and transitivity, I want to pay attention to the elements of appraisal, that is, how companies use language to give a positive picture of themselves to the audience. In promotional texts it is common to use appraisal, because the texts are meant to pursue and change opinions (Bloor and Bloor 2007: 33-34, 141-144). It is important to consider which way the companies on their corporate websites use appraisal to give a certain kind of positive image of themselves (Bloor and Bloor 2007: 33-34). There is actually a separate field of study of appraisal, which concerns the study of attitude and stance (Bloor and Bloor 2007: 33-49, 173), however, in the present study the focus is more narrow and concerns only the way companies use evaluative language when describing themselves.

In addition to appraisal, I will explore what sorts of attitudes the companies convey in their corporate stories. Pollach (2005: 293-296) found that companies improve their credibility by various processes such as referring to themselves both in terms of the size or scope and as leaders and emphasising the continuity of the business processes. It is interesting to see whether the data of the present study also reflects the similar issues. Furthermore, I will look at the modality of the texts, that is, the level of certainty or uncertainty in the texts (Fairclough 1992: 158-162). Modality is expressed through the use of modal auxiliary verbs (e.g. may, should) and modal adverbs (e.g. possibly) (Fairclough 1992: 159; Bloor and Bloor 2007: 103-104). I am especially interested in to find out whether companies use modality in appraisals.

In conclusion, the lexico-grammatical features that I will focus on in the analysis deal with the ways of reference, naming and addressing, the four different process types, voice, nominalisation, appraisal and modality. All of these lexico-grammatical elements add something to the representation and identity construction and as such are of importance when defining how companies both represent themselves and construct their identities on their websites and in their corporate stories. In addition to examining these elements, I will also consider the reasons behind the use of certain lexico-grammatical choices. Therefore, I will not only describe the lexico-grammatical features of the texts, but also examine the underlying social practices behind the features.

4.4 The genre-based view of CDA

The second level of text analysis concerns the genre perspective, which is the discursive practice of the online corporate stories. Genres are based on conventions in the language use (Bhatia 1993: 14; Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 82-83; Bloor and Bloor 2007: 8-9, 19) and they are also comprised of functional sequences that are typical for each genre (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 95-97). In the present study I am interested in to find out whether the companies use the same linguistic resources to construct their corporate online presences, that is, whether there are certain ways for companies to construct their online presences on their websites. Thus, the micro level analysis is also of importance when analysing genres (Bhatia 1993: 24-34; Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 81). This will both enlighten the ways of constructing corporate online presence and give insight on the genre of corporate websites.

One of the important facts about genres is the realisation that genres change and develop all the time (Bhatia 2004: 25, 29). In addition, the boundaries between different genres are not always clear, but instead genres overlap and mix with each other and there can be elements of different genres in one text (Bhatia 2004: 29; Cook 2001: 39). Also Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009: 129) discuss the possibility of mixing genres, that is, whether some elements of one genre are also present in another. Another interesting fact about genres is that they are constructed through different text types (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 100). Fairclough (1992: 127) also acknowledges that there are certain styles that are used in particular genre. Indeed, it is interesting to explore whether the companies rely on different text types and styles when creating their corporate online presences. It is important to remember that text types and styles alone do not establish a genre, but different text types and styles can be present in the same genre (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 104). However, analysing text types and styles can help in defining a genre or even show some underlying changes happening in the genre (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 104). Thus, I will consider the style and the text types of the online corporate stories in order to define their genre.

Fairclough (1992: 127) introduces three essential indicators of style, tenor, mode and rhetorical mode. Here I want to pay attention to tenor and rhetorical mode in particular. Tenor refers to the relationship between the reader of the text and the writer of the text, which can be determined for example in terms of formality (Fairclough 1992: 127).

Whereas rhetorical mode "can be classified with terms such as argumentative, descriptive, and expository" Fairclough (1992: 127). Other rhetorical modes are also informative and narrative (Fairclough 1992: 129, 235). Rhetorical modes particularly refer to the style and determine the text type of the text. In fact, Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009: 101-102) introduce five different text types including descriptive, narrative, instructive, argumentative and expository text types.

Descriptive texts describe through the use of adjectives and verbs that indicate being or perceiving something. In addition, the story is usually told from the narrator's point of view and there may not be any active participants in descriptive texts. Narrative texts follow a storyline, even a plot, and they are usually in past tense describing something that happened. What is different in narratives is that they include usually active participants who do something. Instructive texts give instructions and guidance sometimes using a commanding voice. Argumentative texts handle issues of power and negotiate and even take stance to something. Typical for this type of text is the use of conjunctions. Expository texts are reflective and usually define things that are abstract concepts. (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 101-102.)

Fairclough (1992: 126) argues that genres are not only related to text types, but also the way genres are produced, distributed and consumed define genres. In fact, when comparing corporate websites with corporate brochures, one obvious difference is the medium these two texts are produced and distributed in. Indeed, the Internet enables interactivity on corporate websites, which is not similarly possible with company brochures. Thus, this implies that corporate websites can be called a genre of their own that is separate from the company brochures. Moreover, the realisation that genres are produced, distributed and consumed in different ways also relates to the social practice of discourses. Indeed, it is interesting to find out whether there are differences in the corporate websites in terms of their social practices, that is, whether there are differences between the ways to consume the corporate websites. This is directly linked to the business practice of corporate websites and it can be defined using the model of five forms of online presences discussed above (see chapter 3.1 page 20).

4.5 Visual features on corporate websites

In this section I will elaborate how images and layout can be analysed through a multimodal approach to critical discourse analysis. According to Koskela (Järvi and Koskela 2005: 7) linguists are more and more interested in analysing images and graphics, and I believe that when considering a medium that depends greatly on the visual form, it is important to take into consideration the visual elements as part of the discourse. Thus, I have adopted Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) approach for analysing the visual structures of corporate websites. Their view on analysing visual structures of discourses is to some extent based on critical discourse analysis and approaches the analysis from a linguistic point of view (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 1-15).

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 15) claim that the visual design has also the three functions language has, that is, the visual design is used as a way of interacting and communicating with others, it helps in representing the world around us and it helps us to create relationships and construct our identities. Thus, the visual structures and linguistic structures as semiotic modes are quite similar in their functions. Moreover, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 46) argue that "the semiotic modes of writing and visual communication each have their own quite particular means of realizing what may be quite similar semantic relations". Indeed, action verbs in images are represented through *vectors* (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 46). There cannot be a vector without participants. Indeed, a vector can either emanate from the participant or the participant can be a vector (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 63). An example of a vector could be a person's hand pointing at something.

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 48) introduce two types of participants that are involved in every semiotic act, *interactive* and *represented participants*. The interactive participants are the ones involved in the production and consumption of the semiotic act and the represented participants are the objects represented in the act (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 48). The represented participants can be either *main* or *secondary participants* (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 72). When determining the participants' salience, it is important to consider their size (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 65). When a secondary and a main participant are not related to each other by a vector, the secondary participant is called a *Circumstance*, which is not as important as the main participant (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 72).

In order to be able to identify the participants and analyse the processes involved in the visual structures, it is important to pay attention to the *transactional* and *analytical structures* (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 49-50). In the transactional structure there is an *Actor* which does something to the *Goal* of the process. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 63) the actors "are often also the most salient participants", which can be recognised in terms of their size, position and colours to name a few. In the transactional structure a vector has an essential role as it represents what an Actor is doing (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 50). Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 59) call this sort of vector pattern a *narrative process*, as it connects the participants. Furthermore, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 67) discuss *reactional processes* in which "the vector is formed by an eyeline, by the direction of the glance of one or more of the represented participants" and the participants glancing are called *Reacters* and the process is called *phenomenon*. There are also structures in which there is only one participant and a vector and that is called a *non-transactional structure* (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 63). In addition, there can be participants that are not related to each other by a vector.

The analytical structures include the *Carrier* and the *Attribute*, which means that the participants are not actually doing anything, but instead together they create a combination, the *Carrier* being the whole and the *Possessive Attributes* making up the whole (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 50). As an example Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 50) use a map of Australia, which is represented through the combination of states. It is important to remember that there can be various analytical processes embedded in the images (Kress and Leeuwen 2006: 50). The analytical structures do not include a vector and as such they include conceptual patterns, which according to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 59) "represent participants in terms of their class, structure or meaning". On the other hand, there can be structures in which there is only a Goal and vector, but no Actor, and these structures are called *Events* (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 64). In Events it is not clear who or what has caused the vector and the Goal (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 64).

When considering what the participants in the images are or represent we are dealing with *Symbolic processes* (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 105). Depending on whether there is only one or more participants the process is either *Symbolic Attributive* or *Symbolic Suggestive* (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 105). In the former there are two participants, a *Carrier* and the participant which represents the identity of the *Carrier*,

the *Symbolic Attribute* (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 105). The latter instead consists of only one participant, the *Carrier* and the identity can be represented in various ways such as through the use of colours (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 105-106). It is important to note that the identity in the Symbolic Suggestive process is depicted using other than the *Symbolic Attribute*.

Besides the images and the processes images contain, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 176-177) consider composition of the images, however, they also recognise that the composition is important when considering visuals in which images and texts are combined. In the present study the tools for analysing the composition are used for analysing the layout of the company profiles and as such the composition means the whole layout of the page including the online corporate story. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 177) identify three interrelated systems that composition entails: *information value*, *salience* and *framing*. Information value refers to the placement of different elements, which can affect the informational value of an element, whereas salience refers to the elements that are due to size, colour or some other features more salient than the other elements and which attract the viewers' attention (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 177). Framing is about connecting or disconnecting the elements through dividing lines or actual frame lines (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 177).

When considering the spatial composition of corporate websites there are a few things to consider. First of all, I want to find out what is considered as salient in the online corporate stories both in terms of horizontal and vertical placement of elements. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 179-181) argue that in the Western cultures what is on the left is considered as given and what is on the right is considered as new information. On the other hand, the upper section of a layout "tends to make some kind of emotive appeal", whereas "the lower section tends to be more informative and practical, showing us 'what is'" (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 186). However, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 186) also consider that the bottom could be considered to consist of information that is Real and the upper part instead would represent what is Ideal and thus, also what is salient. Nevertheless, it is interesting to see whether these generalisations are present on the corporate websites as well.

In order to be able to consider the different elements that constitute the spatial composition and layout of the corporate websites, I will use Melvasalo's (2005) model for categorising the different website elements. According to Melvasalo (2005: 124-125) website designing concentrates on creating a functional entity using different visible elements. There are all in all 15 different elements that Melvasalo has recognised in website designing (Melvasalo 2005: 135). The elements can be divided into four different categories: corporate elements, user elements, content elements and formational elements (Melvasalo 2005: 136).

Corporate elements include identifier elements such as company logos, notification elements such as banner ads or information boxes and contact elements which include the contact information or even a direct way to contact a company. User elements consist of directive elements and elements that help the visitors to browse through the websites, such as offering different language choices, search engine tools and audio controller. The main element, heading and subheading elements and factual content and lifting elements are all content elements, which emphasise certain sections on the website and help in organising the content. The main element is the element that dominates the website both because of its size and because it draws the visitor's attention to the element. The main element is also very informative and tells a lot about the content of the website. Lifting elements are used as directive elements, which can be either factual content elements or hyperlinks leading the visitor to other subsites. Formational elements consist of organisational, illustrative and background elements, which are used for organising the visual look of the websites and dividing and emphasising different sections and creating atmosphere. (Melvasalo 2005: 131-136.)

In this chapter I have introduced the framework of multimodal and genre-based view of critical discourse analysis and elaborated how to analyse the online corporate stories as multimodal discourses and as a genre. In the next chapter I will go through in more detail how I will proceed in the analysis and introduce the methods of analysis.

5 RESEARCH DESIGN

In this chapter I will go through the focus of the present study by introducing the research questions. In addition, I will introduce the data, the eight chosen companies, and explain how these particular companies were chosen. I will conclude the chapter by elaborating in more detail the methods and tools that will be used for the analysis of corporate online presence and the genre of corporate websites.

5.1 Research questions

The goal of the present study is to examine how language, images and layout create corporate online presence on eight Finnish exporting companies' English websites and explore what constitutes the genre of corporate websites. In other words, I will analyse the English used on these different corporate websites through critical discourse analysis and give insights on the genre of corporate websites both in terms of language and visual elements. I will examine the visual structures and compositions of the online corporate stories according to the approach of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006). I will start the analysis by focusing on the corporate stories themselves and then move on to describing and analysing the images and layout used on the company profiles.

The unit of analysis consists of the company profiles on eight Finnish exporting companies' corporate websites, that is, the “about us” pages that consist of the corporate stories. The analysis focuses not only on linguistic forms and meanings, but it is equally important to take into a consideration the social aspects of language use, that is, to consider the communicative purposes of the texts and the construction of identities and relationships. I will examine the corporate websites through the research questions presented below:

- 1) What linguistic features and visual structures are used in the creation of corporate online presence and what do these features and structures tell about the companies and their corporate online presences?

- 2) Are there any conventions or differences in the use of linguistic features and visual structures in the creation of corporate online presence between the different companies?

The first question is twofold focusing on the construction of corporate online presence and the projection of corporate identity. I am especially interested to explore what linguistic features and visual structures are used, which way and what these tell about the companies. The second question aims to reveal the underlying norms behind the language use and design of online corporate stories. Thus, the research questions fulfil both the descriptive and explanatory functions of discourse analysis (Bhatia 1993: 1). I will analyse the texts both in terms of the descriptive and explanatory functions simultaneously. In other words, I will give examples of the different ways of constructing corporate online presence and at the same time I will compare the texts to find out whether there are any conventions in the language use.

I hope that the present study will enlighten the ways linguistic features and visual structures are used on corporate websites and especially in the creation of corporate online presence. In addition, I believe the present study can give some insights on the corporate website designers what sort of genre they are working with. In addition, I wish to enlighten how corporate websites can be part of reputation management and what role linguistics plays in the management of company's reputation.

5.2 Data

As said above, the data consists of eight Finnish exporting companies' English websites. The companies were chosen from Kauppalehti's list of the most successful Finnish exporting companies. Kauppalehti classifies the companies in terms of KL-scores and according to the revenue companies have made. KL-scores are given based on a company's profitability, financial standing and liquidity. Moreover, revenue has to exceed 0.5 million Euros for a company to be listed and all the exporting activities and operations need to cover over 30 % of all the revenue. The list is based on the Finnish Trade Register and it is updated according to the balance sheets. (Kauppalehti 2011.)

The list chosen for the analysis was published on 4 April 2011 (see Appendix 1). The companies I chose were the top eight of the list on that date, however, as Bayer Schering Pharma was one of them, I decided to choose only firms that were micro, small or medium sized. The reason for leaving out Bayer Schering Pharma was that it is a large global corporation, whose English website is a not an English version of the Finnish Bayer, but instead introduces the global Bayer. Thus, it would not have been

compatible with the other companies' websites. Therefore, the eight chosen companies are Mastsystem, Endeas, Golla, Serres, Steerprop, Finlandia Vodka Worldwide, Kentek and Palidoro.

Table 1. The eight chosen companies

Company	Exporting	Size	The language choices on the websites
Endeas	100 %	micro	English
Finlandia	95,20 %	small	English, Russian, Czech, German
Golla	96,40 %	medium	English, Japanese, German, Spanish, Chinese, French, Russian
Kentek	75,10 %	medium	Finnish, English
Mastsystem	99,40 %	small	English
Palidoro	75,50 %	micro	Finnish, English
Serres	71,40 %	medium	Finnish, English, French
Steerprop	100 %	small	English

All the eight companies' corporate language is Finnish and also their headquarters are located in Finland. The proportion of exporting activities in April 2011 was very high for all of the companies as can be seen from Table 1 above. For example for both Endeas and Steerprop exporting functions covered all of the revenue. This is also reflected in the language choices on the companies' websites, as both Endeas and Steerprop only provide information in English, none in Finnish. Also Mastsystem has only provided information in English. It could be argued that Mastsystem is only following Cobham's lead, as Mastsystem is part of the international Cobham corporation, whose websites are also provided only in English. Indeed, there is a direct link between the websites of these two. On the other hand, the proportion of exporting in Mastsystem is fairly high, almost up to 100 %, and thus, this can also reflect the reason for choosing English as the only language choice.

In addition, there are three companies that have Finnish as one of the choices (Table 1). In these cases, English is the other language choice, except for Serres, which offers also French besides Finnish and English. It is important to notice here that although Kentek has also English as a language choice, the entire website is not provided in English, instead there is only one page with a short introduction of the company. The other companies have an English version for the entire website. Golla and Finlandia offer more language choices than the others, Golla 7 and Finlandia 4, however, neither of them have Finnish sites either. What is special about Finlandia's website is that when entering the site, one needs to define the country of origin from 225 choices. The country one chooses is represented in the upper column with the flag of the country, but only when choosing Russia, Germany or Czech Republic language is other than English.

The companies work in a variety of industries: Mastsystem works in the metal industry, Endeas works with manufacturing machines, Golla manufactures bags for portable electronics, Palidoro manufactures and installs ships' electric systems, Serres produces plastic products, Steerprop makes propulsors for maritime and offshore industries, Finlandia makes alcoholic beverages and Kentek produces products for heavy duty on-road and off-road vehicles. None of the companies have online sales, which makes the case even more interesting as they assume the visitors to go visit their website to get information, not to purchase anything.

5.3 Methods

The methods used for the text analysis are based on the framework of critical discourse analysis introduced by Fairclough (1992: 231-240). According to Fairclough (1992: 231-232) it is important to choose the most relevant issues for one particular analysis and focus only on those aspects, thus, I have pursued to include issues that would help in examining the construction of corporate online presence. The lexico-grammatical features that I will focus on in the analysis deal with the ways of reference, naming and addressing, the four different process types, voice, nominalisation, appraisal and modality. I will discuss each of these linguistic aspects in detail below. Moreover, I will examine the layout of the company profiles and analyse the images in terms of their content and what role these images play in the creation of corporate online presence. In all of these steps mentioned above, I will include the analysis of genre to find out

whether there are some underlying norms or rules that govern the way the companies construct their online presences. In addition, I will also explore the genre of corporate stories in terms of styles and text types.

The ways of reference, naming and addressing all relate to the representation of an identity. Indeed, it is very common to examine how things and situations are named or described and depicted (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 71-72). Furthermore, it is interesting to find out whether the companies address the audience and if they do, what linguistic choices are made when addressing the audience and why.

In addition, it is important to examine the process types in the clauses, that is, what sorts of process types the chosen verbs describe in the texts. This is done through transitivity, which according to Fairclough (1992: 178) "deals with the types of process which are coded in clauses, and the types of participant involved in them". The process types in English include relational, action, event and mental processes (Fairclough 1992: 180). Relational processes describe the relationship between participants, whereas action processes refer to an agent in a clause (Fairclough 1992: 178). Event processes refer to events and goals in the clauses, that is, they reveal the result of doing (Fairclough 1992: 180). Mental processes differ from the others in the sense that these processes are constructed through cognition, perception and affection (Fairclough 1992: 180). In other words, the verb in mental processes includes either a cognitive action such as 'knowing' or actions referring to senses or feelings (Fairclough 1992: 180).

Another important feature is the choice of voice. In English language verbs have two voices, they are either passive or active. The analysis of voice is central when examining the construction of corporate online presence especially as the choice of voice can have some underlying functions (Fairclough 1992: 181-183, 236). In addition to voice, I also want to pay attention to nominalisation, which refers to "the conversion of a clause into a nominal or noun" (Fairclough 1992: 27, 179). Nominalisation enables the writer to omit the agent or other participant, which usually is done in order to obscure the agent or because the agent is obvious (Fairclough 1992: 27, 182). Also passivisation, changing active clauses into passive clauses, has a similar effect in obscuring the agent (Fairclough 1992: 27).

Besides voice I am interested in the evaluative language that is used in the corporate stories, that is, whether there is appraisal in the texts. It is interesting to find out whether the companies appraise themselves using positive adjectives or referring to themselves as leaders of their industries. Also the reference to third-party evidence, offering information in numbers and emphasis on continuity have been proven to add companies' credibility (Pollach 2005: 294-294). Thus, I will also pay attention to the more subtle ways of appraisal. In addition, I want to explore the attitudes conveyed in the texts.

In addition to evaluative language, I will also examine the level of certainty or uncertainty in clauses, which is called modality (Fairclough 1992: 158-162). Bloor and Bloor (2007: 103-104) call this phenomenon hedging. However, these both terms refer to the use of modal auxiliary verbs (e.g. may, should) and modal adverbs (e.g. possibly) to express the certainty (Fairclough 1992: 159; Bloor and Bloor 2007: 103-104). What is especially interesting in terms of modality is to examine how modality relates to evaluative language and appraisals in particular. In other words, I am interested in finding out whether the level of appraisal is certain or uncertain and what sorts of modalities are used when describing the companies. There are two types of modalities, subjective and objective, the first describing the agent's modality and the second leaving the agent open (Fairclough 1992: 159). Fairclough (1992: 159) argues that "the use of objective modality often implies some form of power".

When considering the corporate online stories as a genre, I will pay attention to the conventions of language use between the companies, that is, I will compare the lexicogrammatical features examined at the first level of analysis to find out whether there are any similarities or differences between the language use when constructing corporate online presence. In addition to the lexicogrammatical features presented above, I am interested in the different styles and text types that are present in the texts. In order to examine the style, I will analyse the tenor and rhetorical mode. Tenor refers to the level of formality and informality and rhetorical mode refers to the purposes of the texts.

Rhetorical mode refers to not only the underlying purposes of the texts but also the way the information is given, that is, whether the texts describe something or inform the audience (Fairclough 1992: 127, 129). The analysis of tenor and rhetorical mode also relate to the analysis of text types. Indeed, I want to find out whether some text types are used more often than others. This can be done through analysing the texts at a

sentence level to define what sorts of clauses there are in the texts. There are all in all five different text types that can be distinguished: descriptive, narrative, instructive, argumentative and expository (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009: 101-102).

The analysis of visual features is divided into two, the analysis of images and the analysis of certain layout elements. I will use Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) approach in the analysis of visual structures and Melvasalo's (2005: 123-137) model for categorising the websites' layout elements. The analysis of visual features will be limited to the "about us" pages of the corporate websites. Some of the companies do not have any images on their company profile page and in those situations I will only analyse the layout.

In the analysis of images I want to pay attention to the participants of the images, what is their relation to the identity projected in the texts and what structures there are in the images. This is done through determining the participants depicted in the images, whether they are Actors, Goals, Carriers, Circumstances or Reacters. It is interesting to see what sorts of represented participants the images on corporate websites include and how they reflect the identities of their producers. After determining the participants I will consider the relations between the different participants and what sorts of underlying structures are present in the images. This is done through the analysis of vectors, which represent the action verbs in the images. Determining the participants and the analysis of vectors help in defining whether the structure is transactional, analytical, reactional or event. In addition, I am interested to find out what sorts of possessive attributes, symbolic attributives or symbolic suggestives the images include.

I also want to pay attention to the relation between the texts and images. Therefore, I will examine whether the images reinforce or complement the texts. I will also examine the structures of spatial composition, the layout, through the websites' information value and salience. Melvasalo's model for categorising the elements of the websites helps in analysing the certain elements. The elements that are of importance when considering the corporate visual identity are the background elements, illustrative elements and organisational elements. In addition, I believe it is important to consider what is the main element of the website. I want to find out how the corporate website designers use different elements in constructing a certain feel of the company and whether there are any similarities between the use of elements in different corporate websites.

6 THE COMPANY PROFILES

In this section I will introduce the corporate websites and explore the different approaches the companies have for the construction of online company profile. First, I will consider the companies' websites in terms of the five forms of online presence, a model introduced by Chaffey et al. (2009: 22-23). Secondly, I will go through the content of the websites and thirdly, I will introduce the sections which will be part of the text analysis.

6.1 Forms of online presence

Chaffey et al. (2009: 22-23) have defined five forms of online presence, which help in the categorisation of different types of corporate websites. When considering the eight chosen companies' websites according to the five forms, i.e. transactional e-commerce site, services-oriented relationship-building website, brand-building site, portal or media site and social network or community site, almost all of them fall into the services-oriented relationship-building (SORB) category. This means that the corporate websites chosen for the present study mostly focus on building and sustaining relationships with customers and business partners.

Endeas, Kentek, Mastsystem, Palidoro, Serres and Steerprop all have SORB websites as they are not selling anything on their websites, but focus more on providing information about their products and/or services and encouraging people to contact the company. Indeed, one needs to take into consideration the industries these companies are working in and their products as well as the customers, when considering the type of online presence the companies have. All of them work in the business-to-business sector and the products they produce are very industrial in nature and would be difficult to sell online. Therefore, it is understandable that their online presences focus more on building relationships and persuading visitors to offline buying.

Golla and Finlandia are slightly different than the other six companies and their websites, although they also do not sell products online. First of all, both companies produce products for consumers. In addition, at least Golla's products could be sold online. However, Golla does not have an online shop, but instead the company offers information about the products. Thus, also Golla has a SORB website. However, Golla's

website also relies on the brand and I believe their website could also be called a brand-building site. Indeed, Golla's website focuses on creating a certain image of the brand with colourful, young and trendy products. When comparing Golla's website to the websites of Endeas, Kentek, Mastsystem, Palidoro, Serres and Steerprop, it is clear that these six focus more on giving a professional impression of the company and also informing the visitors. Golla, on the other hand, aims at evoking feelings and creating both a story for the brand and giving the visitors an experience of the brand through the use of colours and images.

Finlandia's website is somewhat similar to Golla's website, as it seems that also Finlandia pursues to create an experience of the brand. Indeed, Finlandia's website can also be considered as a brand-building site as most of the information greatly depends on the brand and the image the company wants to pursue with its products. Interestingly, Finlandia does not have a company profile per se, instead, there are stories that tell about the products and their background. Like Golla also Finlandia uses colours and images in order to create an experience of the brand. I believe that leaving out the company profile reinforces even further the brand image on Finlandia's website. The stories focus more on the products than the company. Despite this I believe that the stories also project corporate identity and create corporate online presence.

The companies' websites also include elements from the other forms of online presences. Indeed, Chaffey et al. (2009: 22-23) claim that the five forms can be also simultaneously present on one website. Most of the websites have some elements of media sites as they share news releases and important topics that relate to the company. In fact, only Palidoro and Kentek do not share any news, although Kentek has actually provided news on its Finnish site. In addition, some of the companies have links to external websites. For example, Golla has a link to Facebook, whereas Finlandia also has Twitter and Youtube along with Facebook. Although the websites themselves are not social network sites, they still offer the visitors the opportunity to contact with others interested in the company through these links.

6.2 Website content

I have summarised the content of each corporate website in Table 2 below. Notice here that with content I mean the internal navigation links on the main page of the corporate website. As one can see all of the companies have an independent site for contact information except Kentek. However, Kentek also provides the contact information, but instead of devoting an entire page for that, Kentek has placed it in the lower horizontal bar of the website. As all of the companies provide their contact information on their websites, this implies that the companies consider it important to interact with the visitors. Indeed, interactivity was discovered as an important feature on corporate websites (Chaffey et al. 2009: 450; Esrock and Leichty 2000: 340; Heinze and Hu 2006: 320) and also the data of the present study supports this idea.

Table 2. Content of the websites

Company	Content
Endeas	Company, Products, Technology and Contact
Finlandia	Home, Drinks and Flavors, Stories, Media and Events
Golla	Home, Products, We are Golla, Retailers, Contact, Careers, News and Extranet
Kentek	In English
Mastsystem	Heinävaara, About Us, Products and Services, Contacts, News and Events
Palidoro	Gallery, Contact details, Company, Installations, Home, Service, Maintenance, Electrical, Engineering
Serres	About Serres, News and Info, Awards, Quality, Innovation, Working at Serres, Contact Us
Steerprop	Home, Company, Applications, Products, Service, News and Contact

As one can see from Table 2, the content of the corporate websites mostly focuses on products and/or services and as already pointed out, some of the companies also share news on their websites. Interestingly, Serres and Golla are the only ones referring to employees. Esrock and Leichty (2000: 333) found out in their study that prospective employees are one of the audiences of corporate websites, however, the data of the present study reflects this only to some extent. Mostly the information on corporate websites is about the company's products and/or services and of course about the company itself. Indeed, as one can see from Table 2 six of the eight companies have some sort of link identifying the company profile. On the websites of Endeas, Steerprop

and Palidoro the link to the company profile is named as "Company", whereas Golla and Serres have attached the company name into the link, "We are Golla" and "About Serres". Mastsystem's company profile is similar to Serres, however, instead of using the company name, Mastsystem has chosen to use the first person plural *us* when referring to the company.

When considering Finlandia and Kentek, their company profiles are not that easily identified. Indeed, neither of the two have a clear link to the company profile nor any other indication of a company profile. On Kentek's Finnish website there is a link to the English page, "In English", however, the link does not take the visitor to an English version of the Finnish company website. Instead, there is only one page with a brief introduction of the company. This is the English company profile of Kentek. When it comes to Finlandia, one link that stands out from all of the others is the link labelled "Stories". There are three separate stories behind the link, which describe how the products are made and what the products represent. It seems these texts have replaced the ordinary company profile and although their approach is different from the more straight forward company profiles and corporate stories, I believe that the stories also implicitly describe what sort of company Finlandia is.

In conclusion, the data of the present study presents similar results as the study of Esrock and Leichty (2000: 336) in which they found out that company profiles are an essential part of corporate websites. Indeed, all of the chosen companies have a company profile of some sort, even though in Kentek and Finlandia's case the company profile is not that easily identified. Interestingly, six out of eight of the company profiles could be immediately identified, which implies that these companies consider it to be important for the visitors to find the company profile. On the other hand, Kentek has also considered it to be important to have even a brief introduction of the company. In Kentek's case it is interesting to notice that the company profile is the only section the company has provided in English. When considering Finlandia's company profile, it does not seem as traditional as the other companies' profiles, however, it still shows that also Finlandia considers it essential to have some sort of story of the company and its products on the website.

6.3 Texts selected for analysis

Many of the companies do not only have one site or one text that constitutes the company profile. Therefore, I had to make some limitations when choosing the texts for the analysis. Some of the companies have divided their company profiles into different sections or even under several subsites. However, in cases where there are several sites devoted for the company profile, I chose the first site as it can be considered as the main page of the company profile. Finlandia, Serres and Steerprop's company profiles all consist of several sites and therefore, only the main sites of their company profiles are included in the analysis. In Endeas' case, the page with the corporate story includes also a separate section for the news. Obviously the news are not part of the corporate story and thus, it is not included in the analysis. The company profiles and the main headings of the corporate stories are listed in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Company profiles and corporate stories

Company	Company profile and the corporate story
Endeas	Endeas Oy - Background and present
Finlandia	Stories - Glacial Water
Golla	We are Golla - About Golla
Kentek	Kentek Oy
Mastsystem	About Us
Palidoro	Company - Palidoro
Serres	About Serres
Steerprop	Company - The Azimuth Propulsion Company

There are three companies that have a very simple structure for their company profile, those three are Golla, Mastsystem and Palidoro. For example Mastsystem's company profile is rather simple as it is clearly identified with the heading "About Us" and it only includes one page with a brief corporate story divided under three subheadings "Company", "Quality" and "Products". Thus, the scope of the analysis in Mastsystem's case is the "About Us" text with the three subsections. Similarly, Golla's company profile is only on one page, although it has two separate headings, "We are Golla for Generation Mobile" and the actual corporate story with the heading "About Golla". Like Mastsystem's corporate story, also Golla's corporate story is divided under three subheadings "Vision", "Mission" and "Brand heritage". In Golla's case the analysis concentrates on the "About Golla" text and its three subsections. Palidoro's company profile only includes the corporate story with one heading "Palidoro".

Endeas differs from the others as it does not actually have a separate entry or main page, instead the main page already includes the company profile and the news. In addition, the company profile does not have any subsites in itself. Endeas' corporate story's heading is "Background and present". This is the text that will be included in the text analysis. As said above the section with the news will be left out as it is not part of the corporate story. Steerprop's company profile has six separate subsites "Company", "Reliability", "Performance", "Flexibility", "Environment" and "References". However, I will only analyse the site with the heading "Company", which is the main site of the company profile.

Serres' company profile is called "About Serres" and it includes also a subsite for company's history, but I will only include the "About Serres" in the analysis as it is the main site of the company profile. Serres has divided the corporate story under three subheadings, "About Serres", "Hospital Business" and "Vieser". Kentek, on the other hand, is different from the others as the English version of the website includes only one page that briefly introduces the company with a heading "Kentek Oy" and a subheading "Business Concept". Both the excerpts are included in the analysis.

As said above, Finlandia is an exception as it does not actually have a company profile per se, instead the main page includes a link to "Stories", which includes three different stories "Glacial Water", "Midnight Sun" and "Six-Row Barley". I chose "Glacial Water" for the analysis because it is the first of the three stories and thus, it can be considered as the main story.

As one can see, already the surface level analysis revealed that there are various approaches for constructing a company profile and a corporate story. However, a deeper analysis is needed to understand what the corporate stories are as a genre and how corporate online presence is created in the texts through certain lexico-grammatical choices and through visual manifestations. Although the present study includes only eight corporate websites, this small sample already shows that it is essential for companies to have a some sort of company profile on their website.

7 CORPORATE ONLINE PRESENCE IN THE STORIES

In this section I will concentrate on the online corporate stories and analyse the stories through the lexico-grammatical features and in terms of text types in order to define the genre of online corporate stories. I will analyse the lexico-grammatical features in terms of their appearance on each corporate website to find out what sorts of similarities and/or differences there are in the way the companies construct their online presences. First, I will analyse the ways of reference, naming and addressing. Secondly, I will move on to transitivity, that is, I will analyse what process types are used and what the main participants in the texts are. In addition, I will consider the use of voice and whether the companies use nominalisations. Thirdly, I will analyse what sort of evaluative language is used and how companies convey attitudes through language. Lastly, I will consider the styles and text types of the online corporate stories.

7.1 Reference, naming and addressing

First of all, I will explore the ways companies refer to themselves or how the companies name themselves in their corporate stories. In addition, I will examine whether the companies address the readers of the texts and if they do, in what ways.

The data of the present study shows that the most common ways to name the company is to use either the company name or first person plural *we*, as Table 4 shows. Finlandia, Mastsystem and Palidoro only refer to the company in one way, whereas the others use at least two ways of reference. Indeed, Mastsystem is the only one using the company name, while Finlandia and Palidoro only use the first person plural. Endeas, Steerprop and Serres similarly use mostly only company name, however, they all also use the third person singular *it*. Kentek and Golla differ from the six, because they also use other ways of reference besides the company name and the first person plural. I will elaborate these in more detail later on.

Table 4. The ways companies refer to themselves

Company	Company name	We, us, our	It	Other
Endeas	x		x	
Finlandia		x		
Golla	x	x		x
Kentek	x	x		x
Mastsystem	x			
Palidoro		x		
Serres	x		x	
Steerprop	x		x	

I will first concentrate on the use of a company name. Examples 1-6 below show the most common way of using the company name. In all of these examples the company is depicted as the subject of the clause, that is, as an active participant either describing what the company has or what it is doing.

Example 1 (Mastsystem)

While Cobham Mast Systems has the industry's widest range of standard, commercial off the shelf (COTS) composite masts, antenna pointing devices, and vehicle mounting systems available for rapid delivery, Cobham Mast Systems is also able to provide a custom, fully integrated solution precisely tailored to the application.

Example 2 (Kentek)

KENTEK supplies internationally valued quality products for heavy duty on-road and off-road vehicles.

Example 3 (Golla)

Golla joined this revolution and started bringing fashion and colour into the world of electronics.

Example 4 (Endeas)

Endeas Oy continues its development work by concentrating on the refined analysis of the PV cells and modules during the standard IV curve measurement.

Example 5 (Serres)

In the domestic market Serres has its own sales, marketing and distribution and is a well-known supplier of hospital disposables in Finland.

Example 6 (Steerprop)

Steerprop Ltd. also offers lifetime service of its products to ensure that the propulsors stay as efficient and reliable as possible.

In example 1, one can see that Mastsystem refers to the company with its full name Cobham Mast Systems. This similar form is used throughout the text. Example 2 shows the only instance in which the company name is used to refer to the whole company in Kentek's corporate story. In the other instances the company name is always related to the subsidiary, for example KENTEK LATVIJA SIA. Interestingly, Kentek always uses capital letters when using the company name.

In example 3 Golla is positioned in the beginning of the sentence like Kentek in example 2. Thus, the emphasis is on what Golla did. Examples 4, 5 and 6 have also a similar structure as the other three, placing the company name in the beginning or near the beginning of the sentence. However, as one can see, in all of these examples the companies also use the third person singular *it*. Interestingly, the third person singular in all of these situations is related to the use of a company name and in all occasions it is the possessive form of the third person singular. In example 4, the use of the third person singular is related to the development work and the reason for using the possessive form is to emphasise that it is the company's development work. Instead in example 5 the use of a possessive form is rather reasonable because of the use of "own", which cannot be used without a possessive form of some sort, whereas in example 6 the company has wanted to emphasise that the lifetime service applies to the company's products, not any products per se.

As one can see from examples 1-6, the use of a company name can be rather straight forward. However, it is not only used as a subject. Instead, the companies also refer to their products through the use of a company name like Golla and Serres, *Serres products*, *Serres suction liner systems*, *Serres Suction System*, or *The Golla bags*, *Golla bags*. Mastsystem also refers to its products or systems through the use of a company name, however, using a possessive form such as, *Cobham Mast Systems' quality system* and *Cobham Mast Systems' telescopic masts*. Golla also uses the company name when referring to the history of the company, *The Golla story*, and also when referring to the brand as in example 7 below. Also Serres refers to its brand *Vieser* as one can see from example 8.

Example 7 (Golla)

Golla is the original brand that brought colors and prints to portable electronics.

Example 8 (Serres)

In the sanitary business the products designed and manufactured by Serres are sold under the brand Vieser. Vieser - smart with water, consists of a complete and high-quality range of products covering water trap, grating and floor drain systems with required accessories.

I will now move on to describe the use of the third person plural when referring to the company. First of all, there are two companies, Golla and Kentek, which also use the first person plural and its different forms in addition to the company name. As said above, Kentek uses the company name only once when referring to the whole company, whereas Golla uses the company name as often as the first person plural. However,

Golla uses the possessive form *our* more than *we*, which is actually used only once, as one can see from example 9. Example 10 shows the use of the first person plural and its possessive form in Kentek's corporate story. Notice in example 10 that the word supervise is misspelled as *superwise* in the actual story.

Example 9 (Golla)

Our vision is to be the leading consumer brand of fashionable carrying solutions for portable electronic around the world. We continuously set new trends with products that are unique, useful and universally appealing.

Example 10 (Kentek)

We especially appreciate quality, and superwise our working according to the criteria of the Finnish Quality Award.

In both examples 9 and 10 the first person plural refers to the whole company. However, it is not always clear who is included in this reference. In fact, in Finlandia and Palidoro's cases the first person plural does not necessarily only refer to the company or the whole company. Interestingly, both the companies use only the first person plural as a way of reference. However, through the use of a possessive form *our* and the object form *us* the companies can vary the *we* they are referring to as one can see from examples 11 and 12.

Example 11 (Finlandia)

One of nature's most precious gifts to us is pure glacial spring water, the water we use to make our vodka.

Example 12 (Palidoro)

We are working closely with engine supplier and ship owners. Our personnel work on board and on shipyards around the world and are on call around the clock.

In example 11 it is not that clear whether *us* used in the beginning of the sentence is referring to the same group as the *we* and *our* in the latter part of the sentence. The first person plural *we* and *our* used in the latter part of the sentence refer to the company, because it describes the group that makes the vodka. However, the most precious gift of nature can be a gift to any of us, not only for the company. Indeed, one can wonder whether the company considers the water to be a gift solely to the company or whether the first person plural includes also other people and groups apart from the company. The first person plural *we* is an inclusive pronoun, which enables the writer to include many different groups together. The *us* could for example refer to the Finnish people, because Finlandia is a Finnish company and thus, the glacial spring water is a gift to all of us who live in Finland. However, there is a problem with this interpretation as it does not come across in the text that Finlandia is a Finnish company. Nevertheless, I believe

example 11 points out the difficulty to pinpoint who are included in the *we* the writer is referring.

A similar type of issue is present in example 12, in which Palidoro first explains how they are working with their business partners, but then moves on to describe how Palidoro's *personnel work on board*. Interestingly, in this particular example the reference to *our personnel* in the second sentence makes one wonder who is the *we* owning the personnel and whether this *we* used in the first sentence includes the personnel or not. Indeed, there are interesting choices made in the types of references used in example 12. Instead of saying *we work on board*, the writer has wanted to emphasise that it is the personnel working on board and on shipyards who *are on call around the clock*, while the *we* is working with the suppliers and ship owners. This makes one wonder whether *we* referred to elsewhere in the text includes the same distinction.

Palidoro is not the only one referring to its personnel with the possessive form of the first person plural. In fact, a similar structure appears also in Kentek's corporate story as one can see from example 13, in which Kentek refers to its staff.

Example 13 (Kentek)

Our competent staff is all the time ready to serve you. We find solutions to your requirements, and take care of the logistics - from producers into your warehouse.

When comparing examples 12 and 13, they are similar in terms of the use of the first person plural. In Kentek's corporate story the staff has been separated from the *we* referred to elsewhere in the text. In the first sentence it is Kentek's staff who are *ready to serve*, but in the second sentence it is not that clear whether the *we* refers to the staff or the whole company. Also Steerprop refers to its personnel as one can see from example 14.

Example 14 (Steerprop)

Steerprop Ltd. was established in 2000 by personnel with decades of experience with azimuth propulsion to produce high quality azimuth propulsors with outstanding lifetime economy.

In example 14 the personnel refers to the founders of the company, who are not similarly separated from any other part of the company as in Palidoro and Kentek's case. In Steerprop's case the use of a company name is more straight-forward and it is clear

that it means the whole company, whereas when using the first person plural, one cannot always be sure which group the writer is referring to.

When comparing the use of a company and the first person plural, there is also another obvious difference. When using the first person plural the writer includes her/himself in the collective, whereas when using the company name, the writer is separated from the company. In other words, the first person plural is an inclusive personal pronoun and through the use of *we* the writer is part of the group s/he is writing about. This is a very important notion because it affects the way the reader sees the company. In fact, when using the first person plural one gets the feeling that the people inside the company have written the story. On the other hand, when using the company name, the story is told from a third party perspective, in which the writer is an observer of the company, telling objectively what the company does and what it is about.

The difference between the use of a company name and the first person plural does not only entail the inclusiveness of the first person plural, but instead it also affects the tone of the text. Indeed, the use of the first person plural makes the tone slightly more informal, whereas the use of a company name makes the tone more official. Thus, this is a matter of tenor. The use of personal pronouns makes the text more personal, whereas the use of a company name makes it more distant and impersonal. In conclusion, one might consider Mastsystem, Endeas, Serres and Steerprop to have a more formal approach in the construction of their online presences and the others having a more personal and informal approach.

Golla and Kentek also use other ways of references than only the company name and the first person plural. As one can see from example 15, Kentek not only mentions its managing director but also gives his name. This is a matter of humanising the company. Interestingly, the other companies do not give the names of their managing directors or any other names for that matter. Therefore, Kentek is the only one trying to humanise the company in the text. In addition, the names of Kentek's subsidiaries are listed in the company profile. Notice here that Kentek uses the term daughter companies, which is a direct translation from Finnish to English and as such it is not actually an idiomatic expression. In addition, Lithuania's capital city is misspelled, *Vilniaus*, when the correct spelling is Vilnius.

Example 15 (Kentek)

Managing Director: Mr Markku Blomqvist. Daughter companies: KENTEK EESTI OÜ in Tallinn, KENTEK LATVIJA SIA in Riga, UAB KENTEK LIETUVA in Vilnius, ZAO KENTEK in St.Petersburg and in Moscow.

Golla's corporate story is different from all of the others, because instead of only referring to the collective of the company, the writer also refers the founders of the company. As one can see from example 16, Golla uses various references other than the company name or the first person plural, when referring to the company's founders.

Example 16 (Golla) [emphasis added]

Two ambitious brothers began designing and crafting furniture out of metal in *their* father's old shed. *They* soon incorporated *their* strong sense of design by creating small functional items from rubber and plastic, which were sold around the world and even appeared in the MoMa gift shop in New York. By the turn of the millennium, a new era began when *one of the brothers* saw a market in a fashionable accessories for portable electronic devices, just as the mobile revolution emerged.

In Golla's story the company's founders are referred to as *two brothers* and *they*. As the third person plural is not similarly inclusive like the first person plural, the writer is not included in the reference. Interestingly, the writer uses the non-inclusive ways of references in the "About Golla", but in the other parts of the company profile the writer uses the first person plural. Therefore, in the "About Golla" the writer is only telling the story, but in the three extracts through the use of the first person plural *we* the writer is also included in the story. This seems to imply that the "About Golla" is written by someone outside the company, or by someone who was not part of the company in its early days, when the other parts of the story are told by someone inside the company, who is considered as part of the collective *we*.

I will now move on to explore the different ways the companies use to address the readers. First of all, there are only two companies, Golla and Kentek, which use the direct way of reference, that is, the second person singular/plural *you* as one can see from example 13 above and examples 17, 18 and 19 below. Using the second person singular is a very dynamic way of addressing and it immediately connects the reader to the text. In fact, Fairclough (1992: 115) argues that "[d]irect address is conventionally used as a marker of informality in modern advertising".

Example 17 (Golla)

Our mission is to make technology part of your lifestyle and to provide the most stylish accessories to fit it.

Example 18 (Kentek)

We offer you tailor-made total deliveries, stock the goods and make shipments just on time.

Example 19 (Kentek)

Do not hesitate to contact us.

In example 17 the writer uses the second person singular/plural to address the reader. The writer could have chosen to refer to Golla's customers, but instead, the writer chose to assume that the reader could be a potential customer. The same structure is present in examples 13 and 18. However, example 19 is different from the others, as it includes the imperative *do not hesitate*. Here the addressing is implicit, but the agent of the action is *you*. When directly addressing the reader, the writer invites the reader into an interaction. Especially in Kentek's case, the imperative for the reader to contact the company can be regarded as a plea to interact with the company. Through the use of a direct address the reader is expected to be part of the intended or targeted audiences of the text.

Most of the companies do not directly address the reader as in examples 17-19, instead they address and refer to the customers in more implicit ways. For example, in Serres' corporate story the writer addresses a certain kind of company (example 20).

Example 20 (Serres)

For a company interested in introducing new products on the Finnish hospital market, particularly for operating rooms and intensive care units, Serres can offer an established and specialised organisation to reach the customers.

As one can see from example 20, the reader is not expected to be part of a company defined in the extract. Thus, the addressing is more implicit than when using the second person singular/plural *you* as it does not include the reader in the reference. Also the other companies use this sort of implicit style of addressing as one can see from examples 21-26.

Example 21 (Steerprop)

It is not enough for Steerprop Ltd. to deliver a single shipment of quality azimuth propulsors to its clients.

Example 22 (Endeas)

The first Quicksun simulators were developed and delivered to in-house clients in a national energy company in Finland.

Example 23 (Finlandia)

Out of respect for nature, our vodka and our vodka drinkers, we go to great lengths to protect our glacial spring, promising that the water we use today is as pure as it was thousands of years ago.

Example 24 (Golla)

Today, the success story continues and Golla has attracted more than 40 million users of Generation Mobile worldwide.

Example 25 (Serres)

Success in the highly competitive export markets is largely based on a solid network of reliable and carefully selected and trained partners distributing Serres products to the end-users.

Example 26 (Kentek)

Our daughter companies in the Baltics and in Russia offer reliable service also for Finnish off- and on- road contractors and manufacturers.

In examples 21 and 22 Steerprop and Endeas refer to their *clients*, whereas in examples 23-26 the customers are referred to as *our vodka drinkers, users of Generation Mobile* and *the end-users, Finnish off- and on-road contractors and manufacturers*. Notice also that in example 23 the verb *promising* does not have an object, which makes one wonder to whom the company makes the promise. Indeed, one could consider that the omitted object is the second person singular/plural *you*. Nevertheless, it is an implicit way of addressing as the object is omitted. Palidoro goes even further by naming the clients as one can see from example 27 below.

Example 27 (Palidoro)

We have been working for Wärtsilä Turku Shipyard and for example Kvaerner, Mitsubishi, Alstom and Fincantieri yards.

The companies refer to also groups other than the customers and clients. As one can see from example 25 above, Serres also refers to its business partners. In addition, Palidoro refers to its business partners with *engine suppliers and ship owners* and Endeas with *partners and distributors*. Unlike all the other companies, Finlandia refers to its competitors (example 28).

Example 28 (Finlandia)

Where others must filter water several times before it's pure enough, here, nature itself has given use the perfect filter: a glacial moraine that was created in the last Ice Age over 10,000 years ago.

In Finlandia's story the reference to the competitors reinforces the image of the superiority of the water Finlandia uses to make their vodka. I believe this sort of reference to competitors is not very common in corporate stories, at least when considering the data of the present study and the previous studies on corporate websites (see chapter 3.4 pages 25-29).

In conclusion, the most common way to refer to the company is to use the company name and the second most common is to use the first person plural *we*. Sometimes these two can also be used simultaneously as in Golla and Kentek's case. In addition, the third person singular *it* is used only with the company name. The companies also rarely refer

to anyone of the company's personnel by name, Kentek being the only exception. However, three of the companies do recognise their personnel in their stories. When considering the addressing of the reader, the companies use more implicit ways to refer to the target audiences rather than using the direct address *you*. In fact, there were only two companies, Golla and Kentek, who use the direct address. This implies that the companies rarely want to directly address the reader or engage the reader in the text and also that the companies still consider the corporate stories to be more formal than informal types of texts.

7.2 Transitivity

In this section I will focus on the transitivity of the online corporate stories. When examining the transitivity I will explore what process types are used and what are the main participants in the stories. In addition, I will consider whether the companies use more passive or active voice and whether there are any nominalisations. Moreover, I will pay attention to the level of certainty, that is, whether the companies express any modality.

I have summarised the number of process types used in each corporate story in Table 5 below. Notice that I have divided the action processes into directed action active and passive and non-directed action processes. When considering the corporate stories as a whole, the most used process type is the action process. In fact, seven out of eight companies mostly use action processes in their texts when the second most used process type is the relational process. Palidoro is the only one having more relational processes than action processes. The companies using mostly action processes favour also the directed action processes which are in active voice. The only exception is Endeas, which has more passive than active directed action processes. Nevertheless, the passive voice is also fairly often used by Endeas and Mastsystem. When considering Golla's corporate story, it is interesting to notice that the company also uses the event processes almost the same amount as the relational processes. In addition, Golla is the only one having also one mental process in the text. Thus, according to the present study the mental processes are not typically used in online corporate stories.

Table 5. Process types in the online corporate stories

Company	Relational	Directed action (active)	Directed action (passive)	Non-directed action	Event	Mental
Endeas	2	10	12	1		
Finlandia	7	13	1	1	1	
Golla	5	16	3		7	1
Kentek	1	12				
Mastsystem	5	7	5			
Palidoro	6	1	1	2		
Serres	11	15	5			
Steerprop	2	4	2			
Total	39	79	27	3	8	1

This brief preview has only touched the surface of the processes in the online corporate stories. In order to understand how these processes create a certain kind of corporate online presence, I also need to pay attention to the participants in the clauses. I will now move on to more explicit analysis of the different processes and explore what is their role in the creation of corporate online presence. When examining the process types and the participants of the clauses, I found out that some of the companies use quite similar ways to construct their identities and thus, I have categorised some of the companies into groups. As Golla is quite unique in its approach, I will analyse Golla's corporate story after the other companies. The other seven companies I have divided into two groups, Finlandia, Mastsystem, Endeas and Serres being in the first group, and Kentek, Palidoro and Steerprop being in the second group.

What is common with the corporate stories of Finlandia, Mastsystem, Endeas and Serres is that they all use mostly directed action processes, but the company is rarely depicted as acting upon a goal in these processes. In fact, the products or the systems used to make the products have a bigger role in the texts than the companies. In addition, the second most used process type is the relational process, which is usually used when describing the products or the systems, not the company. When considering the nominalisations in the texts, Finlandia has only a couple of nominalisations, whereas the others have fairly many. Indeed, Finlandia is slightly different than the other three companies, but it is also surprisingly similar when considering the process types and the

company's role in the text. Example 29 below shows the different processes there are in Finlandia's story.

Example 29 (Finlandia)

One of nature's most precious gifts to us is pure glacial spring water, the water we use to make our vodka. This water is in such pristine condition, it would be a shame to tamper with it in the slightest way.

So instead of trying to improve it, we respect it, admire it, and protect it.

Where others must filter water several times before it's pure enough, here, nature itself has given us the perfect filter: a glacial moraine that was created in the last Ice Age over 10,000 years ago.

Out of respect for nature, our vodka, and our vodka drinkers, we go to great lengths to protect our glacial spring, promising that the water we use today is as pure as it was thousands of years ago.

As one can see from example 29, in Finlandia's corporate story the emphasis is more on the water than on the company itself. When considering for example the phrase *the water we use*, which is repeated twice in the text, the company is the agent of the phrase, but instead of acting upon goal, the action is turned into a noun phrase and *we use* is the attribute of water. Indeed, when comparing the clauses *the water we use* and *others must filter water several times*, it is clear that the writer wants to make a distinction between the water Finlandia uses and the one its competitors used. Notice here also the use of the modal auxiliary verb *must*. Besides the use of *must* and *would* in the second sentence of example 29, there are no other instances in which modality is expressed in Finlandia's corporate story.

It is also interesting to notice that the word *water* is either an object or an agent in almost every sentence in Finlandia's corporate story. In addition, in the occasions where the company is acting upon a goal, it is always related to the water, for example, *we respect it, admire it and protect it* or *we go to great lengths to protect our glacial spring*. This implies that the water is actually in a more important role than the company. Also the relational processes focus on the water describing its *pristine condition* or how pure it is. As the water in the story represents the most important ingredient of the product, it also represents the product and emphasises the importance of product quality. In addition, Finlandia has one event process, *water trickles*, which is actually not part of the story per se, but actually a sub-heading or a caption.

When comparing Finlandia's corporate story to that of Mastsystem, one can recognise similar structures in which the system or the product is given more emphasis than the

company, as one can see from examples 30 and 31. In both examples the process type is directed action process and the agent is either the system or the product.

Example 30 (Mastsystem)

Cobham Mast Systems' quality system fulfils the requirements of ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and AQAP 2110 standards.

Example 31 (Mastsystem)

Masts exceed the military's requirements for maintainability and require very little service.

As one can see from example 30, Mastsystem uses the company name in a genitive form to form a noun phrase *Cobham Mast Systems' quality system*. This is actually very common for Mastsystem. In addition to example 30, there are couple of other occasions in which a similar structure is used, *Cobham Mast Systems' know-how and understanding of customers' needs and requirements* and *Cobham Mast Systems' telescopic masts*. Due to the use of a genitive form, the company name is fairly often mentioned in Mastsystem's corporate story. In addition, all of the instances in which the genitive is used in the beginning of the sentence enable the writer to emphasise the company's ownership. However, the company is the agent in only one directed action process as one can see from example 32.

Example 32 (Mastsystem)

Cobham Mast Systems manufactures seven main product lines: TM-, TR-, EX-, EXL- and EXB-masts, telescopic lifting poles and tripods including accessories for deployment.

Also Serres uses its company name when referring to its products, *Serres products*, and as Mastsystem, also Serres is rarely used as an agent. In fact, in Serres' corporate story the passive voice is fairly often used in directed action clauses as in examples 33 and 34 below. Notice here that the emphasis is mostly on the company's products or systems.

Example 33 (Serres)

Serres Oy was established in 1973 and from the beginning success has been based on combining the expertise in plastics design and manufacturing with customer needs. Serres products are known for their innovativeness and high quality, but a very important success factor is also the extensive distributor and partner network, both in Finland and abroad.

The use of a passive voice allows the omission of an agent and thus, the emphasis is on the object, as in example 33 the emphasis is on the company and its products. Interestingly, the passive form is usually used when referring to the quality or use of the product as in examples 34, 35 and 36.

Example 34 (Serres)

Serres suction liner systems have been used in hospitals for the collection and disposal of fluids for more than two decades already, but the new innovative Serres Suction System that was introduced in 2000 has enabled Serres to become the largest European manufacturer of suction bags.

Example 35 (Mastsystem)

The carbon and glass fiber composite masts have been proven to meet MIL-STD 810 F requirements to function in all extremes of environmental conditions. Masts are also tested against lightning strikes.

Example 36 (Mastsystem)

Cobham Mast Systems' telescopic masts have been used extensively around the world and have proven to be fully operational after long exposure to sand, dust, ice or snow.

As one can see from examples 34 and 36 the writer has not identified the ones using *Serres suction liner systems* or *Cobham Mast Systems' telescopic masts*. Indeed, the use of a passive voice allows the writer to leave out the agent especially when it is difficult to identify. In addition, in example 34 the nominalisations *collection* and *disposal* reinforce even further the facelessness of the ones using the suction liner systems, as the nominalisations have enabled the writer to omit the agent also from these processes. In example 35 the passive voice enables the writer to omit who has proved the products to meet the requirements. Moreover, when using the passive voice, the writer can introduce claims as facts and leave out who actually proved the claim to be true. Also in Endeas' corporate story there are occasions in which it is difficult to identify the agent and thus, the writer has used the passive form as in example 37.

Example 37 (Endeas)

The proprietary QuickSun measurement technology was also applied for the testing of single crystalline silicon cells. A unique option called IDCAM was developed in 2003 and it enabled the evaluation of the physically meaningful equivalent circuit parameters in a production friendly and reliable way.

When examining the first sentence in example 37, one can see that the writer does not reveal who applied the technology. This pursues an image of customers as a faceless group of people, who cannot be identified. Moreover, the nominalisation, *testing*, reinforces the unidentified group of people applying and using the technology. In the second sentence the omitted agent is the company, thus, the use of a passive form and omission of an agent does not always mean that the agent is unidentified. However, the nominalisation, *evaluation*, in the second sentence also omits the agent and thus, reinforces the image of the faceless users of the products.

In Serres' corporate story there are also occasions in which the company is also referred to as the agent as in example 38 below, however, when considering the position of the

company in the sentence, it is usually in the middle. Indeed, if it was in the beginning, it would have had a higher value, but as it is positioned in the middle, it loses some of its importance.

Example 38 (Serres)

For a company interested in introducing new products on the Finnish hospital market, particularly for operating rooms and intensive care units, Serres can offer an established and specialised organisation to reach the customers.

In addition, notice the use modal verb *can* in example 38. Interestingly, the writer has wanted to imply that there is a possibility that *Serres can offer an established and specialised organisation to reach the customers*, but that it is not entirely sure that will happen. Indeed, I believe the modality is chosen because the writer cannot make a promise to the interested company that they would actually reach the customers with Serres' help, but that Serres can help in this process. When examining closer example 38, one can see that the company referred to in the first clause gets more value in the sentence than Serres. Indeed, the writer has positioned the object of the action in the beginning of the sentence in order to give it more emphasis. Fairclough (1992: 184) calls this type of process foregrounding. Nevertheless, in Serres story there is more active voice than passive, but the company itself is not depicted as very active. Endeas' story, on the other hand, has more passive voice than active as one can see from example 39.

Example 39 (Endeas)

The first Quicksun simulators were developed and delivered to in-house clients in a national energy company in Finland. In 1995 the simulator was exhibited publicly and immediately a US company ordered one system. This success encouraged for further development and marketing and the system was regularly exhibited in the following PV conferences. By the year 2000 more than 10 QuickSun solar simulators had been delivered and the product started to establish itself in the global market.

In example 39 most of the sentences are in passive voice. In addition, there are no references to the company. Indeed, in Endeas' corporate story the company is the agent of the clause only twice. As in the corporate stories of Finlandia, Mastsystem and Serres, also in Endeas' corporate story the focus is more on the products. On the other hand, when considering the agent omitted through the use of a passive voice in example 39, it is usually the company. Nevertheless, this implies that the products are in a more important role, while the company is left in the background.

As said, the relational processes are the second most commonly used processes in the corporate stories of Finlandia, Mastsystem, Endeas and Serres. I already discussed the relational processes in Finlandia's corporate story, which are usually used when describing the water. Indeed, the several relational processes describing the water as pure are used by the writer to pursue an image of the vodka being pure as well, because it is made of the pure water. However, there are no relational processes related to the company. Indeed, when considering whether Finlandia's corporate story projects the company's identity, one can see that it does not actually reveal that much about the company. On the other hand, when considering the relational processes of Mastsystem and Serres, it is interesting to notice that most of the relational processes in their texts concentrate on describing what the company is alike or what it has as one can see from examples 40 and 41.

Example 40 (Mastsystem)

While Cobham Mast Systems has the industry's widest range of standard, commercial off the shelf (COTS) composite masts, antenna pointing devices, and vehicle mounting systems available for rapid delivery, Cobham Mast Systems is also able to provide a custom, fully integrated solution precisely tailored to the application.

Example 41 (Serres)

Serres Oy is a Finnish family-owned company with a strong international market position in two product lines, suction liner systems for hospitals and drainage systems for buildings.

Indeed, when considering examples 40 and 41, both examples describe the company and what it does. Although neither one of the companies depict themselves as active participants, they do tell something about themselves. In addition, both of the companies also use the company name fairly often in relation to the products. Thus, it seems that Mastsystem and Serres pursue to give a certain kind of coherent picture of themselves and to identify their products and systems. On the other hand, when considering the products, the companies do not identify the ones using the products. Indeed, the use of a passive voice obscures the agent and enables the writer to omit it altogether.

In Endeas' corporate story the directed action processes play a bigger role than the relational processes. In fact, there are only two relational processes both of which refer to the products. Indeed, the lack of references to the company is very typical for Endeas' corporate story, which in turn gives space for the introduction of the products. The relational processes also reinforce the products' role.

As said above, Finlandia has only one nominalisation, *respect for nature*, which one could consider to be sort of a slogan for the company. Due to nominalisation one cannot identify the one respecting the nature, however, I believe it is implied that the company has respect for nature. On the other hand, as the nominalisation does not identify the agent, it is also possible that it has further social goals. For example, one could consider that when choosing Finlandia's products the customer is also having respect for nature.

The stories of Mastsystem, Endeas and Serres include several nominalisations. In Mastsystem's corporate story the nominalisations often relate to the products and their functions such as *antenna pointing devices*, *vehicle mounting systems* or *telescopic lifting poles*. Also Serres and Endeas have similar nominalisations. For example in Serres' corporate story there are *plastic disposable products* and *waste collection system* and in Endeas' corporate story there is *The proprietary QuickSun measurement technology*. On the other hand, the nominalisations refer to the processes of product development or the use of the products as one can see from examples 42, 43, 44 and 45.

Example 42 (Endeas)

This success encouraged for further development and marketing and the system was regularly exhibited in the following PV conferences.

Example 43 (Endeas)

This product enables the testing of PV modules with face down position.

Example 44 (Mastsystem)

Every detail is designed for reliability and quick and safe operation. Masts exceed the military's requirements for maintainability and require very little service.

Example 45 (Serres)

Serres Oy was established in 1973 and from the beginning success has been based on combining the expertise in plastics design and manufacturing with customer needs.

In examples 42 and 43 the nominalisations are *development*, *marketing* and *testing*. Especially in the latter example the nominalisations play an important role, because when omitting the agent from *testing of PV modules*, the writer implies that this can be done by anybody. Therefore, anyone can use the company's products. In example 44 there are three nominalisations *operation*, *maintainability* and *service*, which all refer to the use of the product. In example 45 the nominalisation *plastics design* and *manufacturing* are used to refer to the underlying processes inside the company and to emphasise that these processes are targeted to satisfy customer needs.

When comparing the corporate stories of Kentek, Palidoro and Steerprop to the stories of Finlandia, Mastsystem, Endeas and Serres one obvious difference is that in the stories of Kentek, Palidoro and Steerprop the companies usually take the role of an agent in the clauses. Kentek and Steerprop also have more directed action processes than relational processes, like Finlandia, Mastsystem, Endeas and Serres do, however, Palidoro has more relational processes than action processes. Indeed, Palidoro is different from the other companies as Palidoro's corporate story focuses more on describing what the company, or actually the collective *we* is alike as one can see from example 46. Notice here that in the third sentence the preposition *in* is missing in the actual story.

Example 46 (Palidoro)

We have a long experience from shipbuilding and ship's electrical work. We have been working for Wärtsilä Turku Shipyard and for example Kvaerner, Mitsubishi, Alstom and Fincantieri yards.

We are specialized ship's electrical systems; installation, service, maintenance, engineering and manufacturing electrical cabinets. Our superior knowledge is on ship's main and auxiliary engines and its accessory equipment.

Our office is located in the city centre, near the railway station and harbour. Still the deliveries and pick-ups can be handled with a heavy transport because we have a big space for parking.

We are working closely with engine supplier and ship owners. Our personnel work on board and on shipyards around the world and are on call around the clock.

A closer examination of example 46 reveals that there is actually one directed action process, *we have been working for*, and two non-directed action processes in which the company or its personnel is the agent and four relational processes, which describe either the company or the personnel. The non-directed action processes are the ones using the verb *work*, which is an intransitive verb, *we are working* and *our personnel work*. Also the relational processes describing the company's *superior knowledge* can be considered to depict the company as an active participant. Thus, the story clearly wants to project the company as an active participant.

When considering the choices made in the voice, it is interesting to notice that the writer uses mostly active voice. In fact, there is only one process in passive voice, *can be handled*. Interestingly, the writer has chosen to describe *the deliveries and pick-ups*, which are actually nominalisations, in passive voice. The use of passive voice and the nominalisations allow the writer to omit the agent, thus, leaving it open who handles the deliveries and pick-ups. I already discussed the similar phenomenon with the other companies as it seems that some of them omit the agent when the referring to their customers. The same issue is present in Palidoro's corporate story as it would be the

customers who would do the deliveries and pick-ups. In addition, the use of a modal verb *can* in this situation emphasises that the customers have a possibility to handle the deliveries *with a heavy transport*, but that it is not necessary.

Steerprop and Kentek are different from Palidoro, as they both have mostly used the directed action processes. Interestingly, Kentek's corporate story is not that different from Palidoro's, because the company is usually referred to in the beginning of the sentence, however, Kentek's story includes fewer relational processes than Palidoro's story as one can see from example 47.

Example 47 (Kentek)

KENTEK supplies internationally valued quality products for heavy duty on-road and off-road vehicles.

We especially appreciate quality, and superwise our working according to the criteria of the Finnish Quality Award.

Our competent staff is all the time ready to serve you. We find solutions to your requirements, and take care of the logistics - from producers into your warehouse.

We offer you tailor-made total deliveries, stock the goods and make shipments just on time.

Our daughter companies in the Baltics and in Russia offer reliable service also for Finnish off- and on- road contractors and manufacturers.

Do not hesitate to contact us.

In Kentek's corporate story the company is depicted as a very active participant. In fact, the company is almost always the agent in the directed action processes, such as *KENTEK supplies*, *We especially appreciate*, *we find* and *we offer*. Interestingly, in one occasion the company is the object, *Do not hesitate to contact us*, in which *you* is the implicit agent. Interestingly, Kentek is the only using an imperative form. When considering the nominalisations in Kentek's corporate story, unlike in Palidoro's corporate story, there are not actually that many nominalisations. However, there is one interesting nominalisation, *valued*, which has enabled the writer to omit the agent, the one who values Kentek's products. The other companies also use the similar tactic when giving an evaluation of their products, but they usually do it through the use of a passive voice, as one can see from examples 48, 49 and 50.

Example 48 (Serres)

Serres products are known for their innovativeness and high quality--.

Example 49 (Mastsystem)

Cobham Mast Systems' telescopic masts have been used extensively around the world and have proven to be fully operational after long exposure to sand, dust, ice or snow.

Example 50 (Golla)

Golla bags are known worldwide for their array of colours, stylish prints and good quality.

Steerprop is also depicted as a fairly active participant in its corporate story. Although the story includes only four sentences of which two are actually in a passive voice, closer examination reveals that mostly the agent in the clauses is the company (see example 51 below).

Example 51 (Steerprop)

Steerprop Ltd. was established in 2000 by personnel with decades of experience with azimuth propulsion to produce high quality azimuth propulsors with outstanding lifetime economy.

It is not enough for Steerprop Ltd. to deliver a single shipment of quality azimuth propulsors to its clients. Steerprop Ltd. also offers lifetime service of its products to ensure that the propulsors stay as efficient and reliable as possible.

Steerprop Ltd. has been certified according to the ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and the OHSAS 18001 standards.

As one can see from example 51, Steerprop is the agent in the directed action processes *to produce*, *to deliver*, *offers* and *to ensure*. In the first sentence the company is the object as well as the agent, because the agent of the process *to produce* is Steerprop. Interestingly, the second sentence in example 51 starts with a relational process in which *it* refers to the rest of the sentence *to deliver a single shipment of quality azimuth propulsors to its clients*. In this sentence Steerprop is a subject complement, which is linked to the subject *it*. In other words, the company is not in fact the agent of the clause. However, Steerprop is the agent semantically as the clause *it is not enough* describes the company's state of mind. In the third sentence in example 51 one can see that Steerprop is referred to as the agent twice, first with the action process *offers* and secondly with *to ensure*. It is also interesting to notice that Steerprop is the only one of the companies which uses negative form. I believe that in this particular occasion negative form reinforces that the company wants to do more than only deliver the products. Using the negative form is stronger than merely saying Steerprop pursues to deliver.

When considering the use of voice in Steerprop's story, there are both passive and active clauses. Indeed, two of the clauses are in a passive voice and two are in an active voice. In addition, in one of the passive directed action process the agent is omitted and in the other it is indicated, *by personnel* as one can see from example 51 above. The omission of an agent in the clause *Steerprop Ltd. has been certified* allows the writer not to

mention the ones giving out the certificates. In fact, I believe this implies that it is more important to have the certificates than to recognise the one admitting them.

In Golla's corporate story, the company is the agent of the clause in most occasions as one can see from example 52 below. Notice here that *the two brothers* can also be considered to refer to the company. Indeed, it is interesting to notice that as the story of Golla evolves, the writer moves from telling a story about the two brothers to referring to the company by name or by the first person plural.

Example 52 (Golla)

The Golla story started in the early 90's in a small Finnish town. Two ambitious brothers began designing and crafting furniture out of metal in their father's old shed. They soon incorporated their strong sense of design by creating small functional items from rubber and plastic, which were sold around the world and even appeared in the MoMa gift shop in New York. By the turn of the millennium, a new era began when one of the brothers saw a market in a fashionable accessories for portable electronic devices, just as the mobile revolution emerged. Golla joined this revolution and started bringing fashion and colour into the world of electronics. The Golla bags brought something new and unique with fresh styles and prints. Throughout the years, the collection of bags kept growing and has been introduced to new markets all around the globe. Today the success story continues and Golla has attracted more than 40 million users of Generation Mobile worldwide.

Golla is the only one having all four types of processes in the text, although there is only one mental process, *saw*. Nevertheless, the most used process type is the action process and the secondly most used is the relational process. However, Golla also has many event processes (see Table 4 above). Besides Golla, Finlandia is the only one having event processes. The event processes in Golla's story usually describe the processes of abstract concepts such as *The Golla story started*, *a new era began*, *mobile revolution emerged*, *the success story continues* and *the market of electronics is developing*. The event clauses describe events that the company does not have any part in, in fact, they focus on describing the ever-changing environment with which the company has to deal with on a daily basis. When considering the industry Golla is working in, it is understandable that the coping with change is raised in the story. Indeed, the industry of electronics is one of the fastest developing industries. Interestingly, the writer has also emphasised how the company survives with these changes through directed action processes such as *Golla joined this revolution* or *by staying innovative*, *Golla will help shape the products and trends of the future*.

When considering the company's role, whether active or passive, surprisingly Golla is depicted as a fairly active participant. This is especially the case in the three subsections of “Vision”, “Mission” and “Brand heritage” as one can see from examples 53 and 54.

Example 53 (Golla)

Our vision is to be the leading consumer brand of fashionable carrying solutions for portable electronics around the world. We continuously set new trends with products that are unique, useful and universally appealing.

Example 54 (Golla)

By staying innovative, Golla will help shape the products and trends of the future.

In example 53 the second clause clearly includes a directed action process *we* as an agent and *set new trends* as the process. Also in example 54 the process is directed action process with *Golla* as the agent and *will help shape* as the process. Notice here the use of a modal verb *will*, which is used to describe the possibility of shaping *the products and trend of future*. Nevertheless, in example 53 the first clause is different as it includes two relational processes *our vision is* and *to be*. Here both the relational processes describe the company one way or another, but interestingly the company is only referred to in the beginning with the possessive form of first person plural *our*. The similar structure is actually used twice in the text, the other one being *Our mission is to make*. When considering both of these clauses, it is important to pay attention to the second processes, *to be* and *to make*. In fact, both of these processes focus on the company, although it is implicitly implied. In the first one the process is relational and in the second one directed action process. This type of structure allows the writer to keep the emphasis on what the company does without referring to the company too excessively.

Golla's corporate story also emphasises the products and the industry in which the company is working for example referring to *The market of electronics*. In addition, Golla's corporate story includes mostly action and relational process types, and most of the time the voice is active. The passive directed action processes are mostly agentless, although in most of them the agent omitted is the company. There is one exception which was already introduced above (see example 50 above, page 76). Indeed, in example 50 the agent omitted is the customers or the ones using the products.

When considering the nominalisations in Golla's corporate story, there are not that many occasions in which they are used. In fact, one nominalisation which relates to the

industry is repeated several times, *portable electronics*. Another nominalisation very similar to the *portable electronics* is the *carrying solutions*, which refers to the products. Furthermore, it is very typical in Golla's corporate story to concretise abstract concepts as if they were tangible objects such as the following examples: *bringing fashion and colour* and *brought colors and prints* (notice here that Golla uses two types of spelling for the word colour). Indeed, the writer implies several times that colours, prints and fashion are important product qualities and as such they are treated as tangible product qualities.

When considering the transitivity of the corporate stories in general, it is clear that the process type alone does not always tell everything, instead one needs to pay attention to the participants in the clauses as well to be able to recognise which way the company is depicted and described in the texts. Although some of the companies use mostly action processes, this does not always mean that the company is depicted as an active participant. Indeed, this is the case for example with Endeas. Many companies focus more on the products or the systems they provide and instead of describing how the companies are, they introduce their products and their qualities.

When considering the nominalisations, they mostly concern the products, the product names and even the evaluation of the quality or performance of the products. In addition, the nominalisations are also used to omit the agent, which in many cases is the customer using the product. On the other hand, passive voice is used many times to evaluate either the company or its products and in these occasions the agent is also fairly often omitted. Overall, the companies pursue to give an image that the group using their products or known to their products is vast. In addition, modality is rather rarely used, which implies that mostly the companies do not want to refer to any level of uncertainty.

7.3 Evaluative language and conveying attitudes

In this section I will concentrate on the ways the companies convey attitudes of themselves and their products and what sort of evaluative language they use when describing themselves. I will first consider the different processes the companies use to evaluate themselves and their products and then move on to more elaborate analysis of the evaluations and attitudes conveyed in the corporate stories.

When conveying attitudes the companies use evaluative language, which can be either very direct or subtle. Interestingly, the use of evaluative language in the companies' corporate stories is more subtle and usually the evaluation is embedded in the clauses. In addition, the companies usually present the evaluations as facts and do not identify the one making the evaluations. As modality is rarely expressed in the corporate stories, one cannot claim it to have a role in conveying attitudes. Nevertheless, there are two interesting occasions in which modality is expressed in order to convey certain attitudes as one can see from examples 55, 56 and 57.

Example 55 (Finlandia)

This water is in such pristine condition, it would be a shame to tamper with it in the slightest way.

Example 56 (Finlandia)

Where others must filter water several times before it's pure enough, here, nature itself has given us the perfect filter: a glacial moraine that was created in the last Ice Age over 10,000 years ago.

Example 57 (Golla)

By staying innovative, Golla will help shape the products and trends of the future.

In example 55 the modal auxiliary verb *would* emphasises the fact that the water should be left as it is because it already is in *such pristine condition*. Interestingly, the writer also later on refers to the company's competitors who *must* filter their water to get as pure water as Finlandia has (example 56). These expressions of modality clearly convey a message that Finlandia has the best resource, while the competitors are compelled to use a water that is not as good as Finlandia has.

In example 57 Golla refers to the continuity of their business with the modal verb *will*. This conveys the idea of Golla being already a trendsetter and continuing to be a trendsetter. In addition, the phrase *By staying innovative* refers to Golla being already innovative.

When considering the actual processes when using evaluative language, there are occasions in which the companies use very direct ways to appraise themselves. What I mean with direct ways is the use of an active voice in the sentence and use of a process which either enables the evaluation, as in the relational processes, or has a positive connotation, that is, using verbs that describe the action as positive. In the relational processes the verb either describes the company or its products having or being something very positive as in examples 58-62 below.

Example 58 (Golla)

We continuously set new trends with products that are unique, useful and universally appealing.

Example 59 (Endeas)

In addition, the testing capacity of this product is high enough in order to comply with the throughput requirements of any PV production line.

Example 60 (Serres)

In the domestic market Serres has its own sales, marketing and distribution and is a well-known supplier of hospital disposables in Finland.

Example 61 (Palidoro)

We have a long experience from shipbuilding and ship's electrical work.

Example 62 (Mastsystem)

While Cobham Mast Systems has the industry's widest range of standard, commercial off the shelf (COTS) composite masts, antenna pointing devices, and vehicle mounting systems available for rapid delivery, Cobham Mast Systems is also able to provide a custom, fully integrated solution precisely tailored to the application.

Besides the relational processes representing the direct way of conveying attitudes, there are also occasions in which the attitude is embedded in the verbs. Indeed, the companies also use verbs that have a positive connotation or carry certain positive attitudes as in examples 63-66 the verbs *exceed*, *enables*, *ensure*, *stay* and *attracted*.

Example 63 (Mastsystem)

Masts exceed the military's requirements for maintainability and require very little service.

Example 64 (Endeas)

This product enables the testing of PV modules with face down position.

Example 65 (Steerprop)

Steerprop Ltd. also offers lifetime service of its products to ensure that the propulsors stay as efficient and reliable as possible.

Example 66 (Golla)

Today the success story continues and Golla has attracted more than 40 million users of Generation Mobile worldwide.

As said above, there are also more subtle ways of using evaluative language than the use of relational processes and verbs with positive connotations. For example, one of the ways the companies use the evaluative language is to use adjectives as modifiers in noun phrases, such as *a single shipment of quality azimuth propulsors* (Steerprop), *the new innovative Serres Suction System* (Serres), *true Class A irradiance uniformity characteristics* (Endeas), *nature's most precious gift* (Finlandia), *two ambitious brothers* (Golla) and *internationally valued quality products* (Kentek).

In addition to using adjectives as modifiers, the companies also use passive voice to reflect that their products or the company itself are widely recognised. For example, in

Golla's corporate story the company claims that their products *were sold around the world* and that now *Golla bags are known worldwide for their array of colours*. Also Mastsystem claims that their *telescopic masts have been used extensively around the world* and Kentek says their products are *internationally valued*. Moreover, Endeas claims that their products *have been delivered around the world*. As one can see, all of these examples follow a similar structure using passive voice and omitting the agent. Kentek's example is slightly different because *valued* is actually a nominalisation. Nevertheless, it seems to be relatively important for the companies to be recognised internationally and they also want to project their identity as internationally known exporting companies.

The processes used in evaluative language already give indication of the ways companies appraise and evaluate themselves and their products. However, it is also important to consider what sorts of attitudes the stories convey and what is their relation to the corporate online presence projected in the texts. Thus, I will now move on to describe and analyse the conveyed attitudes in more detail and elaborate the ways companies use evaluative language to project themselves and their products in a positive way.

I will start the analysis with Golla. In Golla's corporate story there are certain themes that are repeated several times. For example when considering example 66 above, the verb *attract* with its positive association emphasises that the company offers products which attract the users. This similar idea is conveyed also in example 58 above, in which the writer describes the products as *universally appealing*. Indeed, this is a quality that is also reflected several times either directly referring to the attractiveness of the products or referring to them as fashionable items such as *stylish prints, bringing fashion and colour into the world of electronics, fashionable carrying solutions, the most stylish accessories* and *fashion bags*. The attractiveness of the products is recurrent theme in Golla's corporate story. When considering the examples further, one can see that the writer implicitly compares Golla's products to fashion clothes. This similar idea is also conveyed in the phrases *we set new trends* and *Golla will help shape the products and trends of the future*. In conclusion, the writer pursues to project Golla as a trendsetter which offers its customers not only useful products, but products that can be used as *accessories*, which include various colours and prints. Indeed, *the world of*

electronics is implicitly implied to have been dull and colourless before Golla's products, which *brought colors and prints to portable electronics*.

Besides the attractive qualities of the products, the writer also emphasises their usefulness describing them with adjectives such as *useful* and *functional*. Also uniqueness is emphasised several times as the writer describes *The Golla bags* bringing *something new and unique* and having *fresh styles and prints*. Golla also evaluates itself and the founders of the company. For example the two brothers are referred to as *two ambitious brothers* who incorporate *their strong sense of design*. Both of these examples show how the writer has turned the claims into facts.

Golla also uses third party evidence to gain credibility as in example 67. Indeed, the reference to the MoMa gift shop implies that this is a very important and prestigious reference. The use of a word *even* reinforces this further as it conveys the idea that it is not necessarily easy to get products for sale in the shop. Example 67 also includes a more implicit third party reference, which does not identify the group, *were sold around the world*. Indeed, *around the world* does not describe the users of the products, but it projects the idea of Golla being recognised worldwide. There are also other these types of references such as *Golla has attracted more than 40 million users of Generation Mobile worldwide* and *Golla bags are known worldwide*.

Example 67 (Golla)

They soon incorporated their strong sense of design by creating small functional items from rubber and plastic, which were sold around the world and even appeared in the MoMa gift shop in New York.

When comparing Endeas and Golla, first of all, their products are very different. While Golla projects its products as attractive and colourful, Endeas emphasises the products characteristics in terms of their functions as in example 59 above *testing capacity*. However, both the stories address also similar themes. For example, the uniqueness of the products is also emphasised in Endeas' story, *A unique option called IDCAM*. Notice that this is a claim presented as a fact. In addition, Endeas also uses third party evidence as the writer refers to *the throughput requirements of any PV production line*. However, here the third party evidence is very vague as it does not identify who has set the requirements. Moreover, Endeas wants to pursue an image of a company recognised worldwide as one can see from example 68. In example 69 the company also reflects the idea of continuity with the verb *continues*.

Example 68 (Endeas)

Today more than 400 QuickSun Solar Simulators have been delivered around the world.

Example 69 (Endeas)

Endeas continues its development work by concentrating on the refined analysis of the PV cells and modules during the standard IV curve measurement.

Also Mastsystem emphasises the functionality and characteristics of its products using phrases such as *a custom, fully integrated solution precisely tailored to the application* and *Cobham Mast Systems' quality system*. In both of these examples the attitudes are embedded in the clauses and the adjectives are used as part of the noun phrase. Furthermore, Mastsystem uses third party evidence when referring to the requirements of the ISO standards and the military as in examples 70 and 71, as well as, when referring to its products as having *been used extensively around the world*, to emphasise the recognition worldwide.

Example 70 (Mastsystem)

Cobham Mast Systems' quality system fulfils the requirements of ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and AQAP 2110 standards. The carbon and glass fiber composite masts have been proven to meet MIL-STD 810 F requirements to function in all extremes of environmental conditions.

Example 71 (Mastsystem)

Masts exceed the military's requirements for maintainability and require very little service.

In Mastsystem's corporate story the writer uses lots of appraising phrases, which have a positive connotation, such as, *Cobham Mast Systems' know-how and understanding* and *material and manufacturing expertise*. Both of these phrases imply that Mastsystem actually does have know-how, understanding and expertise and as such they are claims presented as facts. In addition, Mastsystem claims that *every detail is designed for reliability and quick and safe operation*, which implies that the products are reliable. Indeed, as one can see, Mastsystem uses words with a strong positive connotation in order to give a positive image of the company and turning claims into facts the evaluations are given more weight.

The evaluations in Mastsystem's story mostly relate to the characteristics of products and the company is not in fact evaluated that much. There are only couple of occasions in which the company actually uses evaluative language when referring to itself. In the first occasion the writer refers to the company's *more than 30 years of experience* and in the other it describes how the company *has industry's widest range of standard products*. Indeed, size and scope are also used in the stories of Golla, Endeas and

Steerprop in order to gain credibility. For Golla the reference concerns its customers, *more than 40 million users*, whereas Endeas states that it has delivered *more than 400 QuickSun Solar Simulators*. In Steerprop's story the writer refers to the personnel who established the company to have *decades of experience*.

Steerprop is very similar to Mastsystem in its use of evaluative language as it also uses the ISO standards as third party evidence (example 72) and refers to its products with evaluative noun phrases, for example with *high quality azimuth propulsors with outstanding lifetime economy, a single shipment of quality azimuth propulsors and lifetime service of its products*. As one can see, the evaluations in Steerprop's story mostly refer to the products. Interestingly, Steerprop is also the only one using negative form to emphasise the company striving to be even better, *it is not enough for Steerprop Ltd. to deliver a single shipment of quality azimuth propulsors*.

Example 72 (Steerprop)

Steerprop Ltd. has been certified according to the ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and the OHSAS 18001 standards.

Also Serres uses size and scope when referring to the size of its markets, *Serres products are available in almost 30 markets*. Serres also recognises the markets abroad also by naming some of the biggest markets in Europe (example 73). Moreover, Serres refers to their long experience in the business by claiming that *Serres suction liner systems have been used in hospitals for the collection and disposal of fluids for more than two decades already*. Like Steerprop and Mastsystem, Serres does not evaluate the company that much. There are actually only two occasions in which the company is evaluated the writer claiming the company to have *a strong international market position and expertise in plastics design*. However, Serres does refer to itself as *a well-known supplier*. In addition, Serres refers to the *success in the highly competitive export markets* to imply that the company is very talented to be able to succeed in such challenging markets.

Example 73 (Serres)

Serres products are available in almost 30 markets throughout the world. In particular, Europe is well-covered, the biggest markets being Germany, UK, France and Spain.

Kentek's corporate story does not include that much evaluative language, although it provides third party evidence when referring to the Finnish Quality Award, whose criteria the company uses to supervise their working. In addition, Kentek embeds the

appraisal in the noun phrase as in *Our competent staff*. Kentek also mentions the businesses abroad, which conveys that the exporting activities are also important for them. However, when considering conveying attitudes, I believe the correct spelling of the words and the use of appropriate and correct phrases or terms is very important in order to gain credibility (example 74).

Example 74 (Kentek)

We especially appreciate quality, and supervise our working according to the criteria of the Finnish Quality Award.

Our competent staff is all the time ready to serve you. We find solutions to your requirements, and take care of the logistics - from producers into your warehouse.

We offer you tailor-made total deliveries, stock the goods and make shipments just on time.

Our daughter companies in the Baltics and in Russia offer reliable service also for Finnish off- and on- road contractors and manufacturers.

As one can see from example 74, in Kentek's corporate story there is one spelling error, *superwise* instead of *supervise* and also two incorrect expressions, *daughter companies* and *just on time*. *Daughter companies* is a direct translation from Finnish to English, but the correct term is *subsidiary*. In addition, *just on time* is an incorrect term in English. The right term is *just in time*, also known as JIT, which is a term used in the production industry. The Finnish substitute is shortened as JOT (Juuri Oikeaan Tarpeeseen), therefore, it is possible that the incorrect term is used because the writer has thought the abbreviation of the Finnish term is actually abbreviation of the English term. Nevertheless, although the company pursues to project itself as a credible company and the content of the story supports this idea, I believe the company's credibility may slightly suffer because of these errors.

Palidoro also uses third party evidence and even mentions them by name as one can see from example 75. Similarly to Kentek, also Palidoro has some language errors. For example the preposition *in* is missing from the phrase *We are specialized ship's electrical systems*. In addition, the phrase *our superior knowledge* actually conveys the reader that the company thinks their knowledge is somehow superior to others. Indeed, when using the genitive form of the first person plural together with the adjective *superior* the reader can get the impression that the company over emphasises its status. At worst this can even irritate the reader, because *superior* has such a strong connotation.

Example 75 (Palidoro)

We have been working for Wärtsilä Turku Shipyard and for example Kvaerner, Mitsubishi, Alstom and Fincantieri yards.

Finlandia's corporate story includes lots of adjectives such as *pure*, *precious*, *pristine* and *perfect*. However, what is interesting is the fact that most of these adjectives refer to the water as one can see from example 76. Through appraising the water the company uses to make their vodka, the company simultaneously and implicitly appraises its product.

Example 76 (Finlandia)

One of nature's most precious gifts to us is pure glacial spring water, the water we use to make our vodka. This water is in such pristine condition, it would be a shame to tamper with it in the slightest way.

As one can see from example 76, the writer first appraises the water and creates a strong image of the pure glacial water. After this the writer contrasts the water and the vodka with the phrase *the water we use*, thus, the pureness is also connected to the vodka, without actually ever mentioning directly that the vodka is also pure. Also the phrase *respect for nature* has a very strong association and conveys that the company is environmentally friendly and responsible. In addition, as some of the word choices are very delicate, for example *it would be a shame to tamper with it in the slightest way*, the company conveys implicitly the idea of them being responsible.

Two of the companies also convey attitudes about being the leaders in their markets either referring to their leadership or size. Serres refers to itself as *the largest European manufacture of suction bags*, whereas Golla aims at becoming *the leading consumer brand of fashionable carrying solutions*. In fact, according to Pollach's (2005: 294-295) study companies convey attitudes by referring to themselves both in terms of the size or scope and as leaders.

In conclusion, the companies use third party evidence or references to gather more credibility. Six of the eight companies use some sort of third party evidence to convince the reader that the companies are credible and trustworthy. Only Serres and Finlandia do not use any third party evidence. In addition, many of the companies remove the agent from the clauses evaluating the company. This pursues an image that everybody considers the company according to the presented claim. Moreover, most of the companies refer to the size or scope of their business or give information in numbers.

The companies use fairly often claims as facts or adjectives as modifiers in noun phrases. Interestingly, Pollach (2005: 291-294) founded similar results in her study on corporate websites.

When considering the attitudes pursued in the corporate stories, many of the companies emphasise their worldwide recognition, which implies that they want to pursue an image as well-known exporting companies. In addition, some of the companies express continuity of the business and uniqueness of the products. Also functionality and attractiveness of the products appear in the stories.

7.4 Styles and text types

In this section I will consider both the styles and text types of the companies' corporate stories. The style refers to the rhetorical mode of the texts, that is, what is the level of formality in the texts. When considering the text types, it is important to pay attention to the active participants in the texts. It is important to remember that although there are separate definitions for different text types, the different text types can also be used simultaneously in the same text.

Golla's story starts with a narrative text type as it is told in past tense and as there are active participants, the two brothers. The story is told from a narrator's point of view and it describes the development of Golla from the beginning to a present day. Notice the change into a present tense in the last sentence in the first paragraph in example 77.

Example 77 (Golla)

Golla joined this revolution and started bringing fashion and colour into the world of electronics. The Golla bags brought something new and unique with fresh styles and prints. Throughout the years, the collection of bags kept growing and has been introduced to new markets all around the globe. Today the success story continues and Golla has attracted more than 40 million users of Generation Mobile worldwide.

Vision

Our vision is to be the leading consumer brand of fashionable carrying solutions for portable electronics around the world. We continuously set new trends with products that are unique, useful and universally appealing.

As one can see from example 77, the writer suddenly changes the tense into a present tense, although the story starts with a past tense. This indicates a shift into a descriptive text. Interestingly, the last sentence of the paragraph is told from a narrator's point of view, but instead of focusing on what happened, it emphasises the continuity of Golla's

story. The extracts under the subheadings are descriptive texts as the extracts include lots of adjectives and verbs which indicate being or perceiving something (examples 77 and 78). When considering the process types of the two types of texts, the relational processes are usually typical for descriptive texts, whereas narratives consists of event and action processes.

Example 78 (Golla)

Our mission is to make technology part of your lifestyle and to provide the most stylish accessories to fit it. The market of electronic is developing fast and new technology shapes the customers' needs and preferences.

When it comes to the tenor of the texts, the use of the first person plural makes the text informal and the addressing of the audience with the second person singular/plural *you* emphasises this even further. Because of directly addressing the audience, Golla's corporate story can also be considered as an advertisement of some sort (Fairclough 1992: 115). There are not really any difficult technical words or jargon and the text portrays the company in a positive light. In order to see the whole story see Appendix 4.

Finlandia's story is a mix of descriptive and narrative as it includes both active participants and adjectives and verbs indicating being (Appendix 3). The two most used process types are action and relational processes. On the other hand, Finlandia's story is told in a present tense from a narrator's point of view. When considering the use of the first person plural, it actually indicates that there is no narrator and at the same time this makes the text informal, thus, the tenor is quite informal. However, the rhetorical mode is also informative and descriptive at the same time. Finlandia's story is similar to Golla's story as it does not include any jargon or technical words. However, both Finlandia and Golla evoke strong images about the products and the company with evaluative language.

Kentek's corporate story starts with a simple list of the most important facts, but the story under the heading "Business Concept" is a descriptive text with a hint of narrative in it (Appendix 5). Indeed, there are active participants, but the story is told in a present tense from the company's perspective, not from a narrator's point of view. The level of formality is not high because of the relatively frequent use of personal pronouns. On the other hand, the rhetorical mode is simultaneously informative and descriptive. Notice here that Kentek has also elements of instructive text type as the writer encourages the reader to contact the company, *Do not hesitate to contact us*. Palidoro's story having

mostly relational process types is more descriptive than Kentek's story, however, it is also narrative as it includes active participants. The style is similarly informal as is Kentek's because of the frequent use of the first person plural.

The corporate stories of Mastsystem, Endear, Serres and Steerprop are different from the other four, as they all use also passive voice and do not include that many active participants. Indeed, their stories are told mostly from a narrator's point of view and concentrate on describing things. What is typical for these four stories is the tendency to use many nominalisations and technical words. Indeed, all the texts are very informative in their style. However, as became clear, it is difficult to pin point the online corporate stories into a specific text type, instead they usually include a mixture of different text types. Indeed, all of the stories entail elements of different sorts of text types and include different rhetorical modes. The most accurate way to describe the stories would be to call them informative texts, which include narrative and descriptive elements. The purpose of the texts, for the most part, is to inform the audience. However, Golla and Finlandia are exception as they rely more on the narrative and descriptive elements than solely on informing.

8 PROJECTED IDENTITY IN THE IMAGES AND LAYOUT

In this section I will apply Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) model for the analysis of visual structures in order to explore the images and layout of the company profiles. In addition, I will categorise the website elements according to Melvasalo's (2005) approach. Moreover, I will consider the relation between the images and the texts to see whether the same processes and participants are present in both of the modes, that is, whether the images reinforce or complement the texts. Furthermore, I will consider what is the main element of each company profile and what meanings does it convey.

I will start the analysis with Kentek, because there are not actually any images on its company profile (Images 1 and 2). However, there are three corporate elements, a company logo and two certificate logos of AAA and The Strongest in Finland. The company logo is the identifier element, which helps the visitor to identify the company or the organisation whose website they are visiting. The certificate logos are notification elements as they do not directly relate to the content of the website, but instead they inform the visitor about the third party references Kentek has. Indeed, they offer confirmation of Kentek's credibility and as such have an important role in complementing the corporate story. They are especially important because the references are not mentioned in the text.

Image 1. Kentek's company profile, the upper part of the page

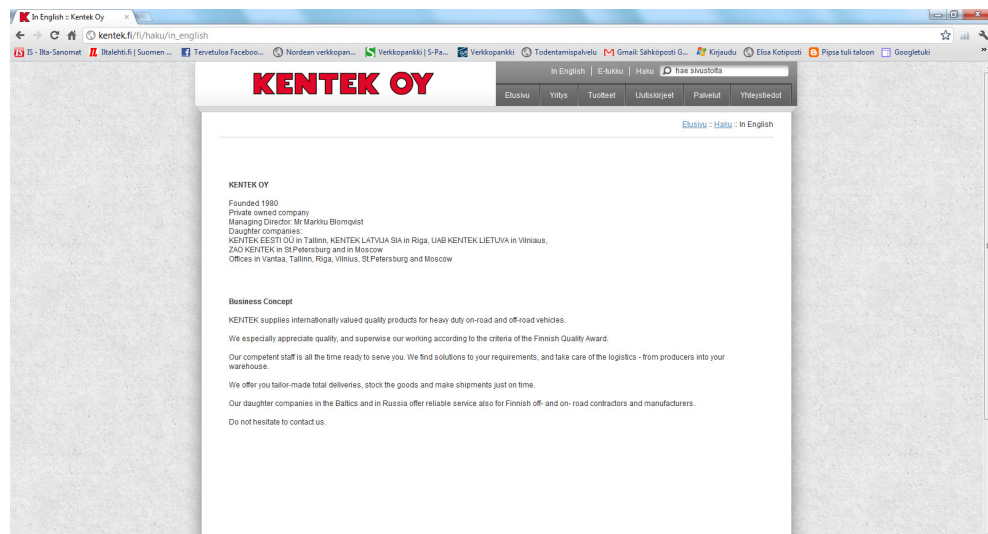
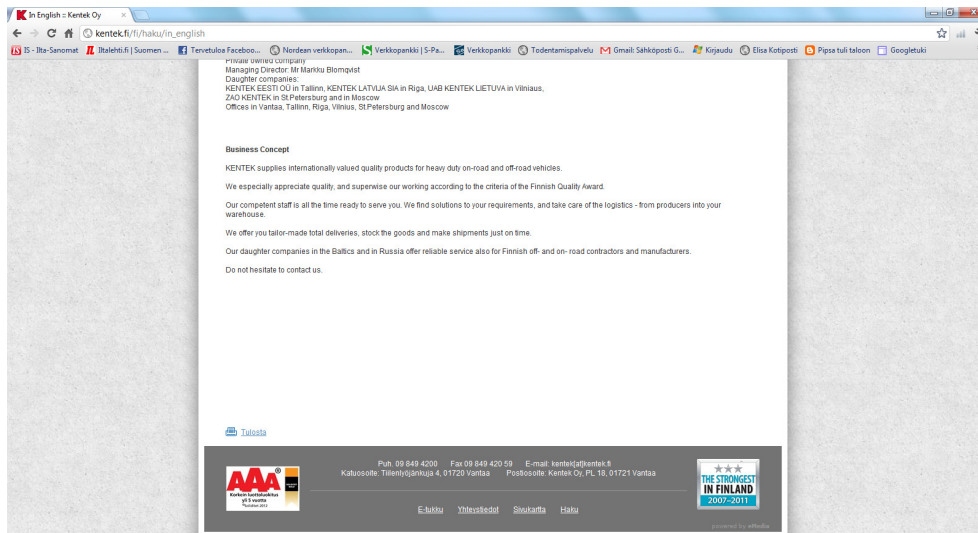


Image 2. Kentek's company profile, the lower part of the page.



When considering the layout of the website, it is important to examine the placement of corporate elements. First of all, the company logo is placed in the top horizontal bar and the two certificate logos in the bottom horizontal bar with the contact details as one can see from Images 1 and 2. The company logo is clearly in a more prominent role as it is placed in the upper part of the page. In addition, the logo is fairly big compared to the font size of the corporate story and due both its colour and size the logo is very noticeable element on the website. In fact, the company logo can be considered as the main element of the website as it is the element that draws the visitor's attention. As the certificate logos are placed in the lower part of the page, they are not given the same importance as the company logo. In addition, the visitor needs to scroll the page to be able to see the certificate logos.

When examining further the bottom horizontal bar, it is interesting to notice that it is actually a contact element, as it includes the contact information of the company. One might wonder why such an important piece of information is placed at the bottom of the page. However, when considering Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006: 179-186) theory of the horizontal placement of elements, the lower section of the page is usually considered as informative. Indeed, the contact information is very informative, while the corporate story can be considered to include emotive appeals. Therefore, Kentek's company profile does follow Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006: 179-186) categorisation to some extent. Interestingly, the corporate story ends with the clause *Do not hesitate to contact us*, and the contact details are provided below. It seems there is a path the designer wants the visitor to follow; first the visitor reads through the story, then comes the

request to contact the company and after this the visitor is provided with the contact information. If the reader is convinced it is possible that s/he complies to the request and uses the contact information.

The overall outline of Kentek's company profile is very simple and restrained. The actual website is placed on a grey background, which makes the text and the corporate elements to stand out. The website is placed in the middle of the page and it is divided in three sections, the top horizontal bar with the identifier element and the navigation links and the bottom horizontal bar with the contact details and certificate logos. Interestingly, the presence that is projected in the text is more aggressive and pursues to make a contact with the visitor, whereas the visual structure is actually very structured and does not necessarily arouse any feelings. On the other hand, the lack of images and the organised feel of the website gives space for the story itself, which frequently addresses the reader. Thus, in Kentek's case the layout acts as a complement for the story.

Endeas' website is very similar in its outline with Kentek (Image 3). The background of the website is neutral coloured, whereas the actual corporate website with its contents is placed in the middle of the page on a white background. In addition, like Kentek also Endeas does not have that many visual elements on its website. In fact, there is only one corporate element, that is, the company logo and one image, which is not actually part of the company profile, but instead it is placed in the New products section. The website also requires the visitor to scroll the site to able to examine the entire page.

Image 3. Endeas' company profile.



As one can see from Image 3, Endeas' logo is also placed in the top horizontal bar as in Kentek's case. The logo's vibrant and strong colours make the logo stand out, however, it is difficult to say whether it is the main element of the website. Indeed, the image of the product in the right hand column also catches the attention of the visitor, because it breaks the otherwise organised structure of the page. According to Melvasalo's (2005) model the image can be considered as an illustrative element. When examining closer the image in the New products section, one can see that it represents a product, a QuickSun 200A String Simulator. When considering the participants in the image, there is a Carrier, which is the product as a whole and its Possessive Attributes, the details that make up the whole. The image is very static and there are no vectors, thus, there is no action or movement in the image. Indeed, the image has an analytical structure. The image itself does not relate to the corporate story, however, for a visitor unfamiliar with the company's products, it is a good idea to provide an image of the product.

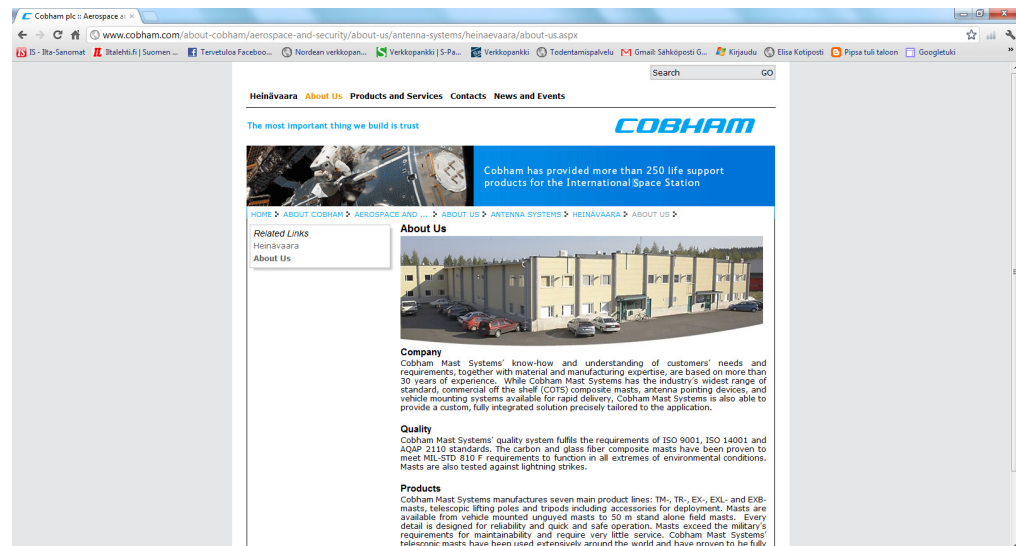
When considering the layout of Endeas' corporate website, the placement of elements on the website is vertical as the text is divided into two columns. Interestingly, the corporate story is on the left side of the website and the news and other informative texts are on the right side of the page. As Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 179-181) claim, typically what is new is placed on the right and what is given is placed on the left side. Thus, the corporate story can be considered to be given information. Although the corporate story cannot possibly be given to all visitors of the website, I believe the targeted audience of Endeas' website is assumed to know the history of the company, and therefore, the designer has decided to place it on the left. Indeed, the news has a higher value for someone who visits the website frequently.

When it comes to the relation between the visual features and the presence projected in the text, one obvious similarity is the emphasis on the products. Indeed, the products are mentioned fairly frequently in the text and also the only image on the website depicts one of Endeas' products. In the story the company is referred to only three times, thus, the lack of visual features relating to the company are in line with the corporate story. The image of the product acts as a compliment because it gives new information that is not provided in the corporate story.

Mastsystem's company profile consists of the company logo, one image and a slide show. As said earlier, moving images are not part of the scope of the study. Therefore, I

only analyse the image related to the company profile right under the heading "About Us" (Image 4). The outline of Mastsystem's website is very similar to Kentek and Endeas. Indeed, there is a separate background with a neutral colour and the corporate website itself is placed in the middle of the page. Mastsystem's website also requires the visitor to scroll the page.

Image 4. Mastsystem's company profile.



The image on Mastsystem's company profile depicts a building and cars outside the building. As in Endeas' image of the product, also in this image there are no vectors. Instead, one could consider the building as the Carrier with all the little details of windows and doors constituting the various Possessive Attributes. Therefore, the structure of the image is analytical. Indeed, the image is simply depicting the business unit of Heinävaara and the cars imply that the employees are working in the building. The image is very static presenting exactly what it contains. Therefore, I do not believe there is any symbolism in the image.

Another interesting point is that there are no people in the image. There is only the building and the cars. One can consider the cars to imply that there are people working inside the building. However, these people who own the cars still feel very distant. In a way, the image relates strongly to the image conveyed in the corporate story, because in Mastsystem's story the company was only referred to by the company name. Indeed, both the reference to company name and the lack of people in the image make the company distant from the visitor.

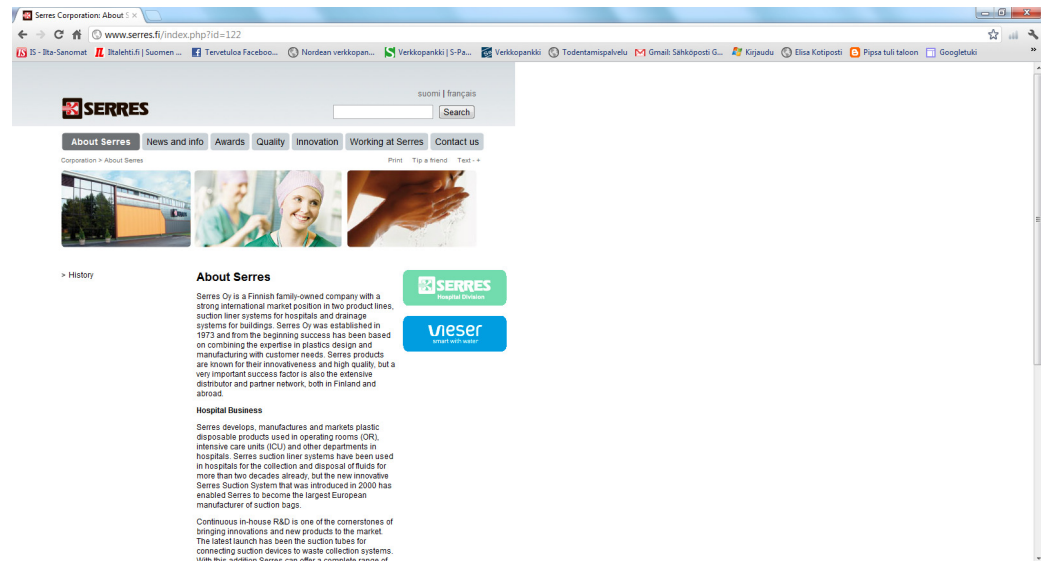
When considering the identifier element, the company logo, one can see that instead of placing the logo on the left, Mastsystem has placed the logo on the right and the slogan on the left. It is difficult to say why Mastsystem has placed the logo on the right, nevertheless, it still stands out from the page. However, I would not consider the logo as the main element. Instead the image of the building draws the attention very strongly and thus, I would consider it to be the main element of the page.

When considering the placement of elements on Mastsystem's company profile, the layout follows a vertical line starting with the images in the upper side of the page, which clearly are meant as emotive appeals and the lower part presenting the actual information, thus, being the informative and practical section (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 186). On the other hand, the layout is very structured and organised.

When comparing the presence of Mastsystem conveyed in the story and the presence in the visual structures, they are quite similar. Mastsystem uses only the company name and does not refer to any individual people or even the personnel in the stories. Interestingly, also the image refers to the whole business unit, not any individual persons working inside the company. On the other hand, the story depicts the company as a fairly active participant, but there is no action in the image. Thus, the image does not reinforce the image conveyed in the texts. Moreover, the image simply depicts the business unit in Finland, although there is no reference to the business unit in the text. Indeed, it seems the image is complementing rather than reinforcing the story.

The layout of Serres' company profile is different from the three already presented ones as one can see from Image 5 below. Although, the company also has a separate background on which the corporate website is placed, the placement of the actual website is on the left side of the page, whereas Kentek, Mastsystem and Endeas have placed the website in the middle of the page. One could consider it to be more logical to place the website in the middle of the page as it should be the centre of attention. In Serres' case there is a huge white space on the right side, which seems to have no function. Indeed, when comparing Serres' site with Mastsystem, there is a clear division with the background and the website. In Serres' case the only elements separating the left side from the right side are the top and bottom horizontal bars. Thus, their role as organisational elements is very important.

Image 5. Serres' company profile



Serres' website uses both horizontal and vertical axis for the placement of elements. The website has a top horizontal bar with the company logo and another column below with navigation links, which is followed by the images and the text and the bottom horizontal bar, which is not actually seen in Image 5. Indeed, as all the other corporate websites already presented, also Serres' website requires some scrolling. Below the navigation links there are three images, which shifts the placement of elements from horizontal to vertical. Also the link to company's history, the corporate story and the links to Serres' two branches all together can be considered to be formed around a horizontal axis.

As one can see from Image 5 above, there are three images, which can be considered as illustrative elements. They together create the main element of the page as the visitor's attention is immediately drawn to them. Especially the one in the middle draws the attention as it is placed in such a prominent place. In addition to the images there are three corporate elements, the company logo and two branch logos, Serres Hospital Division and Vieser Smart with Water. The branch logos are clearly supplementary to Serres' own logo and thus, they are not placed in the top horizontal bar next to the company logo. This similar structure is also seen in the corporate story, because the writer actually mentions Vieser last. Thus, both the story and the placement of the logo beside the text imply that Vieser is a brand under the Serres corporation.

The layout of Serres' website is very similar to Mastsystem's website, as they both have the images in the upper section of the page and thus, the images consist of emotive appeals. When examining the images more closely, one can recognise that they all

include quite different kinds of processes. The first image is similar to Mastsystem's image as it depicts a building. There are no vectors in the image and therefore, the structure is analytical, in which the building is a Carrier and all the details are the Possessive Attributes. Interestingly, like Mastsystem, Serres also refers to itself by the company name in the text and instead of presenting an image of people who work for Serres, there is an image of the company building.

The other two images present people, however, these people do not work for Serres, instead one could consider that they represent the company's customers. For example, in the second image the persons are clearly working at a hospital, thus, they are the ones using Serres' products. When examining the image more closely, one can see that there are two persons, a woman, who is looking at something and smiling and another person behind the smiling woman. However, the other person is blurred in the background and thus, s/he is a secondary participant. In addition, as the persons are not connected to each other by a vector, the secondary participant can be also considered to be a Circumstance, which is the less important participant. Therefore, the woman smiling is the main participant as she is in front of the image. The main participant is a Reacter and although the phenomenon the woman is reacting to is not presented in the image, the process in the image is reactional.

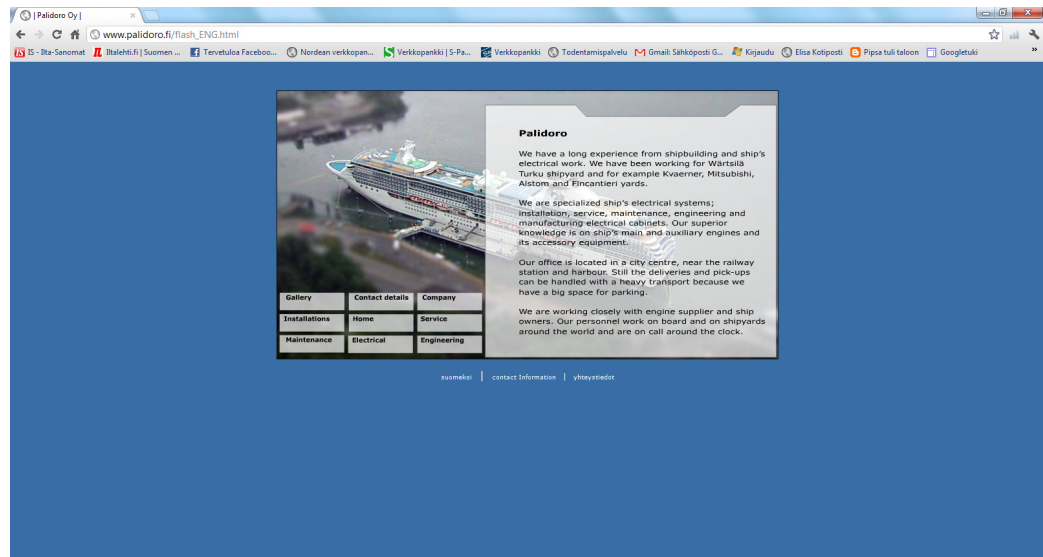
In the third image there is a person washing his/her face. The person is the main participant, an Actor, and the hands form the vector, because they do the washing, and the face is the goal. The structure of the third image is transactional. The difference between the second and the third image is that in the second one can identify the participant, but in the third image it is very difficult to say who the person in the image is.

Interestingly, in Serres' corporate story there are couple of occasions in which hospitals are referred to as the users of Serres' products. Also the images convey a similar image as they depict the nurses working at a hospital. Indeed, the emphasis is more or less on the customers. Another interesting issue is that Serres usually has omitted the agent from the phrases describing the use of the products, but here the agents are visible. Thus, the pictures act both as reinforcement and complement as they give image of the use of products in the hospitals and also depicts the users, which are not actually mentioned in the text. However, Serres is depicted as an active participant in the story,

but this is not conveyed in the images. This implies that the company is pursuing to convince its customers and therefore, the online presence focuses on the customers and what Serres can offer to them. In fact, *Serres can offer* is mentioned twice in the text, which emphasises that the online presence focuses on attracting and persuading customers.

The layout of Palidoro's website is somewhat different to the ones introduced above, as the corporate website is actually placed in the middle of the page with the blue background surrounding the corporate website (Image 6). In the corporate websites of Kentek, Mastsystem and Endeas the background gives frames for the websites, whereas in Palidoro's case the corporate website is embedded in the background.

Image 6. Palidoro's company profile



The placement of elements on Palidoro's company profile follows a horizontal line, as the links are placed on the left and the corporate story is placed on the right. Thus, the corporate story is considered as the new information, while the navigation links are considered as given information. This is reasonable as the story might include new information for the visitor, when the links are there for support and help the visitor to navigate through the site.

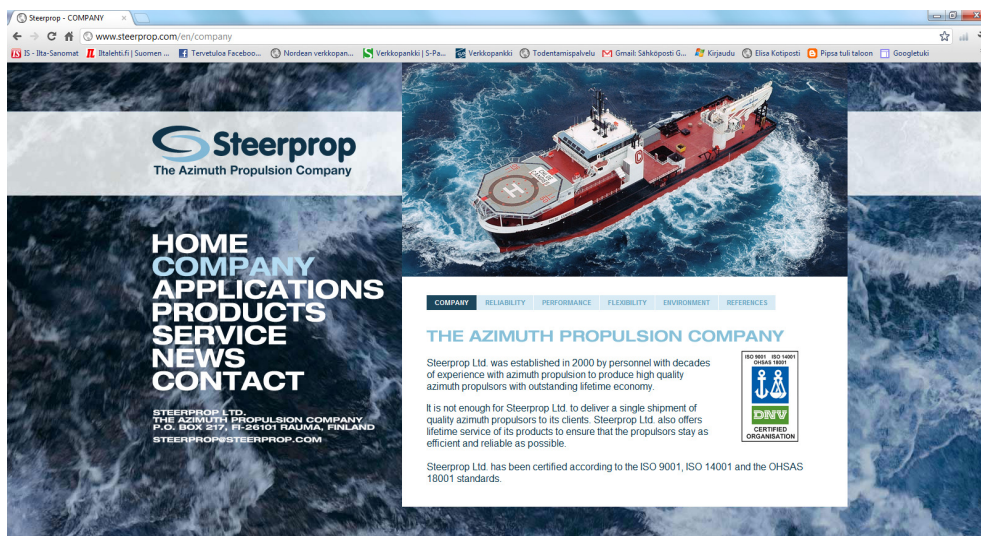
As one can see from Image 6, Palidoro does not have any corporate or identifier elements. Thus, Palidoro differs greatly from the other companies, who have provided their company logo on their websites. In Palidoro's case the only illustrative element is the image of a ship which is partly behind the corporate story. Although only the left

side of the image is clearly visible, I think the image is the main element on the page. The ship clearly relates to the industry Palidoro is working and it can be considered as a supplement, which gives surrounding for the company's activities. The structure in the image is analytical, in which the ship is a Carrier. The ship clearly is not moving in the image, thus, there is no vector.

When it comes to the relation between the text and the image, the image clearly supports the story and gives a visual of the industry the company is working. In addition, as the text refers to Palidoro's personnel working on board, one could consider the image to give a context for this. Interestingly, Palidoro's corporate story includes lots of relational processes describing Palidoro being or having something, whereas the image also reflects the similar process. In addition, although Palidoro refers to itself in the story as *we*, there are no people depicted on the company profile.

As has become clear, Kentek, Mastsystem, Endeas, Serres and Palidoro all have a very neutral background. However, the background of Steerprop's profile is anything but neutral. In fact, the background of Steerprop's website consists of an image of a wavy and stormy sea (Image 7). When considering the other visual elements, there is the company logo in the top horizontal bar of the page, a certificate logo and an image of a ship of some sort related to the corporate story. The certificate logo as a notification element acts as a third party evidence in this case. These references are also mentioned in the story and thus, the certificate logo reinforces the text.

Image 7. Steerprop's company profile



As one can see from Image 7, the background in itself already includes a process, as the water in the image is moving it is simultaneously the participant and a vector of the image. Although the sea is only in the background, it looks very powerful with the waves moving around. However, the main element on the page is the image of the ship. When comparing Steerprop's image of the ship with Palidoro's image, they are quite different although they both depict a ship. Indeed, in Steerprop's image the ship is moving, as one can see from the sea surrounding the ship. The ship is the one moving, but the waves indicate the movement and therefore, the waves constitute the vector. The ship is the Actor but, on the other hand, it is also a Carrier, representing the ship with all its details. The structural process in the image is non-transactional, because the action does not have a goal.

When considering the layout of Steerprop's website, it is fairly similar to Palidoro's layout. The elements are placed according to the horizontal axis, in which the left consists of the navigation links and the right side consists of the corporate story. Interestingly, neither Palidoro nor Steerprop's website require any scrolling. Moreover, the company is referred to by the company name in the text and the distance is also present in the visual structures, because there are no people in the images. As in Palidoro's case, also in Steerprop's company profile the images of the sea and the ship convey the image of the industry the company is working. In addition, it is interesting that the image and the background are very strong and even aggressive, while the writer uses fairly neutral language in the story. Of course, there is evaluative language, but the story does not depict the company as aggressive. However, the phrase *It is not enough for Steerprop* implies that the company wants to succeed and that the company is strong. Therefore, the images both complement and reinforce the identity projected in the text.

The visual features are very dominating on the websites of both Steerprop and Finlandia. When considering Finlandia's company profile, there are all in all four images and a company logo. However, the outline of the website is fairly different from the others as one can see from Images 8 and 9, as it is divided into two sections. Finlandia's website also requires more scrolling than the others, because of the size of the image. The image is given a lot of emphasis and it has a fairly dominating role, while the story is founded only when scrolling down the page.

Image 8. Finlandia's company profile, upper part of the page

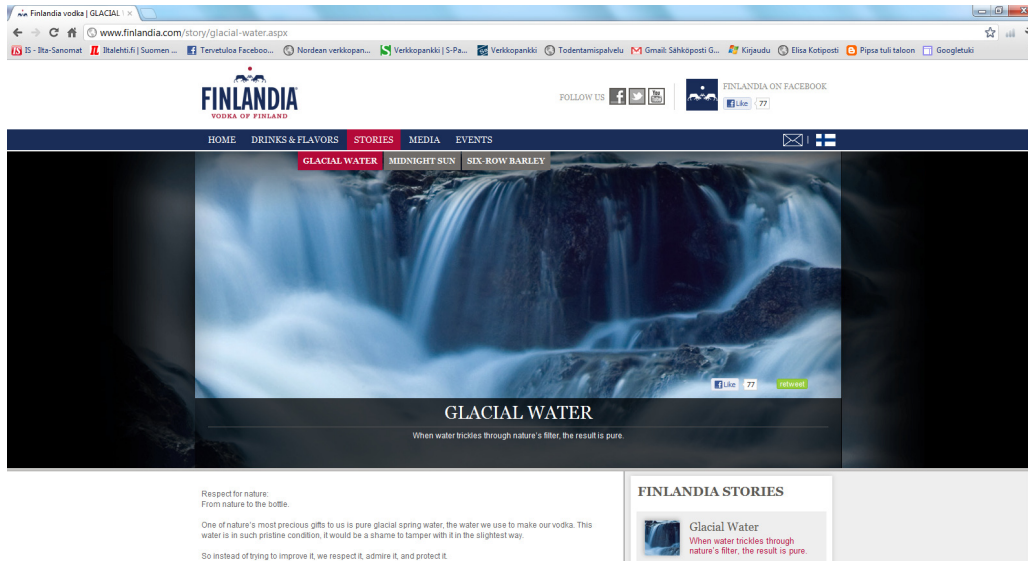
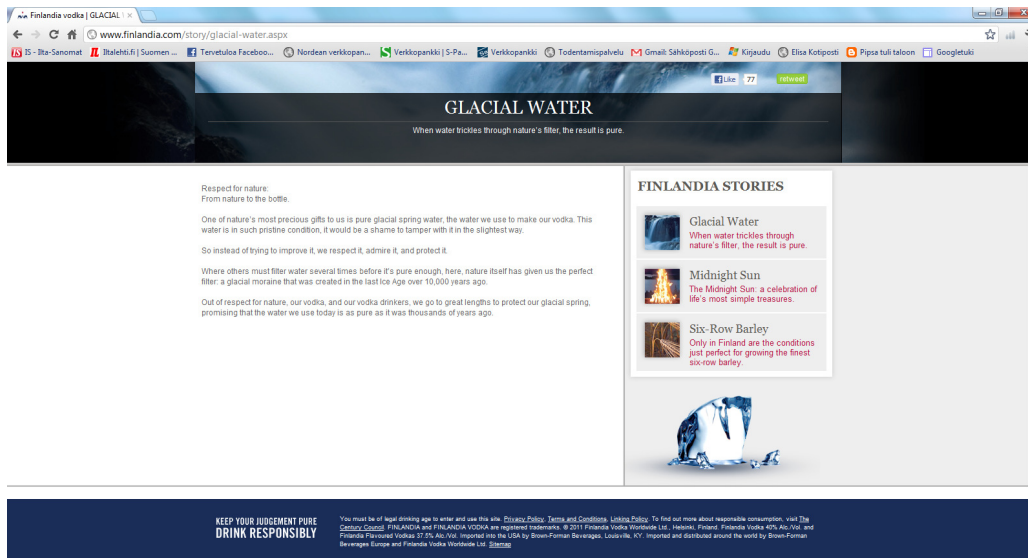


Image 9. Finlandia's company profile, lower part of the page



When considering the placement of elements, one can see that the website is organised into three different parts according to the vertical axis. First, there is the top horizontal bar with the company logo and both external and internal navigation links. With external links I mean the links directing the visitor to other websites, such as Facebook, and with internal links I mean the links the visitors use when browsing Finlandia's website. Below the links there is the image of the waterfalls, which can also be considered as the main element of the website and below the image is the actual story. There is also some horizontal placement of elements, because beside the corporate story there is a column with extracts of all the three stories and also images related to each story.

The image of the waterfalls is clearly making an emotive appeal as it is placed in the upper section of the website. The corporate story, positioned in the lower section of the page, can be considered as the more informative section of the page. The extracts of the stories beside the corporate story are placed on the right side, which indicates that they are new information and indeed, the other two stories can be considered as new information. In addition to the image of the water and the small images beside the extracts, there is an image of an ice cube in the right lower corner of the page. The ice cube clearly reflects the glacial water and on the other hand, relates to the beverages the company is selling as people tend to use ice cubes in the beverages.

Although there are so many images and graphic elements, I will only analyse the main element, the image of the waterfalls. Because of its size the image is clearly a main element of the page. When considering the processes and structures of the image, there is a sense of movement as one can see the water is actually falling from the cliff. Thus, as in Steerprop's images, also here the water itself is both the Actor and the vector and the structure is non-transactional, because there is no goal. Both the image and the corporate story emphasise the importance of water without any reference to the company. On the other hand, one could consider the water to represent the vodka, which is actually what the writer has tried to do in the story. The image of the waterfalls reinforces the image conveyed through the text in which the water is described as pure. In addition, one can see the symbolism in the movement of water, *water trickles through nature's filter* is also seen in the image. Moreover, the fog and mist in the image create the illusion of the air being very cold, which refers to the glacial water.

On Golla's company profile there are all in all four images, one figure and one slideshow and the company logo as the only corporate element. As in Mastsystem's case, also here the slideshow is left out of the scope of the analysis, but notice here that it has quite a central position on the site. Images 10 and 11 show the images that will be part of the analysis. As one can see, the website is divided into several sections and it requires lot of scrolling.

Image 10. Golla's company profile, upper part of the page

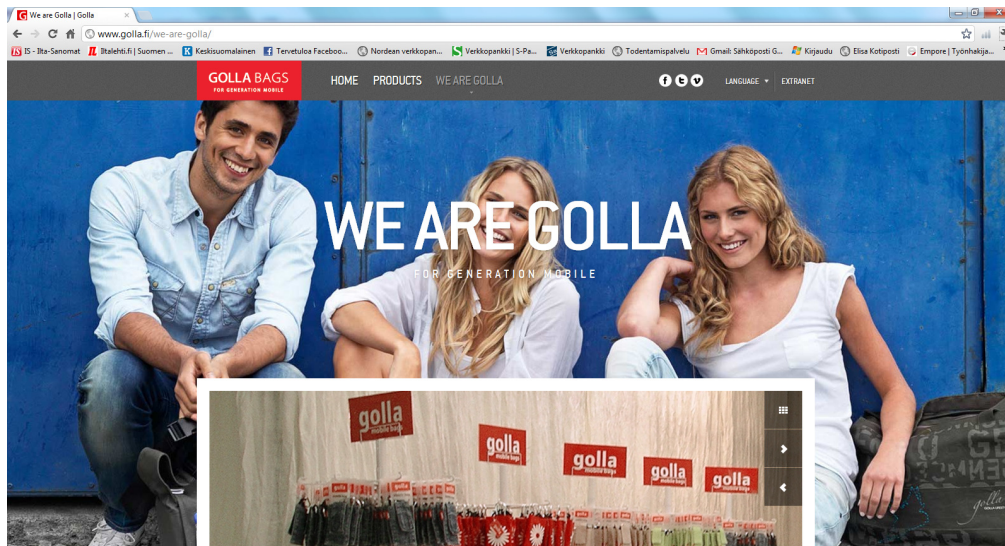
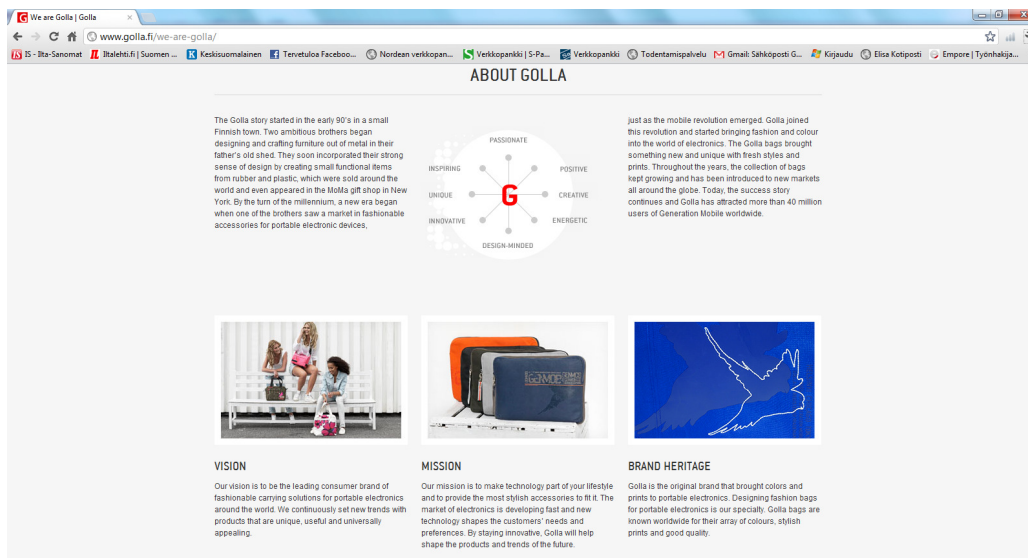


Image 11. Golla's company profile, lower part of the page



The website's layout is organised both horizontally and vertically. When considering the horizontal axis (Image 10), first there is the top horizontal bar with the company logo and both internal and external navigation links. Below the bar there is the image of three people and the text *We are Golla for Generation Mobile*. After this there is a slideshow, which separates the upper image from the corporate story. The corporate story itself is organised both horizontally and vertically (Image 11). First there is the story, "About Golla", and below there are the subsections of the story, "Vision", "Mission" and "Brand heritage". The placement of elements implies that the image in Image 10 includes emotive appeal and the corporate story includes the informative part as has been the case with some of the other corporate websites as well. The vertical division of

corporate story does not seem to have meaning per se, however, the images in the middle give rhythm to the layout. In addition, the figure between the two columns in Image 11 acts as an illustrative element. The red G in the middle reflects the company and the grey lines attach the eight characteristics to the company. Some of the characteristics are also mentioned in the text, therefore, one could consider the figure to reinforce the text.

I will start the analysis of images with the image on top of the company profile (Image 10). There are three people smiling and making direct eye-contact to the viewer. The people are not related to each other by any vectors, thus, each one of them could be considered as the main participant. In addition, there is no goal. However, there is an eyeline, but it is directed to the viewer of the image. The people are actually Reactors who react to the viewers, they smile at the viewers and the glance of each person can be considered as the vector. Thus, there is no actual Actor at all, but instead, the viewer is the Actor. Interestingly, the viewer becomes part of the image and the reactional process. On the other hand, the process is also Symbolic Attributive (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 105-106) because the participants are simply displaying themselves to the viewer.

The similar sort of structure is also present in the text as the company addresses the reader through a direct address *you* as in *Our mission is to make technology part of your lifestyle and to provide the most stylish accessories to fit it*. Both the people in the image and the story engage the visitor to the process. In fact, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 117-118) talk about the participants looking directly at the viewer and creating a connection. They even call this phenomenon as *visual you* as to emphasise that the eye-contact addresses the viewer. In addition, they claim that the smiles on the people's faces reflect a demand "to enter into a relation of social affinity with them".

The other three images are positioned above the extracts "Vision", "Mission" and "Brand heritage", to represent what these texts are about. In the first image there are three women who are carrying or touching bags. Notice also that all of them have different bags, which depicts the uniqueness of the products, which is also mentioned in the text below the image, *products that are unique*. There is one woman with black hair, who is definitely the main participant because she is positioned in front of the image. There is another woman with a brown bag who is a Reactor and who is looking what the

main participant is doing. The third woman is a Reactor as well, but it does not show, what it is she is reacting to. None of the women are looking directly at the viewer. On the other hand, the image is depicting the products the women use. The process in the image is reactional. The women obviously represent the company's customers and as such the image acts as a reinforcement for the text, which vaguely refers to the customers.

The second image depicts the company's products and also tries to convey image of stylish accessories and trends of future, the qualities that are also mentioned in the text. There is one main element, which is a bag in front of the image and four secondary elements, which are the bags behind the first one. There is no vector in the image, but instead the bags create a categorisation of the bags with different colours. As there is no action, there is also no Goal. However, one could think that in a way the image represents the development, there are different colours of the bags and they are developed even further as the technology also develops. On the other hand, the row of bags depicts continuity. The bags are Possessive Attributes that make up the whole of the Carrier, the Carrier being the stylish accessories and trends of future discussed in the text. Indeed, the Carrier in the image is implicitly depicted. Thus, there is also symbolism in the image. The bags can be considered as symbolic attributives of something that is not really depicted directly at all, while the process is Symbolic Suggestive. This image reinforces the text as it depicts the similar themes that are also present in the text.

The third image is an image of an owl with fairly strong colours. There is also continuity in this image as it seems the owl is flying forward. On the other hand, the image also represents the colours and prints mentioned in the text. The owl is an Actor and the process in the image is a non-transactional process, because there is no goal. When examining the image more closely, one can see that there are actually two owls, but because the one with the white outline stands out more and is on top of the other, while the dark blue almost blends in the background, the white one is the main participant and the dark one, although bigger than the other one, is a secondary participant.

Interestingly, Golla's visual elements and the corporate story emphasise different issues. The company is not actually depicted in the images, although in the stories the company

is fairly active. In fact, the images focus more on the products and what they are like, whereas the story also describes the company to some extent. Thus, in the visual look the emphasis is on the products, whereas the story conveys the image of the company. One could also consider that the visual features convey the brand image. Indeed, I already considered above Golla to be both services-oriented relationship-building and brand-building site.

When considering the overall visual structure of the websites, there are elements that seem to appear on almost all of the websites. When it comes to the outline and layout of the corporate websites, most of the websites have a separate, neutral coloured background. The placement of the website in almost all of the occasions is in the middle of the page, except Serres' website is placed on the left side of the page. In addition, the websites use both horizontal and vertical axis in the spatial composition of the elements, which makes the layout more interesting.

The company logo appears on seven of the eight websites. Only Palidoro does not have a company logo or any other identifier element on its website. The logo is placed on the top horizontal bar, usually on the left side of the bar. However, Mastsystem is an exception here as their company logo is on the right side of the bar. Nevertheless, the placement of the logo on the top of the page seems the most prevailing way to identify the company. Indeed, the top of the page offers the logo the best visibility, which helps the visitor to recognise whose website is in question. This also serves the purpose of corporate visual identity, as one of its functions is to help the audience to recognise the company (van den Bosch et al. 2006: 138; Hatch and Schultz 2000: 17; van Riel 2000: 167; Cornelissen 2008: 11, 66). Indeed, the company logo is also named as the identifier element in order to describe its role as an element used to identify the website (Melvasalo 2005: 130-131).

The company logo is not the only corporate element used on the company profiles. Indeed, both Kentek and Steerprop have also notification elements, which depict the third party references the companies have. Both of them also give third party evidence in their stories, although for Kentek the reference mentioned in the text is not the same as in the notification element. There are also other companies who use third party evidence in their stories, however, they have not included any visual elements referring to the third parties.

Most of the company profiles include some illustrative elements, however, there are those who have fairly few elements and those who have a very rich visual appearance. For example, Golla, Finlandia and Serres have quite many images on their profiles, whereas on Steerprop and Palidoro's company profiles there are only a few, which are actually in a very dominating role. The images on the profiles can be all considered as illustrative elements as they all create atmosphere and certain feeling for the site. Melvasalo (2005: 131) also claims that the illustrative elements make the website more interesting. This is the case for example in Steerprop's profile, in which the image of the ship is very strong and the sea is an interesting element with the constant movement. When considering the relation between the texts and the visual features, the images both reinforce and complement the information given in the texts, but in many occasions the images act especially as a reinforcement.

When considering the content of the images, most of them depict either the product or the industry the company is working. Mastsystem and Serres also have an image of the company building, which are the only occasions in which there is some reference to the company in the images. Indeed, none of the companies have images of the company's personnel or any other company members. In fact, there are not really any people in the images, except for Golla and Serres. However, the people depicted in their images are customers. However, one cannot be entirely certain of the people in the first image on Golla's profile (Image 10). Yet I believe they are current customers who are inviting the visitor to become Golla's customer.

The structures that are most prevailing in the images are analytical, reactional and non-transactional. There are four images with analytical structure and three reactional and non-transactional images. This implies that mostly the images on the corporate websites simply depict an object instead of showing any transactional processes in which somebody is doing something. Golla's image with the reactional process (Image 10) stands out as it involves the viewer in the process. On the other hand, the non-transactional structures depict continuity, as in Steerprop's image of the sea being in a constant movement or Finlandia's image of the water falling. Indeed, the emphasis on continuity also appeared in the corporate stories. Moreover, there is not really any symbolism in the images, except for Golla and Finlandia.

9 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this section I will briefly go through the main results of the present study and consider their implications in terms of the construction of corporate online presence. In addition, I will consider the online corporate stories as a discourse and a genre. Moreover, I will discuss the implications and the possible shortcomings of the present study.

9.1 Summary of the main results

When considering the visual aspects of the company profiles, the results show that mostly the images on the company profiles complement the texts. In addition, the placement of the elements on the profiles usually follows certain conventions. Furthermore, the companies consider it to be important to be recognised and thus, seven out of eight of the companies also provided their company logo as an identifier element. Interestingly, the companies rarely have people in their images and if they do, they usually depict the customers. In the corporate stories the emphasis was discovered to be on both the company and the products, while in the images the emphasis is mostly on the products or the industry. The images also rarely include any symbolism. Indeed, the images mostly include analytical processes focusing on depicting what is in the picture instead of depicting movement or action.

The present study shows that there are two types of corporate stories, the ones depicting the company as an active participant acting upon a goal, and the others describing the company or the products they sell. The stories are mostly informative, although they also include many descriptive processes. There are also elements of narratives, especially in the stories of Finlandia and Golla. One of the recurrent themes in the corporate stories is the recognition to be known world-wide or to have business also abroad. This is clearly obvious as the data consists of only exporting companies. Indeed, it seems to be important for the Finnish exporting companies to emphasise that they are working and known abroad.

I also discovered that most of the companies provide third party evidence to increase their credibility. They refer to for example business partners or well known quality standards in their stories. In addition, some of the companies refer to the continuation of

their businesses to point out that the company is developing further. In fact, in today's business world it seems to be a trend to emphasise that a company can cope with change and is constantly adapting to the future. This similar trend is seen in the corporate stories.

In addition to the conveyed attitudes, I also considered whether the companies address the readers. Only Golla and Kentek use the direct address *you*, while the others use more implicit ways to address the readers. This implies that although the corporate websites are considered as corporate advertising, they are softer than advertisements usually are. Of course it is possible that it is difficult to address such a big group as the company profiles are usually targeted at several audiences (Perry and Bodkin 2000: 96; Esrock and Leichty 2000: 338; Hwang et al. 2003: 11, 16). Indeed, the stories should be suited for anybody and thus, the companies may be reluctant to address a certain group of readers. Interestingly, previous studies have suggested that interactivity is one of the advantages of websites (Chaffey et al. 2009: 450; Esrock and Leichty 2000: 340). However, the visitors of the website are rarely engaged in any activity on the company profiles nor are they directly addressed. In fact, Kentek is the only one requesting the visitor to contact the company. Nevertheless, all of the companies provide their contact information on the websites. Indeed, this also implies that the marketing perspective on corporate websites is more subtle than in regular advertisements.

When it comes to the evaluative language, it was discovered that many of the companies fairly often leave the one making an evaluation unidentified. In other words, they omit the agent from the clause to portray the evaluation as something everybody agrees to. This is emphasised even further by using passive voice. Another typical way to use evaluative language is to use adjectives as modifiers in noun phrases. Moreover, the adjectives used mostly focused on the products as was the case in the study of Bolaños Medina et al. (2005: 142-143). In addition, the companies frequently also present claims as facts and give information in numbers especially when referring to the company's size and scope, which is also one of the issues raised in most of the corporate stories.

When comparing the results of the present study to Pollach's (2005) findings, there are lots of similarities. In fact, Pollach (2005: 291-297) also discovered that companies refer to third party evidence, give information in numbers, present claims as facts,

remove agents, refer to size and scope as well as describe themselves as leaders. However, in the present study there were only two companies, Golla and Serres, who describe themselves as leaders. In addition, as the images on the company profiles focus mostly on the products and the texts are more informative in nature, the present study shows similar results with the study of Bolaños Medina et al. (2005).

One major difference between the study of Pollach (2005) and the present study concerns the issue of humanising organisation. Indeed, Pollach (2005: 294) found out that the companies tend to humanise the organisation by providing pictures of their managing directors and identifying some of the people behind the organisation by name. However, this was not the case in the present study. In fact, the images rarely included any people at all and only Kentek mentioned its CEO by name. Pollach (2005: 288-290) also used the company profiles as the unit of analysis, however, the data was gathered from *Fortune*'s list, which included mostly American companies with only one Finnish company (Nokia), whereas the data of the present study was based on the list of the most successful Finnish exporting companies. Nevertheless, it is difficult to say whether this issue could be considered as a cultural difference. Indeed, more research is needed to define whether the corporate websites have any cultural differences.

When considering the genre-based view on the company profiles, it is clear that there is some sort of convention in the language use and also in the use of visual features. Indeed, the companies resort to similar structures both in their texts and in their visual manifestations. However, there are also differences between the companies. As said, there are two types of stories, the ones emphasising the company and the ones emphasising the products. This is not the only thing that separates the corporate stories. In fact, the companies also choose between the use of a company name and the first person plural *we*. The ones choosing to use the company name seem to have a more formal approach in their corporate stories, while the ones using the first person plural tend to have more informal texts. It is important to remember that these two are not exclusive, but there are also companies that use both the company name and the first person plural.

The visual manifestations of the company profiles also imply that there are certain conventions the companies are following. Indeed, both the placement of the visual elements and the content of the images presented on the company profiles imply that

there are rules how to organise the company profiles visually. For example the identifier element is one of the visual features that is often presented on a corporate website and usually on the right hand corner as the present study shows. Also the organisation of text and images seem to follow similar outlines as most of the companies have a separate neutral background for their corporate website and the navigation links are in most of the occasions placed in the top horizontal bar.

When it comes to the social aspects of company profiles, one of the most important things that is relevant to the future website designers is the combination of images and texts in order to promote both a company and its products. Indeed, as the results of the present study indicate, some of the companies use the texts in order to promote the company and in projecting corporate identity, while the images focus on the products. At times the images also relate to the industry the company is working, which implies that the companies determine their identities in terms of the industry they are involved in.

When considering the perspective of marketing public relations (MPR) introduced above (see chapter 2.1 page 10), it is clear that the corporate websites can be considered as part of MPR. In fact, most of the companies promoted both the company and the products in their corporate stories. Thus, the corporate websites do not only relate to marketing but also public relations activities. In addition, when comparing the suggestions of Hwang et al. (2003: 10) about the multiple functions of corporate websites, the results of the present study indicate similar conclusions. Indeed, the companies seem to use their websites for not only image-building but also for marketing and providing information about the products and the company.

9.2 Review of the study and implications for the future

In the present study the aim was to examine how the eight chosen Finnish exporting companies project their identities both linguistically and visually on their company profiles. In order to do this I pursued to combine the fields of linguistics, marketing and PR. The linguistic point of view gave the study the foundation for the text analysis while marketing and PR provided tools for analysing the social aspects of the corporate stories. In addition, I wanted to emphasise that corporate websites should be considered in terms of multimodality as the websites rely on both visual and linguistic features in

conveying messages. Therefore, I used the multimodal approach to discourses introduced by Kress and van Leeuwen (2001, 2006).

I believe the present study managed to combine the appropriate aspects of each field in order to examine the construction of corporate online presence. I also wanted to emphasise the importance of language in the construction of corporate online presence and the results of the present study show that language does play a role in the creation of corporate online presence and in some occasions it is one of the most important tools for projecting a company's identity. This is the case especially when there are no images involved, as the centre of attention is devoted entirely to the story.

Stein (2006) suggests the language errors on the screen are very unforgiving and I also believe that as there are no images, the language errors become even more visible. Although I have only briefly mentioned the language errors that appeared in the data of the present study, one cannot dismiss the fact that they exist. Indeed, it is important to pay attention to the quality of English, and I believe the companies should be more careful with the errors. The language errors can harm the company's reputation and credibility, even though the website otherwise is fine. Thus, for a company pursuing to project itself as professional and credible, especially to the foreign markets, it is essential to make sure that there are no errors on the corporate website. This way the company can manage its reputation.

The present study focused on a concept of corporate online presence. Although corporate online presence has been studied previously, the extent of the previous studies has not included such a systematic analysis of both the linguistic and visual aspects of identity construction. In addition, although the companies' online presence has been studied and referred to before, there has not been agreed practice for the concept. Therefore, I chose to determine the identity projected on the corporate websites through linguistic and visual features as corporate online presence. Indeed, this term follows in line with related concepts such as corporate identity, corporate image and visual corporate identity.

Besides launching the concept of corporate online presence, the present study also focused on the genre-based view on corporate websites. The results indicate that there is in fact a genre of corporate websites as there are conventions in the use of both

linguistic and visual features between the companies. The communicative purpose of the genre lies in the promotion of both the companies and their products and/or services. In addition, the model applied in the analysis of company profiles implies that it is possible to combine the analysis of language and images. More importantly, the present study also shows that the corporate online presence is more complex than the previous studies have acknowledged and that there is need for a study that takes into consideration all the layers in the construction of corporate online presence.

The present study also showed that the companies frequently exploit the multimodality of the Internet using both texts and images on their websites. There was only one company, Kentek, who did not include any images on its company profile. Moreover, there were two companies that had also slideshows on their websites. Although these were not part of the scope of the analysis, I believe these examples show that the companies are becoming more aware of the possibilities of corporate websites. Indeed, the future studies should also consider the use of video and moving images in the analysis of corporate websites and especially in terms of the additional value these might bring for both the company and the visitor.

When considering the implications of the present study, further study is still needed in order to understand the way companies construct their online presences. However, the present study has taken the steps towards a more comprehensive analysis of multimodal discourses and has also been groundbreaking in combining several fields of studies in order to observe corporate online presence from different points of views.

There are also limitations in the implementation of the present study. For example, the scope of the present study is fairly small as it includes only eight companies. In addition, the focus is only on the company profiles instead of the entire websites. Moreover, in some occasions the analysis did not even cover the entire company profile. Therefore, one cannot make any conclusions about corporate online presence reflected on the other pages of the corporate websites. Indeed, the results do not give a comprehensive picture of the companies' actual corporate online presence, but merely portrays the online presences projected in the corporate stories.

In addition, the data chosen for the present study only included Finnish exporting companies and as such the results cannot be generalised to concern all types of

corporate websites. Although the data was chosen very systematically from Kauppalehti's Achiever list, one cannot make generalisations concerning the Finnish exporting companies. Indeed, the eight chosen companies represent the top eight of the Finnish exporting companies, which could imply that some of them have quite advanced websites. In addition, some of the companies were fairly similar to each other, although mostly the companies were from different industries. There are clearly differences in the online presences when taking into considerations the industries and thus, it would be important to examine the websites of companies that are very different from each other.

When considering the perspective taken in the analysis, the focus was solely on the analysis of content. Indeed, the present study did not take into consideration the perspective of the website visitors. However, I believe further studies could apply both the analytical perspective and the visitors' perspective in order to get a more comprehensive picture of how corporate online presence conveys impressions and how it could be used as a tool for reputation management. Indeed, it would be interesting to explore how the visitors of the websites consider for example the use of a company name versus the first person plural.

I hope the present study has built a way for multimodal discourse analysis and encourages language analysts in the future to pay attention to also the visual manifestations of discourses besides the linguistic features. As such, the present study has pursued to be groundbreaking and also to cross the boundaries between the different fields.

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APPENDIX 1: Kauppa-lehti Achiever list 4 April 2011

Vientirytykset | Kauppa-lehti.fi

www.kauppa-lehti.fi/5/0/yritykset/menestyjat/vientikista.jsp

Tervetuloa Facebookiin

Yrityshaku Oma Yritys-uutiset Lehdistötiedotteet Tulostiedotteet Yrityskaupat Koulutushaku **Menestyjat** Protestilista 2000 suurinta

Markkinauutiset: Sijoittajat seuraavat Fedin pöytäkirjojen julkaisemista - Nordea

Vientirytykset

Menestyjat laillataan paremmuusjärjestykseen KL-pisteiden avulla. KL-luokituspisteet lasketaan usean eri tunnusluvun pohjalta: yritys on menestyvä, jos sen kannattavuus, vakavaraisuus sekä maksuvalmius ovat kaikki kunnossa. Menestyvät vientirytykset ovat valittu seuraavien kriteerien perusteella:

- Liikevaihdon on oltava yli 1,7 Meur
- KL-pisteiden on oltava vähintään 50
- Ulkomaantoimintojen osuus (vientä ja ulkomaiset tytäryhtiöt) on oltava yli 30 % yrityksen liikevaihdosta

Jos tilinpäätöksestä ei voida eriyttää Suomen ulkopuolista liikevaihtoa, voi yritys jäädä pois listalta. Tämän takia osa pörssiyrityksistä ei ole mukana, koska he eivät erikseen erittele tilinpäätöksissään Suomen liikevaihtoa. Sija-sarake kertoo koko Suomen menestyvien vientirytykset joukossa. Yksittäisen yrityksen löydät nopeiten [yrityshau](#) kautta.

Lista perustuu Kaupparekisteristä saatuihin 10/2009 - 04/2011 tilinpäätöstihtoihin.

Valitse maakunta: [Kaikki] Tarkenna paikkakunnalla: [Kaikki] Tarkenna toimialalla: [Kaikki]

Kaikki

Sija	Yrityksen nimi	Kotipaikka	Liikevaihto (Mili.€)	Nettotulos (Mili.€)	Ulkom.liikevaihto	Ulkom.toiminta (%)	KL-pisteet	Tähdet
1	Mastsystem Int'l Oy	Joensuu	22.06	7.68	21.9	99.4	96	★★★★★
2	Endeas Oy	Espoo	5.96	2.57	6.0	100.0	93	★★★★★
3	Golla konserni	Helsinki	24.90	3.81	24.0	96.4	89	★★★★★
4	Bayer Schering Pharma konserni	Turku	440.05	206.25	357.3	81.2	89	★★★★★
5	Serres Oy	Kauhajoki	17.99	3.15	12.8	71.4	86	★★★★★
6	Steerprop Oy	Rauma	35.44	5.63	35.4	100.0	83	★★★★★
7	Finlandia Vodka Worldwide Oy	Helsinki	63.12	13.06	60.1	95.2	83	★★★★★
8	Kentek konserni	Helsinki	13.86	1.41	10.4	75.1	83	★★★★★
9	Palidoro Oy	Turku	4.50	0.45	3.4	75.5	83	★★★★★
10	Arctic Oy	Helsinki	8.28	1.00	2.6	32.0	82	★★★★★

Autoliikkeiden luotettavat vaihtoautot >>

Volkswagen Sharan 45 900 €

Toyota Avenis 31 900 €

Uudet autot >>

Varusteita täysi auto >>

Mini Mini 35 778 €

AUTOTALLI.COM

Käynnissä Vientirytykset | Kaup...

10:26

APPENDIX 2: Endeas' corporate story

Endeas Oy

Background and present

The first Quicksun simulators were developed and delivered to in-house clients in a national energy company in Finland. In 1995 the simulator was exhibited publicly and immediately a US company ordered one system. This success encouraged for further development and marketing and the system was regularly exhibited in the following PV conferences. By the year 2000 more than 10 QuickSun solar simulators had been delivered and the product started to establish itself in the global market.

In the year 2001 Endeas Oy was founded and it acquired the QuickSun technology and patents. In the same year a proprietary optical device was developed for improving irradiance uniformity. With this option it was possible to construct a compact large area solar simulator with true Class A irradiance uniformity characteristics.

The proprietary QuickSun measurement technology was also applied for the testing of single crystalline silicon cells. A unique option called IDCAM was developed in 2003 and it enabled the evaluation of the physically meaningful equivalent circuit parameters in a production friendly and reliable way.

In 2004 Endeas Oy launched a new product, QuickSun 540LA In-Line Solar Simulator. This product enables the testing of PV modules with face down position. In addition, the testing capacity of this product is high enough in order to comply with the throughput requirements of any PV production line.

Today more than 400 QuickSun Solar Simulators have been delivered around the world. Majority of the simulators are delivered in co-operation with the partners and distributors as listed in the contacts page of this web site.

Endeas Oy continues its development work by concentrating on the refined analysis of the PV cells and modules during the standard IV curve measurement.

APPENDIX 3: Finlandia's corporate story

Glacial water

When water trickles through nature's filter, the result is pure

Respect for nature:

From nature to the bottle.

One of nature's most precious gifts to us is pure glacial spring water, the water we use to make our vodka. This water is in such pristine condition, it would be a shame to tamper with it in the slightest way.

So instead of trying to improve it, we respect it, admire it, and protect it.

Where others must filter water several times before it's pure enough, here, nature itself has given us the perfect filter: a glacial moraine that was created in the last Ice Age over 10,000 years ago.

Out of respect for nature, our vodka, and our vodka drinkers, we go to great lengths to protect our glacial spring, promising that the water we use today is as pure as it was thousands of years ago.

APPENDIX 4: Golla's corporate story

ABOUT GOLLA

The Golla story started in the early 90's in a small Finnish town. Two ambitious brothers began designing and crafting furniture out of metal in their father's old shed. They soon incorporated their strong sense of design by creating small functional items from rubber and plastic, which were sold around the world and even appeared in the MoMa gift shop in New York. By the turn of the millennium, a new era began when one of the brothers saw a market in fashionable accessories for portable electronic devices, just as the mobile revolution emerged. Golla joined this revolution and started bringing fashion and colour into the world of electronics. The Golla bags brought something new and unique with fresh styles and prints. Throughout the years, the collection of bags kept growing and has been introduced to new markets all around the globe. Today the success story continues and Golla has attracted more than 40 million users of Generation Mobile worldwide.

Vision

Our vision is to be the leading consumer brand of fashionable carrying solutions for portable electronics around the world. We continuously set new trends with products that are unique, useful and universally appealing.

Mission

Our mission is to make technology part of your lifestyle and to provide the most stylish accessories to fit it. The market of electronic is developing fast and new technology shapes the customers' needs and preferences. By staying innovative, Golla will help shape the products and trends of the future.

Brand heritage

Golla is the original brand that brought colors and prints to portable electronics. Designing fashion bags for portable electronics is our specialty. Golla bags are known worldwide for their array of colours, stylish prints and good quality.

APPENDIX 5: Kentek's corporate story

KENTEK OY

Founded 1980

Private owned company

Managing Director: Mr Markku Blomqvist

Daughter companies:

KENTEK EESTI OÜ in Tallinn, KENTEK LATVIJA SIA in Riga, UAB KENTEK

LIETUVA in Vilnius,

ZAO KENTEK in St.Petersburg and in Moscow

Offices in Vantaa, Tallinn, Riga, Vilnius, St.Petersburg and Moscow

Business Concept

KENTEK supplies internationally valued quality products for heavy duty on-road and off-road vehicles.

We especially appreciate quality, and supervise our working according to the criteria of the Finnish Quality Award.

Our competent staff is all the time ready to serve you. We find solutions to your requirements, and take care of the logistics - from producers into your warehouse.

We offer you tailor-made total deliveries, stock the goods and make shipments just on time.

Our daughter companies in the Baltics and in Russia offer reliable service also for Finnish off- and on- road contractors and manufacturers.

Do not hesitate to contact us.

APPENDIX 6: Mastsystem's corporate story

About Us

Company

Cobham Mast Systems' know-how and understanding of customers' needs and requirements, together with material and manufacturing expertise, are based on more than 30 years of experience. While Cobham Mast Systems has the industry's widest range of standard, commercial off the shelf (COTS) composite masts, antenna pointing devices, and vehicle mounting systems available for rapid delivery, Cobham Mast Systems is also able to provide a custom, fully integrated solution precisely tailored to the application.

Quality

Cobham Mast Systems' quality system fulfils the requirements of ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and AQAP 2110 standards. The carbon and glass fiber composite masts have been proven to meet MIL-STD 810 F requirements to function in all extremes of environmental conditions. Masts are also tested against lightning strikes.

Products

Cobham Mast Systems manufactures seven main product lines: TM-, TR-, EX-, EXL- and EXB-masts, telescopic lifting poles and tripods including accessories for deployment. Masts are available from vehicle mounted unguyed masts to 50 m stand alone field masts. Every detail is designed for reliability and quick and safe operation. Masts exceed the military's requirements for maintainability and require very little service. Cobham Mast Systems' telescopic masts have been used extensively around the world and have proven to be fully operational after long exposure to sand, dust, ice or snow.

APPENDIX 7: Palidoro's corporate story

Palidoro

We have a long experience from shipbuilding and ship's electrical work. We have been working for Wärtsilä Turku Shipyard and for example Kvaerner, Mitsubishi, Alstom and Fincantieri yards.

We are specialized ship's electrical systems; installation, service, maintenance, engineering and manufacturing electrical cabinets. Our superior knowledge is on ship's main and auxiliary engines and its accessory equipment.

Our office is located in the city centre, near the railway station and harbour. Still the deliveries and pick-ups can be handled with a heavy transport because we have a big space for parking.

We are working closely with engine supplier and ship owners. Our personnel work on board and on shipyards around the world and are on call around the clock.

APPENDIX 8: Serres' corporate story

About Serres

Serres Oy is a Finnish family-owned company with a strong international market position in two product lines, suction liner systems for hospitals and drainage systems for buildings. Serres Oy was established in 1973 and from the beginning success has been based on combining the expertise in plastics design and manufacturing with customer needs. Serres products are known for their innovativeness and high quality, but a very important success factor is also the extensive distributor and partner network, both in Finland and abroad.

Hospital Business

Serres develops, manufactures and markets plastic disposable products used in operating rooms (OR), intensive care units (ICU) and other departments in hospitals. Serres suction liner systems have been used in hospitals for the collection and disposal of fluids for more than two decades already, but the new innovative Serres Suction System that was introduced in 2000 has enabled Serres to become the largest European manufacturer of suction bags.

Continuous in-house R&D is one of the cornerstones of bringing innovations and new products to the market. The latest launch has been the suction tubes for connecting suction devices to waste collection systems. With this addition Serres can offer a complete range of products for suction procedures in hospitals.

Serres products are available in almost 30 markets throughout the world. In particular, Europe is well-covered, the biggest markets being Germany, UK, France and Spain. Success in the highly competitive export markets is largely based on a solid network of reliable and carefully selected and trained partners distributing Serres products to the end-users.

In the domestic market Serres has its own sales, marketing and distribution and is a well-known supplier of hospital disposables in Finland. For a company interested in introducing new products on the Finnish hospital market, particularly for operating rooms and intensive care units, Serres can offer an established and specialised organisation to reach the customers.

Vieser

In the sanitary business the products designed and manufactured by Serres are sold under the brand Vieser. Vieser – smart with water, consists of a complete and high-quality range of products covering water trap, grating and floor drain systems with required accessories.

APPENDIX 9: Steerprop's corporate story

THE AZIMUTH PROPULSION COMPANY

Steerprop Ltd. was established in 2000 by personnel with decades of experience with azimuth propulsion to produce high quality azimuth propulsors with outstanding lifetime economy.

It is not enough for Steerprop Ltd. to deliver a single shipment of quality azimuth propulsors to its clients. Steerprop Ltd. also offers lifetime service of its products to ensure that the propulsors stay as efficient and reliable as possible.

Steerprop Ltd. has been certified according to the ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and the OHSAS 18001 standards.