

# Research on the International Corporate Image of Chinese Auto Enterprises Based on the Now Corpus: Taking BYD as an Example

Li,Xi

China University of Petroleum (East China), Qingdao, Shandong Province, 266580

**Abstract:** This paper uses the NOW corpus to study the global media attention and discourse tendency of BYD. Through searching the keyword “BYD”, this paper analyzes the frequency of BYD being mentioned in international media, reporting countries, high-frequency words and collocations, in order to comprehensively understand the image of BYD in international media. The research reveals that BYD’s predominant image is characterized by advanced technology and innovation. Through relevant research and analysis, the author hopes to use BYD’s success as an example to provide relevant reference for other Chinese new energy vehicle companies in terms of external promotion and export.

**Keywords:** Corporate image; Corpus; Global media; BYD

DOI: 10.62639/sspjins05.20240101

## 1. Introduction

Foreign research on corporate image can be traced back to the 1950s. (Kennedy, 1977) N. Dexter (1964) in his research *The Relationship of Corporate Image to Product Behavior* had a definition on corporate image. Abratt (1989, p.67) hold the view that “The overall impression formed by these cues in the minds of audiences constitutes an image.

Drawing from Yan’s (2002) perspective, corporate image is essentially the cumulative impression and evaluation that the public holds towards an enterprise. A favorable corporate image signifies widespread public acknowledgment and appreciation of the enterprise, thus serving as a crucial prerequisite for establishing a positive role in the market. There are two main elements influencing corporate image in different ways: one is internal elements, the other is outer elements. The internal elements are the image created by the enterprise and its own workers, while the outer elements are the image constructed by the public out of the companies. From the classification by country, corporate image can be divided into domestic image as well as international image. This paper focuses on the perception of BYD’s international image by international English media.

BYD is a well-known Chinese manufacturer of new energy vehicles and batteries, and was selected as one of the founding members of the UNPD Private Sector Advisory Board in 2016. In addition, BYD is actively involved in overseas markets to provide high-quality new energy vehicles and trams to consumers around the world. In 1998, BYD built its first subsidiary corporation in foreign countries, the European subsidiary company. And in 2018, BYD’s U.S. electric-powered bus plant, which is the largest bus plant in North America, went into production. BYD has received a lot of attention from international English media and its international image building.

---

(Manuscript NO.: JINSS-24-1-LL001)

### About the Author

Li,Xi (1999-05), Female, Han ethnicity; Native Place: Baoding, Hebei province; MTI of China University of Petroleum (East China); Research Direction: International Cooperation & Business.

2. Research Methodology and Subjects

This study uses the open corpus NOW (News on the Web), it is the biggest monitor corpus of English, and contains about over a billion words from web-based newspapers and magazines from 2010 to the present time. The corpus grows by about a million words of data each month.

This study extracts word frequencies and collocations from BYD’s coverage in the NOW corpus, from web-based newspapers and magazines from 2010 to the time January 31, 2024, and examines BYD’s image in international English media news coverage from a corpus linguistic perspective.

3. Research Theme

This paper analyzes international media coverage of BYD in anticipation of understanding the image of BYD under international media. This study mainly focuses on the following questions: what is the coverage of English media to BYD? What are the main concerns from English media? How is the image of BYD constructed by English media?

4. Data Analysis

(1) Analysis of word frequencies

Media coverage serves as a metric to gauge the extent of media attention and public interest towards a specific topic. Media coverage is a multidimensional indicator, involving keyword search statistics, media report analysis, etc. Search “BYD” in the NOW to analyze the frequency of international media coverage of BYD over time and the distribution of countries covered, so as to understand the attention of international media to BYD.

1) Frequency of reporting over time

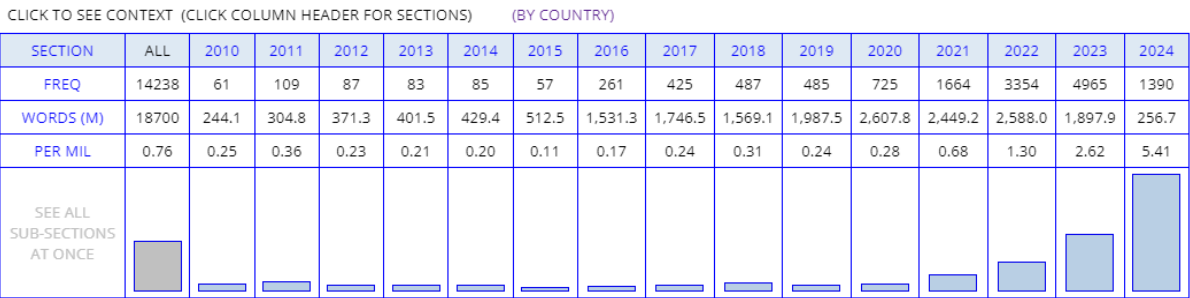


Figure 1 Frequency of Reporting over Time

According to the results of the NOW corpus, in the past 14 years from January 1, 2010 to February 2024, the word “BYD” appeared as many as 14,238 times in the international English media. This data not only reflects the global popularity and influence of BYD, but also reveals the trend of international media coverage. During these 14 years, the frequency of international English-language media coverage of BYD has grown continuously. Especially in 2010, BYD was reported only 61 times, showing that its visibility in the international arena was still relatively low at that time. Whereas, the frequency of coverage starts to increase dramatically to 1,664 times in 2021, and reaches its peak in 2023, with 4,965 times of coverage. This shows a significant increase in media attention to BYD after 2021. Observation of the words about BYD in NOW reveals that media attention coincides with some events, such as the global impact of the COVID19 after 2020 has brought attention to environmental goals such as carbon neutrality, and as a well-known brand of trolley buses BYD’s frequency of coverage climbs rapidly after 2020. As global demand for new energy vehicles continues to grow, BYD’s frequency of coverage rises.

## 2) Distribution of reporting countries

In the past fourteen years, the country with the highest frequency of reports on BYD is the United States with 4,151 times, followed by India with 1,616 times, and the third is Australia with 1,447 times. Among them, Tanzania and Jamaica reported BYD at least 5 times and 4 times respectively. The reasons for the relatively high attention to BYD in the U.S. may be as follows: BYD's products have been got credit, and the sales volume in the U.S. market has been increasing; BYD has been reported mainly in developed countries, but some underdeveloped countries are also included; the continents of the reporting English media covers many continents, such as Europe, Asia, Africa, etc.; and the cultures of the countries of the reporting media are also has its difference, which indicates that BYD has received wide attention globally. This shows that BYD has gained wide attention in the world. The frequency and country distribution of BYD in the international media show that BYD has a certain degree of popularity and influence in the international market.

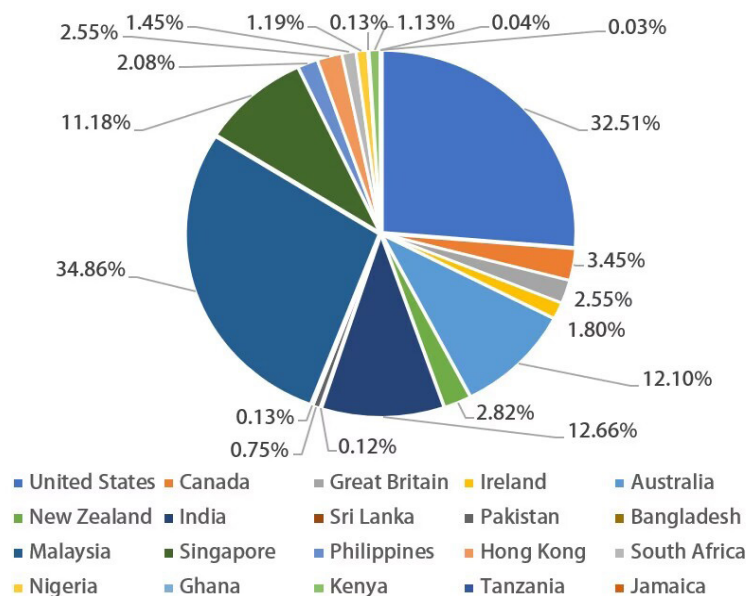


Figure 2 Distribution of Reporting Countries

Frequency by country (Return to frequency by year)				
SECTION	FREQ	SIZE (M)	PER MIL	CLICK FOR CONTEXT (SEE ALL)
United States	4151	7,381.9	0.56	
Canada	440	2,288.2	0.19	
Great Britain	326	2,618.9	0.12	
Ireland	230	1,273.0	0.18	
Australia	1545	1,402.8	1.10	
New Zealand	360	685.1	0.53	
India	1616	2,055.5	0.79	
Sri Lanka	15	144.5	0.10	
Pakistan	96	412.8	0.23	
Bangladesh	17	100.8	0.17	
Malaysia	1447	402.2	3.60	
Singapore	1427	648.8	2.20	
Philippines	265	520.0	0.51	
Hong Kong	326	92.7	3.52	
South Africa	185	839.9	0.22	
Nigeria	152	968.0	0.16	
Ghana	17	161.7	0.11	
Kenya	144	295.4	0.49	
Tanzania	5	39.6	0.13	
Jamaica	4	59.5	0.07	

Figure 3 Frequency of Reporting Countries

## (2) Distribution of high-frequency collocations

### 1) Most frequent word collocations

Analyzing the “BYD” related collocations can help people feel the attitude of the international English media and the public towards the electric auto company. Taking “BYD” as the node word, spanning from L5 to R5, the top 20 collocations with “BYD” are counted, and the most frequent collocations with BYD are CO, AUTO, 3, ATTO, CHINA, LI, ELECTRIC, XPENG, EV, BYD, TESLA, NIO, BIO, BDY. ELECTRIC, XPENG, EV, BYD, TESLA, NIO, BATTERY, SHOU, VEHICLE, LTD, VEHICLES, CAR. (Due to the fact that “.” is not a word, it is postponed to the 21st position in the frequency ranking. BYD-related collocations can be categorized into 2 groups: company identity and benchmark brands.

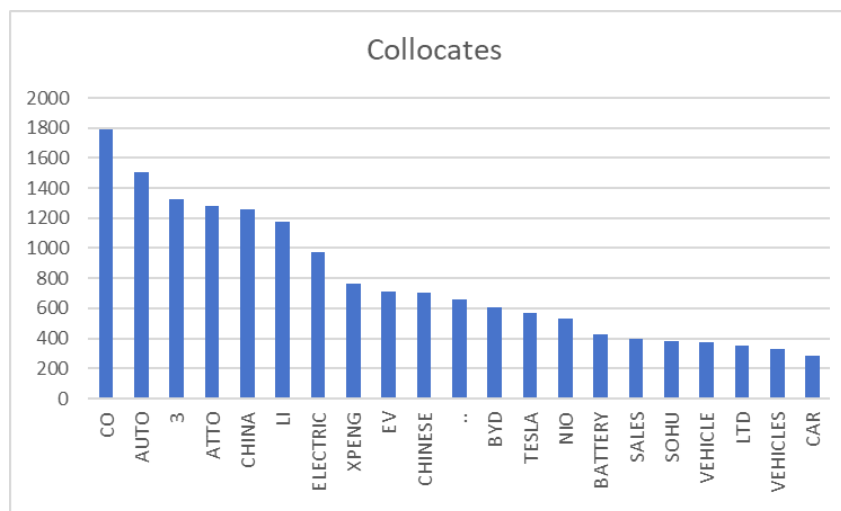


Figure 4 Most Frequent Word Collocations

The first category of company logos: CO, AUTO, CHINA, ELECTRIC, CHINESE, BATTERY, LTD, VEHICLES, CAR; this category is mainly related to the media's perception of BYD and its brand. Looking at the specific corpus of such collocations, it can be found that: CHINA and CHINESE have a high frequency of co-occurrence with BYD, such as “Chinese EV company”, “China's biggest carmaker, BYD”. ELECTRIC, BATTERY, etc. also appear with high frequency with BYD, such as “electric car manufacturer, BYD”, “electric car giant? BYD”, “BYD Electric BYD”, “BYD Electric Vehicle company” and “Specializing in battery design and manufacturing, BYD”, etc., suggesting that the media have spoken about BYD and its industry, emphasizing that BYD's technology in electric vehicles and batteries has received more attention than the company's technology in electric vehicles and batteries. The above word collocations show that BYD is a major supplier in the electric vehicle and battery industry. These word combinations suggest that BYD is viewed by international media as a Chinese supplier of new energy vehicles and trams, and that the company is large and technologically advanced.

The second category benchmark brands: BYD, TESLA, NIO, XPENG, LI. By analyzing this category, it can be found that the term BYD often appears together with Chinese and foreign new energy vehicle brands XPENG, NIO and Tesla. All of these brands are newly emerging players in the new energy vehicle sector, engaging in a close and competitive relationship with each other in the market. Furthermore, the concurrent emergence of these new energy vehicle brands also indicates that when reporting on this field, the international media tends to focus on the analysis and comparison of various new energy vehicles. It also indirectly shows that BYD has a good market in the new energy vehicle industry.

### 2) Most frequent word collocations

Taking BYD as the node word, select the verbs from L5 to R5 and count the top 20 verbs with BYD in terms of word frequency. It can be found that the top 20 are SOLD, BUILD, LAUNCHED, BACKED, DELIVERD, SELLING, STANDS,

UNVEILED, BYD, SEAL, FOUNDED, RECOMMENDATIONS, MOTORS, LUNCHES, EQUIPED, INVESTED, PRICED, EXPECTS, SEAL, GAINED, MAUNFACTURED. (Due to the fact that “BDY” is not a verb, it is postponed to the 21st position in the frequency ranking.) The author categorizes the above collocates to reveal BYD’s role position in the related reports. The above collocates can be categorized into two types: manufacture and investment.

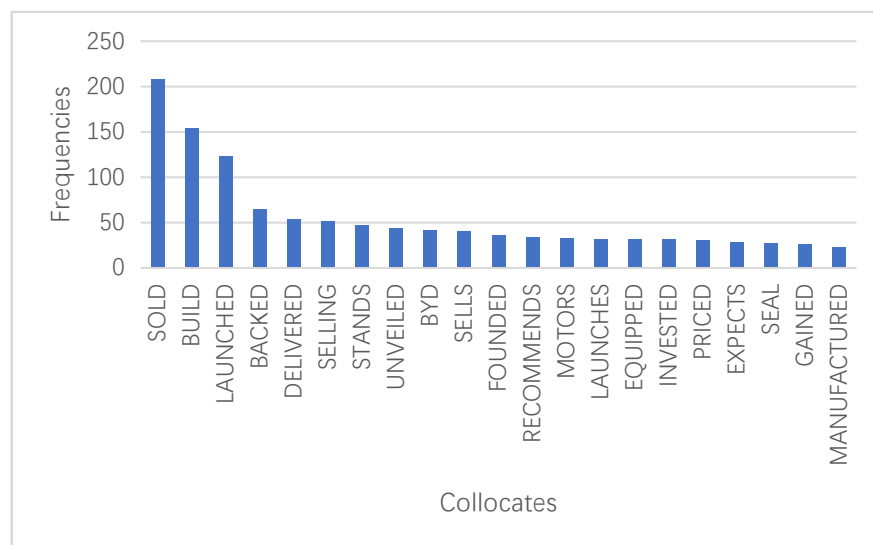


Figure 5 Most Frequent Word Collocations

First, the manufacturing collocates show that the international media is more concerned about the products built by BYD. “BYD launched its AI-powered smart car system”, “BYD launched its first passenger car”. The word “LAUNCHED” describes BYD’s continuous introduction of new products and technologies, which reflects BYD’s innovative philosophy that allows BYD to continue to grow in the market. The word “UNVEILED” is also very crucial. The contexts in which the word is used, such as “BYD unveiled its plan”, “BYD unveiled a monorail system”, etc., are also very important. It also shows that BYD is very active, and that it is constantly launching new models and technologies, so that BYD can attract the international media, and continue to improve its international influence.

Secondly, the market investment collocates show that the international media pays more attention to BYD’s business performance. The word “BYD - backed by US investor Warren Buffett” and “BACKED” show that BYD has been invested. “BYD has already invested”, “INVESTED” shows that BYD keeps on investing and bringing money into production, market and so on. And it also shows that BYD has strong competitiveness in the automobile field and reflects BYD’s increasing brand value. “BYD gained a 9% market share”, the word “GAINED” shows that BYD’s market share is constantly growing, reflecting BYD’s competitiveness is constantly improving, and also showing BYD’s excellent performance and strong growth momentum in the field of new energy. The word “GAINED” shows its growing market share and is increasing competitiveness, and BYD’s excellent performance and strong growth momentum in the new energy field.

To summarize, BYD’s image in the international media is that it is an enterprise with strong competitiveness, innovation and rapid development in the field of new energy vehicles.

## 5. Conclusion

This study uses the NOW corpus to search and analyze the corpus with “BYD” as the keyword, aiming to analyze BYD’s coverage and image characteristics in the international media through the frequency, as well as the number and characteristics of its collocates. From the search high-frequency words, the international media’s attention to it has increased significantly from 2010 to early 2014, which reflects BYD’s increasing attention and influence in the

international market. Through the study of BYD collocates, it is found that the words related to BYD mainly cover its innovation drive, expanding market, and so on. On the other hand, BYD-related collocates show that BYD has been actively building factories overseas, and overseas investors have invested in BYD, all of which show that BYD has been actively “going out” and expanding overseas markets in recent years. This study focuses not only on BYD, but also on Chinese companies. Through the study of BYD’s international image, we can promote Chinese enterprises to bitterly go global.

## References

- [1] Blombaeck, A. , & Axelsson, B. . (2007). The role of corporate brand image in the selection of new subcontractors. *The Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*.
- [2] Bai, Y. , & Yao, R. . (2023). Visualizing environmental management: corporate environmental images information disclosure and idiosyncratic risk. *Environmental impact assessment review*.
- [3] Chen Xiaodong. (2001). Exploration of entrepreneurial image, corporate image, and product image. *Journal of Soochow University*(01),50-55.
- [4] Chen Yaokun, Chen Yiwen. (1999). A review of corporate image research. *Psychological Dynamics* (01).
- [5] Christensen, L. T. , & Askegaard, S. . (2001). Corporate identity and corporate image revisited - a semiotic perspective. *European Journal of Marketing*, 35(3/4), 292-315.
- [6] DEXTERNEADLE. (1964). The relationship of corporate image to product behavior. *Public Opinion Quarterly*(XXVIII-2).
- [7] Hooghiemstra, R. . (2000). Corporate communication and impression management – new perspectives why companies engage in corporate social reporting. *Journal of Business Ethics*.
- [8] Kennedy, S.H. (1977), "Nurturing Corporate Images", *European Journal of Marketing*, 119-164.
- [9] Li, Xin (2013). Research on the shaping and management of corporate brand image. *Science-Technology and Management* (05), 86-89.
- [10] Liu Jing. (2020). Research on the global media image of China’s new first-tier cities - An empirical analysis of Hangzhou-related reports based on the NOW corpus (2010-2017). *Youth Journalist* (12), 44-45.
- [11] Mahon, & J. , F. . (2013). Corporate reputation research agenda using strategy and stakeholder literature. *Business & Society*, 41(4), 415-445.
- [12] Meng Fanyi, & Huifen Fu. (2016). A study on the path of Chinese brands utilizing cultural elements to improve foreign consumers’ brand attitudes. *Foreign Economics & Management*, 38(4), 15.
- [13] Mostafa, R. B. , Lages, C. R. , Shabbir, H. A. , & Thwaites, D. . (2015). Corporate image: a service recovery perspective. *Journal of Service Research*, 18(4), 468-483.
- [14] Peng Siqing, Gao Yuan, & Wang Rui. (2023). Exploring the internationalization paths of Chinese specialized, special and new manufacturing enterprises: A multi-case study based on the Ansoff matrix. *Journal of East China Normal University: Journal of East China Normal University (Humanities and Social Sciences)*, 55(5), 154-169.
- [15] Shee, P. S. B., & Abratt, R. (1989). A new approach to the corporate image management process. *Journal of marketing management*, 5(1), 63-76.
- [16] Yan Huiwu. (2002). Public relations and corporate image building. *Journal of Social Sciences of Xiangtan University* (04), 72-74.
- [17] Zhang Jun. (2007). CIS strategy and corporate image building. *China Market*(01), 53-54.P.85-85.