Tourism Discourse and Corporate Identity: A corpus-based study on eco-hotels' websites

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1. Introduction and Aim

This work, as a case study, focuses on the analysis of *tourism discourse* (Dann 1996; Gotti 2006; Maci 2013) – i.e. English as specialised and promotional discourse in the tourism field – applied by twelve websites promoting eco-hotels, when they build their corporate identity and communicate it online to the 'global audience'.

Tourism discourse (Dann 1996; Gotti 2006; Maci 2013, Manca 2016) is a relatively recent area of study (Nigro 2006: 75). It is defined as a "sub-system of the common language used in professional, technical or scientific areas for descriptive or communicative purposes" (Gotti 2006: 15-34).

Corporate identity, or corporate image (Balmer 2001), refers to the way firms or businesses present themselves to the global market. The Cambridge Advanced English Dictionary defines it as "the way in which a company is seen or understood by people in general" and the Collins English Dictionary, as "the way an organisation is presented to or perceived by its members and the public".

Further studies are carried out by Balmer (2008), Gotsi (2001), Brown (2006) and Bromley (2000), to name just a few.

Corporate identity and its formation are not, however, the purpose of this paper. The focus is on the linguistic choices adopted by the twelve websites when they communicate their corporate image online. Besides, following Turnbull's theories (Turnbull, 2007) the relationship

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which the twelve websites establish with their potential customers will also be investigated.

This paper aims to provide a further contribution to the study of tourism discourse by contrasting the linguistic choices adopted by twelve corporate websites – six British and six Italian – of **eco-hotels**. It presents a corpus-based contrastive analysis which helps understand how discourse is employed when websites communicate their corporate image online.

The focus is on the linguistic choices adopted by the websites in order to check how tourism discourse is employed in order to:
– 'seduce' and turn potential clients into actual clients (Dann 1996; Maci 2013);
– communicate their corporate image online, with special reference to a *green* image (Dann, 1996; Gotti, 2006; Spinzi, 2010; Maci, 2013; Manca, 2016a)
– establish an interaction with their potential customers (Turnbull, 2007).

With reference to the third issue, the present paper is rooted in Turnbull's studies (2007). In her contrastive analysis between British and Italian corporate websites she highlights that British firms tend to establish a friendly relationship with the addressees of their websites, while the Italian ones – in the English version of their websites – prefer to underline their role as experts (Turnbull 2007: 19-28).

As a matter of fact, the results obtained in this analysis, which are shown and commented in Paragraph 6 and in the Appendix, emphasise the fact that the British websites seem more inclined than the Italian ones to establish a 'peer to peer' relationship with their potential customers, while the Italian ones appear to be more concerned with the presentation of their exclusive services, especially *green* services, showing they privilege a kind of authoritative attitude towards their potential customers, i.e. they underline the superiority of their services and their role as experts, compared to their competitors.

2. Theoretical Framework

In his work *The Language of Tourism. A Sociolinguistic Perspective* Dann (1996: 2) claims that "tourism, in the act of promotion, […] has a discourse of its own. […] The language of tourism attempts to persuade, lure, woo, and seduce millions of human beings and, in so doing, convert them from potential into actual clients".

"The language of tourism […] is highly persuasive because its ultimate purpose is to sell a product/service by describing a reality which has to be perceived by the potential tourist as being authentically and genuinely *off-the-beaten-track*. […] Furthermore, the idea of something *off-the-beaten-track* makes the product sound exclusive, thus providing added value"(Maci 2013: 21).

Besides Dann's *The Language of Tourism. A socio-linguistic perspective* (1996), the most meaningful works on English as the language of tourism undoubtedly include contributions such as Van den Abbeele and Fodde's volume (2012) on the growing awareness of the socio-cultural dimension of global tourism; Gotti (2006), who investigates the linguistic features of tourism discourse; Cappelli (2006), who concentrates on the linguistic strategies of tourism discourse; Francesconi (2005; 2007), who focuses on the language of tourism promotion, and Manca (2016), who deals with persuasion in tourism discourse.

Fewer studies, however, have tried to explore the relationship between tourism discourse used to convey a corporate identity online, on the one hand, and eco-hotels on the other. The present article is an attempt to address this gap in literature.

A further theoretical support to the analysis here proposed is also carried out by the geographer Edward Soja's (2001) work. He makes a distinction between the category of *perceived space*, which mainly consists of concrete spatial forms, and that of *conceived space*, i.e. "a spatial variety adopted in specific circumstances, constructed in mental forms and expressed in systems of signs and symbols". Furthermore, Soja introduces the concept of a *third space* or *lived space,* beyond a perceived form or *conceived* construct: it refers to the lifeworld of events, experiences and emotions (Soja 2011: 82).

It is specifically this "third space, where roles and values meet, that is today largely occupied by new technologies and the media" (Salvi 2013: 17).

Such a *third space* – which in our case refers to the websites of the eco-hotels considered – will be taken into consideration in the present paper through an analysis of the linguistic choices adopted by the corporate websites mentioned in defining their corporate identity and providing their 'green' image for the global market.

The reason why eco-hotels have been chosen lies in a current and widespread awareness of environmental issues such as global warming, climate change, the consumption of natural resources and the opportunity of renewable resources. Ecotourism is defined as a

"responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people" (International Ecotourism Society 2002). Consequently sustainability, sustainable tourism, responsible tourism and green tourism have recently become frequent preoccupations both in destination marketing and in the individual decision making process (Spinzi 2013).

It goes without saying that if any company in the world addresses an international market, it must provide an English version of its website; as a matter of fact "the market dictates the language used and it would not be cost-efficient to adopt any other language but English" (Maci 2013: 21).

The role of English as an international language of communication (Guido 2008; Jenkins 2007) has long been established in the business world; it is the main means of information exchange both for native speakers of English and for speakers of English as a second or foreign language. Therefore, it is obvious any brand will adopt it in order to reach a wider range of potential customers.

As for the English version of the Italian websites included in the present study, the English language is analysed in its promotional purposes; issues concerning the theory and practice of translation are not under scrutiny in this paper.

3. Data and Methodology

A combined methodological approach, both qualitative and quantitative, is adopted in order to undertake discourse analysis in the field of tourism; the Corpus Linguistics approach (Teubert 2005; Nigro 2006) is privileged, in order to extract quantitative data; the qualitative analysis is derived from the interpretation of the data from a linguistic perspective (Manca 2016; Corbetta 1999; 2015).

Before the actual linguistic analysis of the websites chosen, it is useful to point out some of the fundamental features of eco-hotels.

By **eco-hotel** we mean a hotel or accommodation structure that has made significant environmental improvements to its structure in order to reduce its environmental impact.

By environmental sustainability in the hospitality sector we mean the development of new businesses which reduce the environmental impact (Bohdanovicz *et al.* 2015), mainly by reducing energy and water consumption as well as water, air and soil emissions.

Such a 'green' movement has improved the ecological performances of many hotel companies, thus limiting costs and improving their brand image (*ibid.*).

The eco-hotels here examined address both a national and an international market; the Italian ones, besides their Italian version for a national market, present an English version (Guido 2008; Jenkins 2007) in order to address a wider market.

As specified before, English is analysed only in its promotional purposes.

The present paper constitutes an introductory study to the analysis of the corporate image of eco-hotels conveyed online. A further analysis will be carried out by the author on a larger corpus of web-texts which will take into consideration more eco-hotels both in Italy and in Britain.

The analysis of the iconic components of the twelve websites is not one of the objectives in the present paper.

The eco-hotels analysed in this paper are the following:
– *British Eco-Hotels*
1) Luxury Country House, Sligo (Ireland)
2) Croeso, LLansanffrraes Court (Wales)
3) Delphi Resort (Ireland)
4) Stratton Hotel (Norfolk)
5) Lancrigg Vegetarian Hotel (Cumbria)
6) Gleneagles (Scotland)
– *Italian Eco-Hotels*
1) Leitlhof – Dolomiten (South Tyrol)
2) Relais del Maro, Diffuse Hotel (Liguria)
3) Lafay Resort (Garda Lake)
4) Agriturismo L'Adagio (Liguria)
5) Hotel Milano Scala (Milan)
6) Josephus, Schnaltal, (South Tyrol)

These eco-hotels were chosen on the basis of their geographical distribution. As for the UK, they cover a territory which extends from Scotland to Wales and, outside the UK, also includes Ireland (Eire). As for Italy, where eco-hotels are not so widespread yet as in the UK or other European countries, the choice privileged the ones located in Northern Italy, where a higher occurrence of such facilities has been registered (i.e. Lombardy, Liguria, Trentino-South Tyrol).

Eco-hotels are defined by Arthur Weissman[1] – President of Green Seal Inc. – as environmentally responsible (or sustainable) accommodation structures which minimize environmental impacts in

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[1] Cf. http://www.greenbiz.com.

purchasing, operations and plant management. This, of course, implies enhancing the health and well-being of guests and staff, because many of a property's environmental impacts are on-site. This also means reducing waste, toxicity and overall costs, because operating in a sustainable way is economical by definition. Being a 'green' hotel does not mean compromising on guest satisfaction or the performance of products and services. Any environmentally responsible product or service must work well or it is of no value, so guests should be as satisfied with the green features in a hotel as with more conventional ones. Finally, being 'green' is not necessarily a single state or end-condition, but rather a process of continuous improvement above a minimum threshold as technologies and procedures develop.

All the websites of the eco-hotels included in this analysis specify that their structures all observe and share the following core principles:
– they use local products to reduce energy waste;
– they minimise energy consumption, waste and landfill;
– the hotel's staff will look at the lifecycle of everything that comes into the hotel;
– they will only deal with organisations that have high welfare standards.

To the purpose of the present study a methodological approach was necessary, which could provide analytical results based on observation, description and analysis of the collected data (Nigro 2006).

The Corpus Linguistics approach (Teubert 2005: 3, Nigro 2006) is therefore privileged, in order to extract quantitative data. The support of *WordSmith Tool* was employed. "Corpus Linguistics is empirical. Its object is real language data" (Nigro 2006: 76). A qualitative analysis has followed, in order to interpret the data from a linguistic perspective (Manca 2016; Corbetta 1999; 2015).

The total corpus of the websites examined consists of 3,394 words (1,962 words in British websites and 1,432 in Italian websites) and refers to their respective 'Homepage' and 'Description' sections. As stated before "A corporate website needs to create a profile of the company which distinguishes it from its competitors" […]; "the brand image and the corporate identity […] all contribute to this profile and influence linguistic choices and the organization of the discourse" (Salvi 2013).

Consequently, in order to analyse the corporate image conveyed by each eco-hotel, the focus has specifically been on the occurrences of the following lexico-grammatical features 14 employed by the two sub-corpora, namely:

1) the use of *possessive adjectives/pronouns and personal pronouns* (your/s; our/s, we; you; they) which shows how the addresser "establishes a direct relationship with the readership" (Halliday, Mathiessen 2004) by personally involving the addressee. No distinction has been highlighted, however, between you-your/s in singular or plural form.

2) the choice of *pre/postmodifiers* with positive connotations (Dann 1996: 65), in order to describe the company's products/services and highlight their value and uniqueness. The concepts of collocation and colligation (Firth 1957; Sinclair 2003) were not under scrutiny in the present paper. In our case pre/postmodifiers mainly refer to the areas concerning energy consumption, surrounding landscape, atmosphere, local products as well as spa and wellness. "Tourism discourse for promotional purposes must be of impact in order to attract the potential consumer. Language is therefore highly evaluative, characterised by pre-modifiers such as attribute and adjectives"(Maci 2013: 54);

3) the use of *direct/indirect questions*: in order to reinforce interpersonal communication;

4) the use of *imperative forms*, in order to underline a direct addressee's involvement (Nigro 2006: 60).

4. British/Irish Eco-Hotels: analysis of their websites

The analysis of the websites of the British and the Italian eco-hotels concentrates – as stated in section 3 – on their choices of specific lexico-grammatical categories. Such categories concern the following:
– pre/postmodifiers (Gotti 2006: 55), which emphasise the positive connotations of the products/services offered (Dann 1996: 65);
– the use of personal pronouns and possessive adjectives/pronouns (Nigro 2006: 61);
– imperative forms, which are a form of specialised, promotional discourse (Nigro 2006: 60);
– direct/indirect questions, which define the type of interaction established between the addresser (i.e. the website) and the addressees (i.e. potential customers) (Turnbull 2007).

All items concerning the abovementioned categories have been collected from each website; they belong to the 'Homepage' and 'Description' sections of each website.

They are listed as they appear on the website of each eco-hotel. No alphabetical order is applied.

Numbers in brackets show the number of occurrences of each single item in each website.

Percentages were calculated from the occurrences obtained, with the support of *WordSmith Tools* (Scott 1998: 70-1).

Occurrences and Percentages are summarised in the Appendix (Tables 1, 2, 3).

4.1. Luxury Country House, Sligo (Ireland)

Number of words: about 350

Pre/postmodifiers: magical, private, mature, total, inside, warm, open (2), incredible, large, bright, comfty, immaculate, perfect, stunning, megalithic, short, available, all, private, special, civil, best, natural, professional, holistic, only, the finest, organic.

Personal Pronouns: you

Possessive adj./pronouns: our own, your

Imperative: none

Questions: none

4.2. Croeso, LLansanffraes Court, (Wales, GB)

Number of words: 412

Pre/postmodifiers: relaxed, unstuffy, private (2), well-known, great, local, high standard, unspoilt, located, best, foodie, rural, award-winning, long, crisp, 'grade II listed', original, old, specimen, tree, walled, 16th century (church), grand, warm, genuine, 'home from home', crackling, eco-friendly, electric, sourced (2), newly, the freshest, seasonal, better, luxury, gorgeous, family, friends, civil, most intimate, the grandest, wide, excellent, special.

Personal Pronouns: we, you (3), us

Possessive adj./pronouns: its (2), our own, our (3), your

Imperative: sip, devour, indulge, catch, go for, blow, explore, have a lie, contact us

Questions: none

4.3. Delphi Resort (Ireland)

Number of words: 356

Pre/postmodifiers: ultimate, contemporary, Irish, warm, central, perfect, available, huge, exquisite (2), magnificent, magical, outdoor, premier, breath-taking, stunning, adventure-filled, varied, full, exciting, scenic (2), romantic, special, abroad, popular, overseas.

Personal pronouns: we (2), you (2)
Possessive adj./pronouns: your, its, our
Imperative: plan your escape
Questions: none

4.4. Stratton Hotel, (Norfolk, GB)

Number of words: 329

Pre/postmodifiers: historic (2), favourite**,** healthy, ancient, peaceful, breath-taking, tranquil, thriving, bustling, fascinating, small, independent, family run, inclusive, pet friendly, child friendly, family friendly, individual, sumptuous, eclectic, hip, funky, glamorous, fabulous, diverse, sophisticated, all inclusive, traditional, ideal, ancient, short, Saxon, medieval, textile, great, small, the largest.
Personal Pronouns/Possessive Adj. Pronouns: none
Imperative: enjoy
Questions: none

4.5. Lancrigg Vegetarian Hotel (Cumbria, GB)

Number of words: 356

Pre/postmodifiers: never ending, proud, 1800s, recent, beautiful (2), mature, tiny, spacious, comfortable (2), restful, grand, beautiful, perfect, sunny, delicious, light, mouth-watering, delectable, significant, rich, relaxed (2), brighter, most welcoming, currently, full, natural, large, keen, true, English, fair, extremely, all, constantly, surprised, quiet, only, rejuvenated, informal.
Personal Pronouns: it (3), they, we (2), you (2), us
Possessive adj. /pronouns: its (2), our (2)
Imperative: none
Questions: none

4.6. Gleneagles (Scotland, GB)

Number of words: 159

Pre/postmodifiers: magnificent, unbeatable, award-winning, unforgettable, available, glorious, spectacular, stylish, lasting, vast, effective, stimulating.
Personal adj./pronouns: none
Possessive adj./pronouns: none
Imperative: none
Questions: none

5. Italian eco-hotels: analysis of their websites

5.1. Leitlhof-Dolomiten, South Tyrol

Number of words: 368
Pre/postmodifiers: neutral, green (2), wellness hotel, straight, cozy (2), comfortable, crackling, open, 'at home' (2), fresh, regional, natural, straight away, comfortable (2), light, superior, culinary, Mediterranean, Alpine, innovative, actively, local, ecological, thermal, whole, close, sustainable, the second, pure, local, natural, mucky, good, varnished, Pfitcher, modern-traditional.
Personal pronouns: you (2), we
Possessive adj./ pronouns: your (4), our own (2), our
Imperative: dream, snuggle up, enjoy, feel
Questions: none

5.2. Relais del Maro, Diffuse Hotel (Liguria)

Number of words: 325
Pre/postmodifiers: fashionable, Ligurian, French, just, yet, perfect, eco-friendly, diffuse, right, historic, unique, maximum, skilled, natural, relaxing, friendly, outstanding, sweet, savoury, local, homemade, various, organic, fresh, dried, free (2), romantic, wonderful, incredibly, pleasant, main, incredible, regional, available (2), antique, Ligurian, small, well known, important, historical, wonderful, roomand, never, tasty, hot, public, new.
Personal pronouns: them (2)
Possessive adj./pronouns: their (5)
Imperative: none
Questions: none

5.3. L'Adagio Agriturismo (Liguria)

Number of words: 171
Pre/postmodifiers: high quality, Ligurian (2), traditional, excellent, overall, different, interior (2), five, elegant (2), ethnic, modern, minimalist, Provençal, four (2), spacious (2), natural, furnishing, luxurious, self-produced, numerous, cozy, same, organic, handicapped, accessible, self-caterer, local, fresh, every.
Personal pronouns: you, they (2)
Possessive adj./nouns: own, their, our

Imperative: none
Questions: none

5.4. Lafay Resort (Lago di Garda)

Number of words: 270
Pre/postmodifiers: beautiful, gentle, natural, sharp, stunning, private (2), central, large, outdoor, surrounding, specially-designed, peaceful, amazing, enjoyable, renewable, alternative.
Possessive adj./pronouns: none
Personal pronouns: none
Imperative: none
Questions: none

5.5. Hotel Milano Scala (Milan)

Number of words: 183
Pre/postmodifiers: proud, the first (2), small, 4 star, zero-emission, perfect, the inner, charming, old, most important, second, eco-chic, classical, natural, warm, environmental, automated, computer-controlled, relative, magnetic (2), fast.
Possessive adj./pronouns: their
Personal Pronouns: you
Imperative: none
Questions: none

5.6. Josephus (Schnaltal, South Tyrol)

Number of words: 215
Pre/postmodifiers: careful, every, traditional, modern, prominent, picturesque, luxurious, alpine,
ample, in midst, exclusive, manorial, special, here, historic, modern, natural, cozy, each, personal, newly, old, clear, simple, warm, wooden, active (2), surrounding, active, cultural, available, in front of, culinary, South Tyrolean, Tyrolean, Mediterranean, well-deserved, geothermal, photovoltaic, permanent, computer controlled, energy saving, LED.
Possessive adj./pronouns: none
Personal Pronouns: you (2), yourself
Imperative: enjoy
Questions: none

6. Results of the contrastive analysis
of British and Italian websites

Although the total number of words employed by the two sub-corpora is rather similar (Italian websites: 1,432 words; British websites: 1,962 words), the frequencies of occurrence of the linguistic data examined differ significantly.

The quantitative analysis carried out on British and Italian websites leads to the following conclusions, which show a different marketing approach between the two sub-corpora in communicating their corporate image online as well as in establishing an interaction with their audience, namely:

a) *Possessive and Personal Pronouns*: British websites vs. Italian websites

British Websites
– personal and possessive adjectives/pronouns: we find a balance between the use of *you/your* (respectively: 8 and 3 occurrences) and *we/our* (respectively: 5 and 8 occurrences); *their* (0 occurrence).

Italian Websites
– *we/our* (respectively: 1 and 2 occurrences) and *you/your* (respectively: 6 and 4 occurrences);
– *their:* (7 occurrences).

The total percentage of occurrences of personal/possessive adjectives and pronouns is 1.68 in British websites, while it is 1.60 in Italian websites (see Appendix, Table 1).

On the basis of such data, therefore, we are led to infer that British websites tend to appear slightly more inclined to establish a friendly and 'peer' interaction with their potential customers, compared to the Italian websites which seem to show an unbalanced use between *we/our* (respectively: 1 and 2 occurrences) and *you/your* (respectively: 6 and 4 occurrences) – although the latter aspect prevails over the former, it still appears slightly reduced compared to the British websites.

The possessive adjective '*their*' shows 7 occurrences, and none in British websites.

These results suggest a certain distance in Italian websites from their addressees and consequently a weak interaction between the company and its potential clients (see Appendix, Table 1) with a preference, instead, for an emphasis on the services offered (which the possessive adjective *their* often tends to refer to*)*;

b) *Pre/postmodifiers*: British vs. Italian websites

On the basis of the selection of pre/postmodifiers with positive connotation used in the two sub-corpora (listed in the analysis of each website and in the Appendix, Table 2), the prevailing areas concern aspects such as:

1) sustainability:

zero emission (1 occurrence: Italian website);

renewable (1 occurrence: Italian website);

eco-friendly (1 occurrence: British website; 2 occurrences: Italian websites);

sustainable (1 occurrence: Italian website);

award-winning (2 in British websites, 0 in Italian websites).

The total percentages are: 0.15 in British websites and 0.34 in Italian websites, thus suggesting that the Italian websites tend to emphasise, more than the British ones, the aspects concerning respect for the environment in the communication of their corporate image online. It is actually an area in which the percentages are higher than the British ones – as well as in the area connected to 'relaxation'. This shows that Italian eco-hotels invest in their 'green' image and to what extent the linguistic choices in their websites reinforce this idea;

2) escape, adventure and beauty:

magical (3 occurrences: British websites);

stunning (3 occurrences: British websites; 1 occurrence: Italian website);

fabulous (2 occurrences: Italian websites);

glamorous (2 occurrences: British websites);

magnificent (2 occurrences: British websites);

incredible (1 occurrence: British website);

breath-taking (2 occurrences: British websites);

adventure-filled (1 occurrence: British website);

fascinating (1 occurrence: British website).

The total percentages are 0.76 in British websites and 0.20 in Italian websites. The striking difference highlights the greater emphasis put on this area by the British websites. It shows how much British eco-hotels invest in the image of magical escape offered by their structures. The focus is particularly on the surrounding environment and on the atmosphere created within the accommodation structures, especially due to their furniture and their historical, sometimes literary past;

3) family background, genuineness/authenticity:

traditional (1 occurrence: British website; 2 occurrences: Italian websites);

genuine (1 occurrence: British website);

original (1 occurrence: British website).

Strangely enough the total percentages are 0.15 in British websites and 0.13 in Italian websites;

4) relaxation:

comfty/cozy (2 occurrences: British websites; 4 occurrences: Italian websites);

relaxed (3 occurrences: British websites);

relaxing (1 occurrence: Italian website).

The total percentages are: 0.25 in British websites and 0.34 in Italian websites. Relaxation seems to be an attractive factor for Italian eco-hotels as well as sustainability as well as an aspect in which they significantly invest, as shown by the lexical choices applied;

c) *direct/indirect questions*: British vs. Italian websites

No question, either direct or indirect, was found in either group of websites.

d) *imperative forms:* British vs. Italian websites

We find 12 occurrences of imperative forms in British websites vs. 5 occurrences in Italian websites; the total percentages are 0.61 in British websites and 0.34 in Italian websites (see Appendix, Table 3). Once again this implies that the degree of personal involvement and interaction is greater in the British websites than in the Italian ones.

7. Final Remarks

In conclusion, all these data – collected through a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the occurrences of the selected lexico-grammatical features employed in the two sub-corpora of websites – provide evidence both for their type of interaction with potential clients and for the type of corporate image they convey online, namely:

– British websites: in communicating their corporate image they insist more on a sense of magical escape from everyday routine provided by their accommodation facility (see Appendix, Table 2). More details are provided in the description of the services offered by their accommodation facility and of the surrounding environment.

They show greater interest in their customers' opinions and in their degree of satisfaction (see Appendix, Tables 1, 2).

The idea of a more relaxed and 'peer' relationship between addresser and addressees is communicated through their wider use

of personal and possessive adjectives and pronouns (see Appendix, Table 1).

– Italian websites: as for the interaction with their potential customers Italian firms, on the contrary, do not usually seem to primarily aim at a friendly, 'peer' relationship – as clearly appears in the choice of possessive adjective/pronouns and in the preference of the possessive adjective *their*, generally referred to services – but they rather adopt a kind of *authoritative* attitude in order to reinforce their role as experts, especially in the field of environmental impact and energy consumption (see Appendix, Table 2). The corporate image they prefer to communicate is, therefore, more in terms of professional superiority and competitiveness, especially as for zero emissions, renewable energies, respect for the environment, wellness and spa (see Appendix, Tables 1, 3).

Therefore, while on the one hand, this paper confirms Turnbull's theories (2007) as far as differences in attitude between Italian and British websites are concerned, on the other hand, the results so far acquired, far from being exhaustive, might have relevant implications in future research concerning tourism discourse and corporate images communicated online, both in destination marketing and tourists' decision making process (Hudson *et al.* 2001: 174).

Appendix

TABLE 1
Occurrences of *personal pronouns/possessive adjectives and pronouns*

	British websites	Italian Websites
You	8	6
Yourself	0	1
We	5	1
Your/s	3	4
Our/s	8	2
It	1	0
Its	5	0
They	1	2
Their/s	0	7
Us	2	0
Total	33 (1.68%)	23 (1.60%)

TABLE 2
Occurrences of *pre/postmodifiers*

	British websites	Italian websites
Pre/postmodifiers in the field of 'escape, adventure and magic':		
Magical	3	0
Stunning	3	1
Fabulous	0	2
Glamorous	2	0
Magnificent	2	0
Incredible	1	0
Breath-taking	2	0
Adventure-filled	1	0
Fascinating	1	0
Total	15 (0.76%)	3 (0.20%)
Pre/postmodifiers in the field of 'relaxation':		
Comfty/cozy	2	4
Relaxed	3	0
Relaxing	0	1
Total	5 (0.25%)	5 (0.34%)
Pre/postmodifiers in the field of 'sustainability':		
Sustainable	0	1
Zero emission	0	1
Renewable	0	1
Eco-friendly	1	2
Award-winning	2	0
Total	3 (0.15%)	5 (0.34%)
Pre/postmodifiers in the field of 'family background, genuineness/authenticity':		
Original	1	0
Traditional	1	2
Genuine	1	0
Total	3 (0.15%)	2 (0.13%)

TABLE 3
Occurrences of *Imperative forms and questions*

	Occurrences of *Imperative forms*	
	British websites	Italian websites
Imperatives	12 (0.61)	5 (0.34)
	Occurrences of *Questions*	
Questions	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)

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