Abstract

To assist Chinese graduate students in refining their English academic writing skills, this research explores a contrastive analysis to identify linguistic disparities in abstracts of journal articles written by native English-speaking scientists and Chinese scientists. Based on Bhatia's (1993) framework, we categorized a total of 80 authentic English abstracts into four sections—introduction, method, results, and conclusion. Utilizing the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), the study conducted a statistical analysis. Results reveal that Chinese authors tend to be more verbose in the introduction section compared to their English counterparts and their content in the method, results, and conclusion sections. The study also indicates significant differences in the use of verb tenses, particularly the present simple and past tenses, suggesting a less nuanced grasp of tense functions by Chinese writers. Furthermore, a higher frequency of passive voice usage in English abstracts (Ea) compared to translated abstracts (Ta) indicates a potential cultural influence on writing styles and a possible lack of experience with passive voice constructions in the Chinese language.The findings have implications for the necessity for well-prepared course materials with concrete data to help graduate students understand the linguistic differences in academic writing between the two languages. It also suggests that further research is required to convincingly explain the observed results, which will provide deeper insights into the subtleties of English texts.

Keywords: Contrastive Analysis, Academic Writing, Abstracts, Linguistic Features, English and Chinese Journals.