In order to help Chinese postgraduate students improve their English academic writing, a sample of authentic English abstracts (Ea), Chinese-to-English abstracts (Ta), and Chinese abstracts (Ca) from 20 different fields were randomly collected, and each of the abstracts was divided into four parts according to Bhatia's (1993) model, marked with different colours, and then aggregated for comparative analysis by applying SPSS.

The study demonstrated the similarities and differences between Ea, Ta and Ca in terms of distribution, temporal pattern and movement, with the "introduction" part of Ta not only being more frequent than the other parts, but also having an imbalanced structure, whereas the structure of Ea was relatively balanced. By comparing the tenses, it is found that although all the abstracts use seven action tenses, the proportion of present tense in Ea is much higher than that in Ta. In addition, by comparing the passive verbs, it can be found that the frequency of passive verbs in Ea is higher than that in Ta, which implies the same problem as in the previous section.

This suggests that although Chinese writers have some knowledge of grammatical rules, they do not have a thorough understanding of the meanings and functions of tenses, plus they may be influenced by the negative transfer from their mother tongue in academic writing.

Therefore, clarifying and analysing the similarities and differences in the influence of Chinese and English language differences on academic writing is a necessary learning process for postgraduate students.