**Abstract**

This study offers a comprehensive contrastive analysis of research paper abstracts from Chinese and English journals, with the aim of assisting Chinese graduate students in improving their English academic writing skills. The primary objective is to uncover and understand the linguistic differences between abstracts written by native English-speaking scientists and those translated from Chinese. The analysis involved 80 abstracts: 40 authentic English abstracts (Ea) and 40 translated from Chinese to English (Ta). Each abstract was divided into four sections—introduction, methods, results, and conclusion—using Bhatia’s (1993) model. Key linguistic features such as verb tense usage, passive voice frequency, and section length were scrutinized.

The findings reveal significant discrepancies in the composition of abstracts by Chinese authors compared to their English-speaking peers. Chinese authors tend to elaborate more in the introduction sections, while providing less detail in the methods and results sections. This pattern suggests differences in academic conventions and linguistic preferences. Additionally, the study identified substantial differences in verb tense usage; Chinese authors predominantly use the present simple tense in introductions, while English abstracts exhibit a more balanced distribution of tenses across all sections. Furthermore, the frequency of passive voice usage is lower in Chinese abstracts, particularly in the methods sections, possibly reflecting native language influences.

The study concludes that specialized instructional materials and focused training are essential for Chinese students to master the linguistic and structural nuances of English academic writing. These resources will not only enhance their writing skills but also improve their ability to effectively communicate research findings in an international context. Further research is recommended to delve deeper into the causes of these linguistic differences and to develop more effective teaching strategies.

**Keywords**

Contrastive analysis, academic writing, research paper abstracts, linguistic features, Chinese journals, English journals, verb tense, passive voice, structural analysis.