

A Corpus-based Study on the Lexical and Syntactic Features of the China-based Research Article Abstracts

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ABSTRACT

English abstracts of technical papers plays a key role in promoting the research finds and academic exchange. Based on the self-made corpus on research article abstracts, we attempt to explore the lexical and syntactic features of the China-based research article abstracts. The results show that these abstracts enjoy characteristics of higher lexical density, lower STTR, higher repetition of high frequency words and more frequent use of nominalization structure. From the aspect of syntactic features, English abstracts in Chinese scientific journals tend to use more compound sentences and passive voice structures with shorter average sentence length. These stylistic features are not consistent with the established writing norm. Chinese researchers are suggested to follow the current established norms of academic papers for a better communication with their western peers.

Keywords: Abstracts of technical papers; corpus; corpus linguistics; lexical features; syntactic features

I. INTRODUCTION

Being an indispensable part of a research article, the abstract summarizes the major information, including research purpose, methods, results and conclusion. By reading abstracts of