

A Comparative Analysis of the Use of Negation in Research Articles:

Chinese, English, and German Authors

Negation is an essential topic from contextual, interpersonal, textual, and ideational perspectives (Pagano, 2002) and is widely used in various texts. Although many scholars have studied negation in terms of its syntactic features, semantic features, pragmatic features, and meaning in different types of discourse, there are far fewer studies exploring the use of negation in academic discourse based on the corpus. Moreover, these studies mainly analyze data from English. The negation, however, is a universal phenomenon that exists in all languages. Do authors from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds similarly use negation in academic discourse?

Based on the previous studies, the present study is designed to conduct a systematic and comparative investigation of the use of negation in Chinese, English, and German academic discourse, focusing on the distribution of negation, linguistic realizations, and functions achieved in the texts. Specifically, this study addresses the following three research questions:

- 1) How is negation distributed across the sections of Chinese, English, and German research articles?
- 2) How is negation realized linguistically in Chinese, English, and German research articles?
- 3) What functions are achieved by using negation in Chinese, English, and German research articles?

To achieve this purpose, a corpus is built with 90 research articles, including 30 Chinese, 30 English, and 30 German articles selected from nine authoritative international academic journals in the linguistic field from 2020 to 2022. A quantitative and qualitative analysis of the use of negation in research articles in three languages has been comparatively conducted.

The following three steps were used to investigate: corpus cleaning, identifying and classifying negation, and statistical work on the data. Among them, the identification of negation is one of the most critical steps for this study. Current studies on negation have been classified by scholars from different perspectives and with differences in different language systems. To make the research more precise and reliable, this study systematically collated previous classifications, based on which adaptations were made to generate a classification of negation under multilingual comparison and annotated it as such. After identification and annotation, the statistical results were put into Excel and SPSS for data analysis.

Through the observation and analysis of the data, this study found that authors from three linguistic backgrounds have certain common features and characteristic differences when using negation in research articles, whether in terms of distribution characteristics, linguistic realization, or function.

Pagano, Adriana (2002): Negatives in written text. In: M. Coulthard (Eds.): *Advances in written text analysis*, 250–265. London: Routledge.