

3936768 SCAL/M : MAJOR : APPLIED LINGUISTICS ; M.A. (APPLIED LINGUISTICS)

KEY WORDS : ABSTRACTS / ORGANIZATION/ LINGUISTIC FEATURES REPORTING VERBS / RHETORICAL FUNCTION

PAWEENA PHANTHAMA : THE ORGANIZATION AND THE LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF THE ABSTRACTS OF MEDICAL JOURNALS. THESIS ADVISORS : BOOSAKORN VIJCHULATA, Ph.D., ROBERT A. COWAN, Ph.D. 138 P. ISBN 974-664-921-3

The main purpose of this study was to investigate and compare the organization and linguistic features (reporting verbs and tenses) of the abstracts of English medical journals and those written in English by Thai researchers. Three hundred and twenty abstracts published between 1997-1998 were randomly selected for analysis. These included 160 abstracts from four Thai medical journals (the Chulalongkorn Medical Journal, the Ramathibodi Medical Journal, the Siriraj Gazette and the Journal of Medical Association of Thailand) and 160 from two international medical journals namely, the British Medical Journal and the Journal of the American Medical Association.

To investigate the organization of the medical abstract, Taddio, Pain, Fassos, Boon, Ilersich, and Einarson (1994) were used as the criteria for this study. The reporting verbs were analyzed based on the recommendations of Thomas and Hawes (1994). Tenses and their functional values were based on the work of Salager-Meyer (1992). The data obtained were calculated and analyzed by employing the chi-square test (X^2) to find out the relationships of both groups of abstracts.

The results of the statistical analyses indicated that although there was no significant difference between the organization of Thai and international abstracts of medical journals to state six main moves: purpose, methodology (design, setting), subjects, measurements, results and conclusion, there were significant differences in the way the intervention move was stated. In addition, at more complex level of analysis based on the above criteria, there were significant differences in the organization between both groups of abstracts at $p < 0.01$. For the investigation of reporting verbs, the study found 209 different reporting verbs that were used in Thai English abstracts and 325 different reporting verbs that were used in international ones, in which *verb to be* was mostly used in both groups of abstracts. In addition, *modal verbs* were used in the conclusion move of both groups of abstracts. For their functional value, experimental verbs were mostly used in every move, even discourse verbs and cognition verbs were also used in conclusion move. For the tense analysis, the study found that there were significant differences in tense usage between Thai and international medical abstracts because noun phrases and verb phrases were mostly used to state purpose, methodology, subject, and measurements in international abstracts. Present simple tenses were used in the purpose and in conclusion and past simple tenses were used in the methodology, subject, and measurements of Thai medical English abstracts. In addition, past simple tenses and present perfect tenses were used in both types of abstracts.

In conclusion, abstracts from Thai medical journals should be written in structured format. Further study should be carried out to investigate the organization and linguistic features of abstracts in other disciplines.