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## Formatting research article titles: The case of Food Science

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### Abstract

Research article titles offer exhaustive information about the contents of the paper in a limited number of words. Data from analyses of titles in social, natural and biological sciences show that the mean length ranges from 10.93 to 15.85 words and that the structural construction conforms to four different types of layout, that is, nominal, compound, full-sentence and question, with a prevalence of the first. Food science has not, so far, been an object of study, and this research note attempts to fill the gap by discussing a corpus of 86 titles collected from three scholarly journals, namely *Food Chemistry*, *Food Control* and *International Journal of Food Microbiology*. Specimens were analysed to elicit the length (word count) and the format (structural construction). The results show that in the examined corpus the mean length of titles is 15.38 words, whereas the preferred construction is the nominal structure, with 69 examples, followed by the compound with 11 examples and the full-sentence type with 6 examples; no question titles were found.

**Key words:** *research article, titles of research papers, discourse analysis, food science*