Analysis of Grammatical Structures of Job Advertisements in Bangkok Post

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ABSTRACT

The research aimed to study and analyze the grammatical structures of the job advertisements in an English newspaper Bangkok Post. The research instrument was ten job advertisements collected from December 1, 2011 to January 5, 2012. The job advertisements were analyzed to find the types of the words used, a variety of the sentence structures and were presented in a descriptive method. The research findings were as follows: Regarding the word types, the words mostly used were nouns, followed by adjectives, verbs, and adverbs respectively. Considering a variety of the sentence structures used in the job advertisements, the sentence structures most used was a simple sentence, followed by a present continuous. The sentence type least used was a complex sentence. In addition, it was found that most of the job advertisements were written in a passive voice. There were some advertisements which were written in an active voice.

Keywords: Grammatical Structure; Job Advertisement; Bangkok Post

บทคัดย่อ

งานการนิพนธ์เป็นงานวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาและวิเคราะห์โครงสร้างโฆษณาในข่าวรับสมัครงานในหนังสือพิมพ์บางกอกโพสต์เครื่องเมืองไทยในการวิจัยคือข่าวรับสมัครงานเป็นภาษาอังกฤษจำนวน 10 ข่าวคัดเลือกจากหนังสือพิมพ์จาก 1 ธันวาคม 2011-5 มกราคม 2012 ข่าวโฆษณาข่าวรับสมัครงานที่คัดเลือกจะได้รับการวิเคราะห์ศึกษาในด้านชนิดของคำความหลากหลายของโครงสร้างประโยคและนำเสนอในรูปแบบบรรยาย ผลการศึกษาพบว่าชนิดคำที่ถูกใช้มากที่สุดคือคำนามของผลลัพธ์คือคำศัพท์คำกริยาและคำวิเศษ

คำสำคัญ: โครงสร้างประโยค; ข่าวรับสมัครงาน; บางกอกโพสต์
INTRODUCTION

Advertising plays an important role in the media. People use it as a tool of communication. Communication by advertising is different from that between parents and children, a teacher and students, or friends and friends. Those relationships are familiar. The interlocutors know each other’s status. On the other hand, advertisers do not exactly know who will get their message. Instead, they only predict their target groups. Therefore, they have to use more strategies in order to relay their message to their audiences.

As a matter of fact, an obvious purpose of advertising is to attract people to buy products or services. Advertising, nowadays, will never accomplish its goal if it lacks access to the mass media. People watch and listen to television and radio programs, and read newspaper and magazine articles. Certainly, they cannot avoid advertisements.

Advertisements are varied, such as for products, services, or even movies or songs. According to Sandge, Fryburger, and Rotzoll, (1983:5) “Advertising today is a worldwide phenomenon.” We can see advertisements everywhere and every time. Nelson (1984:3) says “advertising is communication of a message through a paid medium with the intention to influence people to purchase a product or service or to understand and accept an idea or concept.” In addition, “The purpose of advertisement is to make known in order to sell or buy goods or services” (Jefkins, 1976:1). One method which is very interesting is a job advertisement. Job advertisements have some characteristics different from other advertisements. They can be seen in many media outlets and even on the Internet. Many of them appear in newspapers because job recruitment is required every day. In addition, compared with other media outlets, advertising for jobs via newspapers is a fast and popular way if companies need employees urgently.

In Thailand, some of job advertisements are written in English. It is because nowadays, the role of English has become very important in many fields of work. Because it is counted as an international language spoken worldwide; some positions require people who know English. Therefore, it is not surprising why some of them are in English. However, most of job advertisements written in English can be seen in English language newspapers.

Considering job advertisements written in English, it is obvious that they hold specific characteristics that are very interesting. As a result, they are always used as teaching and learning materials in school, colleges, and universities. In addition, they can be found in English tests, such as entrance examination, TOEIC, TOEFL, etc.

Written advertisements are a kind of communication that will be analyzed in this study. It contains not only ideas and information, but it also implies writing strategies advertisers use. In the same way, written English in job advertisements does not only conduct
information and requirement of companies, but also carries grammatical and rhetorical contexts.

The heart of advertising is to inform and persuade customers. People can change their mind all the times based on how much they believe the advertisements. There are many unexpected factors influencing customers’ satisfaction. If a message can attract their attention, it means that the advertising is successful. There are many kinds of advertisements. Each of them works in different ways. Therefore, it is very important to select the most effective advertising strategies to suit the audience the most.

The researcher recognizing the importance of advertisements tries to understand how the tool or the language in advertisements is used, especially in the print media like the Bangkok Post which is a mass circulation in Thailand. Therefore, the researcher has conducted a study.

Purpose of the Study
The purpose of this study is to study and analyze the types of words and the grammatical structures of English in job advertisements as found in Bangkok Post newspaper.

Scope of the Study
This study used ten job advertisements, in Bangkok Post newspaper from 1 December 2011 - 5 January 2012

Research Questions
1. What are the types of the words mostly used in job advertisements?
2. What are the grammatical structures mostly used in job advertisements?

Definition of Key Terms
Grammatical Structures refers to the rules for organizing elements of a language into meaningful utterances. Grammatical structures are concerned with English sentences, clauses, and phrases.

Job Advertisements is an announcement in a newspaper, in the Internet, etc. about a job that people can apply for.

Bangkok Post refers to the English newspaper which is a mass circulation and well known in Thailand.
Data Collection

Ten job advertisements were collected from Bangkok Post newspapers from 1 December 2011 to 5 January 2012 as the sources of the study.

Data Analysis

The advertisements which were collected were analyzed to find out the following aspects:

1) The words which were most commonly used in the job advertisements.
2) The sentences structure which were most commonly used in the job advertisements.

Results

Words

Under this heading, the researcher studied parts of speech: nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs which are commonly used in job advertisements selected.

Nouns

Based on the job advertisements randomly selected, the researcher found the following nouns which were mostly used. They were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Resume</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Skill</td>
<td>Candidate</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Command</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Company</td>
<td>Application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person</td>
<td>Requirement</td>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advantage</td>
<td>Opportunity</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer</td>
<td>Transcript</td>
<td>Benefit</td>
<td>Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability</td>
<td>Function</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this study, the nouns which are used four times or more are shown in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 Frequency of nouns used in job advertisements
Figure 4.1 shows that the noun which is mostly used is Experience, followed by Qualification, and Position, etc. The nouns used only few time are Photo, Education, Command, Communication, and Candidate.

Adjective

The following are the common adjectives found in the job advertisement under study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>interested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competitive</td>
<td>Motivated</td>
<td>Qualified</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Recent</td>
<td>Minimum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
<td>Successful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The frequency of the Adjective is shown in figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2 Frequency of the adjectives used in job advertisements
Figure 4.2 Shows that the adjective which is mostly used in job advertisements is **Good**, Followed by **High, Excellent, Recent, etc.** The adjective with a low frequency of usage are **Very, Strong, etc.**

**Verb**

The verbs which are used in the job advertisements are very limited. They are easily predictable.

The following verbs are the ones commonly used in the job advertisements under study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Send</th>
<th>Seek</th>
<th>Look</th>
<th>Require</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submit</td>
<td>Apply</td>
<td>Join</td>
<td>Need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The frequency of the verbs used in the job advertisements is shown in figure 4.3

Figure 4.3 Frequency of the verbs in job advertisements

Figure 4.3 Shows that the verb which is most commonly used is **Send**, followed by **Require**, **Look**, **Need** and **Submit**.

**Adverbs**

In comparison with nouns, adjectives and verbs, adverbs as used in the job advertisements are relatively few. This may be due to the fact that the language usage in the advertisement must be precise, direct and compact. The message must be understood at once. Therefore, not so many adverbs are used to modify the words or phrases. In addition, the space in a newspaper kept for the advertisement is a constraint, thus, the message sender has to be careful and maximize the use of a given space. The adverbs found in the job
advertisements are ‘very, currently and highly’. The adverbs found are used in the following structures.

**Variety of Sentence Structures**

Considering all sentences used in the job advertisements under study, it was found that most of the sentences are complete. They are mainly simple sentences. Some are used in the present continuous. The following are different types of often used sentence structures in the job advertisements.

1. **Simple Sentences**

   We require an experienced, energetic person to expand our manpower services in Thailand.

   We offer a competitive salary and benefits to the suitable candidate.

   We need to strengthen our dedicated work team and urgently need the following positions.

   We need following candidate for our expansion.

2. **Present continuous**

   Peace Corps Thailand is seeking applicants for the following short-term contract position for Pre-Service Training.

   Our client, a regional FSA licensed Wealth Management Company is looking to recruit several European sales consultants.

   We are looking for immediate appointment.

3. **Relative Clauses**

   Although rare, a relative clauses is used to give additional information. This clause post-modifies the nouns as shown in the examples. The clause is underlined.

   Preference is given to applicants who currently hold legal status to work in Thailand.

   The QUQ Executive is a communicator who manages client relationship with fitness and liaisons...

4. **Noun Clause**

   A noun clause is rarely used in the job advertisements in the study. The noun clause found is:

   We are committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society.

5. **Complex Sentence**

   There are some complex sentences found in the advertisements as given in the examples:
If you have the following skills, we’d like to hear from you!
If you think you are a high-caliber candidate with the right attitude, please submit your CV with photograph and expected salary to:
If you think you are qualified, please send your resume with photograph to: GPO Box 2658, BANGKOK 10500

6. Imperative Sentences
This type of sentences is normally found at last section of the advertisements. The sentence suggests to the applicants what to do or how to proceed as shown in the examples:
Please send your resume to recruitment@abatek.com
For further information, please visit qutarairways.com
Send application and indicate THVN2012/18 to bkkrecruitment@iom.int by 31 August 2012
Please send your resume with photo to hr@pvs, with ccto_hr1@pvs.co.th md@pvs.co.th, and Pattamatri@gmail.com. See more details at www.kmutt.ac.th

7. Active and Passive Voices
It is obvious that a passive voice is more used in the job advertisement than an active one. This type of language use avoids describing an actor or subject. Instead, more attention is given to the receivers or the objectives as the advertisement language is to be objectively written. The usage is justified by the following examples:
1. Jewelry experience is preferred but not essential.
2. CPD is required.
3. Foreign nationals are encouraged to apply.
4. Only short listed candidates will be contacted.
However, to make the message direct and clear, the writers sometimes use the active voice, for example,
1. We are seeking a qualified candidate to fill the position.
2. We are looking for an immediate appointment.

8. Omission of words
In the job advertisements selected, some sentences have the words omission. The purpose may be to make the message more precise. However, this types of sentences is not widely used. The examples are as follows,
Experience a must
Must have 3 years experience
In the first example, a linking verb ‘be’ is omitted. Hence a complete sentence is ‘an experience is a must.’ In the second example, a subject of a sentence, ‘an applicant or a
candidate’ is understandably left out. A full sentence is ‘a candidate must have 3 years experience.’

Conclusions

The study studied and analyzed the types of words: nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and a variety of sentences structures used in the job advertisements. It revealed the following findings.

The nouns which are most commonly used can be listed as follows: “experience, qualification, degree, resume, position, skill, candidate, knowledge, command, communication, application, contact, management, salary, work, photo, age, education, business, person, requirement, field, Management, opportunity, service, individual, letter, English, national, address, customer, transcript, benefit, team” All these words are found in all the job advertisements selected for the study.

The adjectives often used in the job advertisement are “good, excellent, strong, interested, competitive, motivated, qualified, responsible, expected, new, recent, minimum, high, fluent, successful”.

The verbs found in almost job advertisements include “send, seek, look, require, submit, join, need, apply”.

The adverbs are rarely used in the job advertisements. Some adverbs used include “very, currently, highly”.

Considering the sentence structures used in the job advertisements selected, it was found that there were many different types of the sentence structures in the job advertisements. The following were the sentence structures found in the job advertisements.

1. Simple Sentences
2. Present Continuous
3. Relative Clauses
4. Noun Clause
5. Complex Sentence
6. Imperative Sentences
7. Active and Passive Voices
8. Sentence with Omission of Words

Discussions

The objective of the study was to study and analyze the types of words and grammatical structures used in the job advertisements. It was found that the nouns found
were limited. Almost all the advertisements under study used the same nouns. The nouns used were usually short, clear and direct. Besides, they rarely had a modifier. The reasons for this might be that the message had to be easy to understand. It was found that the nouns topped the words used in the job advertisements, which was in accordance with the study conducted by Wichatrong (1981) who studied Thai advertising in daily newspaper and found that a noun phrase was the most widely used. As regards the verbs, not many verbs were used in the advertisements in the study. The adjectives were also limited in use. It was the adverbs which were least used. In the study very few adverbs were found. They were ‘very, highly, and currently’. As mentioned above, the job advertisements had to be precise, hence the adverbs were viewed redundant modifiers. As far as the sentence structures were concerned, it was found that different types of the sentences structures were used. Most of the sentences were simple which were used in a high frequency. The finding was in accordance with the work undertaken by Prapassorn (1999) who conducted a case study on English usage in political news and found that simple sentences were mostly found. It is to be observed that the affirmative statements and the complex sentences are mostly used in the first and second sections of the advertisements while the imperative sentences are often found in the last section of the advertisements. It can be said that the words types and sentence structures used in the job advertisements do not have a wide variety of usages. They are mostly short, somehow repetitive and predictable.

Limitations of the Study

The present study deals with an analysis of grammatical structures in the job advertisements collected from the Bangkok Post from 1 December 2011 – 5 January 2012. Emphasis is given to the types of words used in the advertisements: nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs and the different types of the sentence structures. The study does not focus on other aspects, for example, writing styles, linguistic distinction in rhythms, participles, statistics and content analysis. In addition, the job advertisements were collected only from Bangkok Post, which is a limitation for the present study.

General Recommendations

The study is expected to help the job applicants in particular and the readers in general to better understand the advertisements in English. As for the English learners, the study will prove useful to them in learning the usage of words and sentence structures. It is to be observed that the writers of the job advertisements are careful in using words and
sentences. Understanding the words and sentences used in the job advertisements may contribute to better understanding of English for learners in general.

Recommendations for further study
1. There should be a further study on the product advertisements.
2. There should be a comparative study of the language usages in different advertisements.

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