
Genre Analysis of English online want Ads in Philippine, Indian and Arabic Job Posting Sites

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ABSTRACT

This study is anchored on the framework of Bhatia (1993) on analyzing ads according their content and rhetorical structure or organization as modified by Gaerlan (2008). It is conducted to analyze the discourse structure of English want ads from Philippine, Indian and Arabic job posting sites. Only want ads advertised within for following jobs are included: domestic job positions, teaching positions and medical professions. Specifically, this seeks to: 1. compare the discourse structure of want ads from the three job posting sites; 2. identify prominent rhetorical features in the want ads; and 3. explain the implication of the result to the patterns observed in the writing of the want ads. The study revealed that four moves, which may vary depending on the preference of the hiring company or the conventions set by the job posting site, are necessary to write want ads which adhere to its communicative purpose. Moreover, move 3 (enumerating job position/s available), move 4 (providing job description and/or requirements) and move 1 (providing company name/introducing company/advertiser) are the conventional moves which are necessary for all online job posts. Meanwhile, tracing the history of the hiring company and mentioning other reputable agencies or organizations which the hiring company is affiliated with or linked to are two rhetorical moves which may be employed by want ad writers to achieve move 2 (establishing hiring company's/advertiser's credentials). Lastly, the use of different varieties of English does not necessarily affect the choice and application of moves in the want ads as well as the rhetorical moves which are applied.

KEYWORDS: *genre analysis, moves analysis, want ads, online job posts, rhetorical moves*

INTRODUCTION

Globalization and global communication have changed the environmental, cultural, political and economic elements of the world (Ahmed, 2018). This process of globalization is directly affected by global communication which allows the increase of business and employment opportunities, eliminate cultural barriers and cultivate a global village. Globalization, in turn, paves the way for the spread of different varieties of English which are also known as World English.

Nordquist (2017) defines World English (World Englishes) as the English language that is variously used throughout the world. It is also known as international English and Global English. It is also defined as “new, increasingly stable and localized varieties of English with properties and functions of their own” (Schneider, 2018). They have been conventionally classified according to their status in specific countries and territories, as native, second or

foreign languages because they represent diverse linguistic, cultural, and ideological voices. Bhatt (2001) suggests that the varieties of English used in diverse sociolinguistic contexts represent a paradigm shift in research, teaching, and application of sociolinguistic realities to the forms and functions of English.

There is a tendency for speakers to mix English with their local language to form a hybrid variety of English language that is as colorful as the culture in that country (Govind, 2018). Thus, although all varieties of English share the same basic aspects of the language, certain words, phrases or linguistic constructs may differ.

Job posting and hiring are some of the aspects of employment which are affected by globalization and the spread of the different varieties of English. Through online job advertisements which are very accessible to job-seekers, the gap between potential employers and employees may be bridged. Much of what goes on in the recruitment process can be attributed to both the job-seekers' and the hiring company's efforts. In the job-seeker's end, the responsibility to thoroughly review want ads that would match his skills and capabilities is his top priority. The hiring company, on the other hand, holds the duty of accomplishing the desired recruitment goals. Failure of each party to perform their expected roles could mean either unemployment or underemployment for the job-seekers, and for the hiring company, it could mean attracting the wrong applicants.

Advertising through job posts or want ads helps bridge the gap between job-seekers and hiring companies and is also considered as a key part of the recruitment process. Its purpose of reaching the largest qualified audience is clearly vital in the success of the recruitment process. Fortunately, job hunting has become more convenient these days since one can do it not only with the help of job posts in traditional newspapers but also with the use of online job posts in various job posting sites.

Some researches on genre analysis of want ads have been conducted, however none of them has focused on online want ads. The discourse organization of English want ads in Philippine, Indian, and Arabic online job posting sites should be studied for readers or job-seekers as well as hiring companies to be acquainted with the conventions of this genre of advertising.

METHODOLOGY

This study used Bhatia's (1993) Genre Analysis Framework as modified by Gaerlan (2008) in analysing online want ads according to their content and rhetorical structure or organization. Specifically, this study used both qualitative and quantitative methods of research to analyse the structure of online want ads. The qualitative aspect leans more on the descriptive nature of the study as it sought patterns in the way want ads were written through the moves analysis and linguistic analysis that were done to the want ads. Meanwhile, the quantitative methods were applied to account for the frequency of moves as well as the frequency and percentage of occurrence of the linguistic features that were analysed. Each ad from the Philippine, Indian and Arabic English job posting site were labelled according to the moves which are used by its writer. The possible moves expected to appear in the want ads were: (1) Providing company name or introducing company advertiser, (2) Establishing company or advertiser's credentials, (3) Enumerating job position/s available, (4) Providing job description and/or requirements, (5) Offering incentives, (6) Enumerating application requirements, and (7) Providing instructions/deadlines for application. The presence or absence of these moves from the ads that were evaluated were the basis for analysing which

moves were considered obligatory or optional in a specific discourse community. Differences and similarities of the ads from the three job posting sites were then drawn depending on the moves present in majority of the corpus. After identifying the moves, the prominent rhetorical move used to establish the hiring company's or agency's credentials were also evaluated. Lastly, a pattern for writing online want ads was drawn from the result of the genre analysis and linguistic analysis.

The corpus of job advertisements analysed to answer the research questions comprised of want ads taken from three different job posting sites. Twenty want ads were taken from *Indeed* (Philippines), twenty from *Times Jobs* (India), and twenty from *Arab News* (Saudi Arabia). Want ads were selected according to the job categories they advertise. Specifically, only ads that advertise the following jobs were included: domestic job positions, teaching positions and medical professions. Each ad from the three job posting sites was analysed according to its content and rhetorical structure or organization following the framework modified by Gaerlan (2008) based on Bhatia (1993). The moves used in the writing of the ads were labelled according to Gaerlan's framework. Then, the prominent rhetorical features were identified based on the different moves. Implications on the pattern observed used in the writing of the ads were then drawn from examining their structure and prominent rhetorical moves.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Differences Among the Philippine, Indian, and Arabic Want Ads in English

Want ads from the three job posting sites apply a maximum of six moves and a minimum of three moves. Also, more than half of the total number of sample want ads (thirty two of the sixty sample want ads) apply an average of four moves only. However, there is a variation in terms of the range of moves applied in each ad. For ads from *Indeed* (Philippines) and *Times Jobs* (India), the moves applied vary from three to six moves. Meanwhile, the moves applied in *Times Jobs* (India) vary from three to five moves.

Furthermore, the analysis found a conventional pattern among all the sample want ads. Four moves are identified as obligatory moves, while three moves are labelled as optional moves. Interestingly, three of the four obligatory moves are similar across the three job posting sites. These moves are move 3 (enumerating job position/s available), move 2 (establishing company's/ advertiser's credentials), move 4 (providing job description and/or requirements) and move 1 (providing company name/introducing company/advertise). Each job posting site only differ in their fourth or last obligatory move. Specifically, for want ads taken from *Indeed* (Philippines), the fourth obligatory move is move 5 (offering incentives). Meanwhile, the fourth obligatory move of the sample want ads from *Arab News* (Saudi Arabia) is move 7 (providing instructions/deadlines for application). Lastly, for the sample want ads from *Times Jobs* (India), move 2 (establishing company's/advertiser's credentials) is the fourth obligatory move.

On the other hand, move 6 (enumerating application requirements) is the only move which is identified as an obligatory move among the three job posting sites.

As for the placement of moves in the ads, most of the sample want ads adhered to the following order of moves:

1. Move 3 - enumerating job position/s available
2. Move 4 - providing job description and/or requirements)
3. Move 1 - providing company name/ introducing company/advertiser)

This arrangement of moves, based on the obligatory moves identified, is followed by most of the sample ads from the three job posting sites. However some variations are observed in terms of the additional moves found in the ads. Specifically, there is a variation in terms of choosing the second move used in the want ads. For example, move 7 (providing instructions/deadlines for application) is only used as the second move in the sample want ads from *Arab News* (Saudi Arabia). On the other hand, the second move used in the sample want ads from *Times Jobs* (India) is move 2 (establishing company's/advertiser's credentials).

Prominent Rhetorical Features in the Want Ads

As for the rhetorical moves used in the sample want ads to attain the purpose of move 2 (establishing company's/advertiser's credentials), the use of a combination of informational and directive statements to describe the hiring company or the advertiser is observed. Furthermore, tracing the history of the hiring company and mentioning other reputable agencies or organizations which the hiring company is affiliated with or linked to are two of the observed prominent rhetorical moves used to achieve move 2 (establish hiring company's/advertiser's credentials).

Implication of Similar Moves Found Among the Want Ads

The want ads from the three job posting sites commonly apply six of the seven moves. They only differ in terms of which specific move is excluded in the ads. Specifically, the only move which is not applied in the ads from *Indeed* (Philippines) and *Arab News* (Saudi Arabia) is move 6 (enumerating application requirements), while for ads taken from *Times Jobs* (India) the only move which is excluded in most ads is move 7 ((providing instructions/deadlines for application). This implies that among all three job posting sites, six moves are essential to achieve the want ads' purpose of advertising the available jobs in a company. Moreover, it implies that the variety of English used in writing the want ads does not affect the number of moves employed in the ads because the decision of how many moves to apply in a want ad can solely be based on either the hiring company or the advertiser's preference or the template followed by the job posting sites for the want ads which they accept in their platform. The hiring company or advertisers determine which information are deemed necessary in the wants ads they will post, while the required details by the job posting site will refine the information which the hiring company submits to them through a template which is applied by all the want ads posted in their respective sites. Thus, the template provided by the job posting sites can affect the number of moves applied in the ads.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The findings of the study leads to the establishing the conclusion that to write a want ad which adheres to its communicative purpose of persuading readers to apply for the job posted, only four moves are necessary. These four moves which are to be included in the want ads may vary depending on the preference of the hiring company or the conventions set by the job posting site. Move 3 (enumerating job position/s available), move 4 (providing job

description and/or requirements) and move 1 (providing company name/introducing company/advertiser) are the conventional moves which are necessary for all want ads posted in online job posting sites. The arrangement of the moves in the want ads may reflect which information the hiring company wants to emphasize to their target readers. The obligatory moves of want ads posted in job posting sites are different from the obligatory moves of want ads posted in traditional printed newspapers. The conventional templates set by job posting sites may dictate and affect which moves will be included in the want ads. Move 6 (enumerating application requirements) is a move which is unnecessary for want ads posted in online job posting sites. Rhetorical moves used to establish a company's or advertiser's credentials all relate to the general purpose of want ads; that is to persuade jobseekers to apply for the job posted. Different job posting sites from different countries may highlight different details about the hiring company depending on which information they think will entice more jobseekers. Tracing the history of the hiring company and mentioning other reputable agencies or organizations which the hiring company is affiliated with or linked to are two rhetorical moves which may be employed by want ad writers to achieve move 2 (establishing hiring company's/advertiser's credentials). The use of different varieties of English does not necessarily affect the choice and application of moves in the want ads as well as the rhetorical moves which are applied. As for the move analysis done to the want ads from the three job posting sites, the similarities observed in the structure of want ads help establish a pattern for want ads which are posted in an online platform which is fairly different compared to the want ads posted in traditional newspapers. On the other hand, the differences observed among the sample want ads will help refine the observed pattern of organization in terms of the conventional moves, the obligatory and optional moves, the arrangement of moves and the number of moves applied in the ads. The prominent rhetorical moves in the ads, the purpose of persuading readers to apply for a job is achieved through focusing on move 2 (establishing company's/advertiser's credentials).

It can be said that the variety of English used among the three job posting sites does not affect the structure of the want ads. This is because the variations of the structure of the want ads can solely be based on either the hiring company or the advertiser's preference or the template followed by the job posting sites for the want ads which they accept in their platform. The hiring company or advertisers determine which information are deemed necessary in the want ads they will post, while the template set by the job posting sites refine the information which the hiring company submits to them. In other words, a template is followed by all the writers of want ads depending on the site where they will be posted. Thus, the template provided by the job posting sites can affect the number of moves applied in the ads. This also affects which moves will be identified as obligatory or optional, the most number and the least number of moves applied in the ads, and the arrangement of moves in the ads.

These findings imply that the variety of English used in writing the want ads from the three job posting sites does not influence the identification of which moves are considered as optional and obligatory. Also, the use of the different varieties of English does not help determine the most number or the least number of moves applied in the ads. Lastly, the varieties of English used in the writing of the want ads from the three job posting sites is not a determining factor in arranging the moves in the want ads.

It is suggested that a study focusing on creating a framework that works best for the analysis of want ads posted in online job posting sites be conducted. It is also recommended that more number of want ads encompassing more types of jobs be included in the analysis of the discourse structure of want ads. Moreover, a more in depth study focusing on how move 2 (establishing company's/advertiser's credentials) is achieved in online want is recommended. Aside from that, to better understand the conventions in the writing of ads, it is recommended that a study focusing on the linguistic aspect of the ads be conducted. Specifically, it is recommended that the analysis focus on syntax. The ads should be analysed on the basis of linguistic features found in the beginning, the middle or main part and the last part of each ad. The occurrences of the linguistic features found in each part of the ad should be analysed.

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