

## CHAPTER VI

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION



#### 6.1 Overview

This study analyzed 100 advertisements, representing two corpora of recruitment advertisements: the Thai and British corpora. Each corpus comprised 50 recruitment advertisements collected from a leading English language daily newspaper of each country. To ensure that the two corpora were representative and comparable, two major issues were addressed: selection of the newspapers and advertisements. The selection of the newspapers was based on the recognition of the newspapers in their respective markets for a number of factors such as the number of years in business, editorial coverage and readership. In this study, the *Bangkok Post* and the *Times* were chosen as representative newspapers for the Thai and British corpora, respectively, because both newspapers were one of the most prestigious national daily newspapers in their countries. As far as the selection of the advertisements is concerned, previous genre-based studies (Swales, 1990; Samraj, 2002; Kanoksilapatham, 2003, 2005; Ozturk, 2007) indicate that the identification of moves and the organizational patterns of moves may vary across disciplines. An examination in various job sectors revealed that job advertisements in most sectors tend to vary a great deal in terms of the nature of the jobs. For instance, in the hospitality and travel sector, it was possible to find advertisements for tour guides, concierges, marketing communication staff, chefs and general managers. Thus, recruitment advertisements for these positions may exhibit different rhetorical structures. However, job advertisements in the banking, finance and accounting sector were likely to represent a more homogenous genre because most jobs, such as financial analysts and accounting managers, entail similar job descriptions. Therefore, this study focused on recruitment advertisements from the banking, finance and accounting sector.

Based upon a genre-analytic approach (Bhatia, 1993, 2004; Swales, 1990, 2004), the move structures of these advertisements were identified. Then, an expert in the publishing and advertising business served as a coder to validate the move demarcation. The inter-coder reliability analysis which was assessed by Cohen's Kappa showed high agreement rates between the researcher and the expert. Finally, the move structures of Thai and British advertisements were outlined and compared. The comparison of move structures was made in four aspects – specificity/generality, frequency, sequence and cyclicity of moves. The analysis revealed a similar set of six moves across the two cultures. However, the discrepancies in the frequencies and sequences of certain moves and steps reflect cross-cultural variations prevailing in this professional genre.

The subsequent part of this chapter reviews and discusses the findings from the above methodology. It attempts to give reasons for the differences between the move structures of Thai and British recruitment advertisements. To do so, it pays particular attention to how national cultures affect generic conventions in recruitment advertisement writing of Thailand and the United Kingdom. The chapter ends with implications of the study and directions for future research.

## **6.2 Major Findings**

Despite being realized by a similar set of six moves, Thai and British advertisements exhibit a number of differences in their organizational structures with regard to all four aspects of moves, namely their specificity/generality, frequency, sequence and cyclicity. At the step level, the frequency of steps of some moves also shows considerable discrepancies between the Thai and British corpora. The following is a review of major findings which will serve as points for further discussion.

In spite of their common communicative purposes, Thai and British advertisements seem to focus on different aspects of information. Thai advertisements place an emphasis on *Establishing credentials (EC)*, *Persuading prospective candidates (PC)* and *Providing application procedures (AP)*. All these three moves show a high frequency in the Thai corpus, especially AP which occurs in all Thai advertisements with elaborate detail. With regard to the sequence of

moves and their patterns, EC is used most frequently as the opening move, while PC is the most cyclical move and frequently occurs in a recursive order with EC.

Nevertheless, British advertisements underscore the *Describing job specifications (JS)*, *Stating requirements (SR)* and *Offering remuneration (OR)*. JS is an essential part of British advertisements because it appears in every British advertisement. Moreover, the JS of British advertisements provides more in-depth information about the job than that of Thai advertisements. In terms of its steps, both *Step 1: Describing work scope* and *Step 2: Specifying work location* occur more frequently in British than Thai advertisements. JS is generally found at the beginning position of most British advertisements and repeated in the middle part of the advertisements, making it the most cyclical move of the British corpus. To further emphasize the significance of job specifications, the SR move in British advertisements concentrates primarily on the candidates' previous work experience, while the candidates' educational background and demographics, namely age, gender and nationality, are not included.

With regard to remuneration, the status of the *Offering remuneration (OR)* move does vary across Thai and British advertisements. Based upon its frequency in each corpus, it is considered an optional move in the Thai corpus, but a conventional move in the British one. Moreover, the information of OR in British advertisements tends to be more specific and detailed than that appearing in Thai advertisements.

With regard to the overall organizational structure of the advertisements, Thai advertisements tend to follow a consistent pattern, while diverse move structures are common in British advertisements. Most Thai advertisements have an order of EC-PC-JS-SR-OR-AP. In some advertisements in which all six moves do not occur concurrently, the sequence of EC-PC-JS-SR-OR-AP is still likely to be maintained. In contrast, it is difficult to identify distinct move structures in British advertisements, as a variety of move sequences can be found.

### **6.2.1 Establishing Credentials vs. Job Specifications**

One of the most distinguishing differences between the move structures of Thai and British advertisements is the type of information that these advertisements

highlight. The findings indicate that Thai advertisements tend to be company-oriented while British advertisements are likely to be job-oriented. In the Thai corpus, most advertisements begin with the *Establishing credentials (EC)* move, which not only introduces the company to the readers but also glorifies its achievements with elaborate information on current business, size, policies and goals. In contrast, British advertisements place great emphasis on the *Describing job specifications (JS)* move. Due to its characteristics, frequency, sequence and cyclicity, JS can be considered an indispensable part of British advertisements. Not only is JS found in every advertisement in the British corpus, it provides clear and specific details of work scope and location. In addition, JS most frequently opens British advertisements with details on work location and recurs in the middle of the advertisements to provide further information on job descriptions.

A possible explanation for the different orientations of Thai and British advertisements may stem from the degree of individualism and collectivism in each society. Although cultures function on a continuum and should not be regarded as a polarized dimension, a value orientation tends to be more predominant in a society (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988). Based on previous cross-cultural research on individualism and collectivism (Hofstede, 1984; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988; Trompenaars, 1993, etc.), Thailand and the United Kingdom have entirely different views on this cultural dimension. Thailand is considered as a collectivist society in which major values are sense of belonging, group harmony, solidarity, interconnectivity with and concern for others. In contrast, the United Kingdom perceives individualism as a prime value. Independence, freedom and personal achievements are signs of quality of life. (See Chapter II, section 2.4.1.2 for more details.)

As far as the writing of recruitment advertisements in Thailand and the United Kingdom is concerned, national differences in individualism and collectivism dimension of the two cultures are likely to influence the occurrence of EC and JS in Thai and British advertisements, respectively. According to Hofstede and Hofstede (2005: 103), in the individualist society, task is supposed to prevail over any personal relationship. The importance of the task suggests that the British tend to work for the job rather than adhere to the organization or people they work for. It can thus be assumed that candidates are likely to be hired and assessed

according to their capabilities. Therefore, JS is an indispensable part of British advertisements as details about the job must be clearly stated. This explains why JS not only appears in all British advertisements with elaborate detail, but it is also repeated most frequently. On the other hand, in collectivist cultures like Thailand, the sense of belonging to group is more important than the task (Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005: 103). This collectivist attitude may make the Thais consider the company more than the job when they apply for the job. As a result, EC in Thai advertisements must be prominent in the sense that it has to be able to convince the readers to apply for the job. It is thus common to see EC at the beginning of most Thai advertisements, which attracts the readers by emphasizing the current business status and achievements of the company.

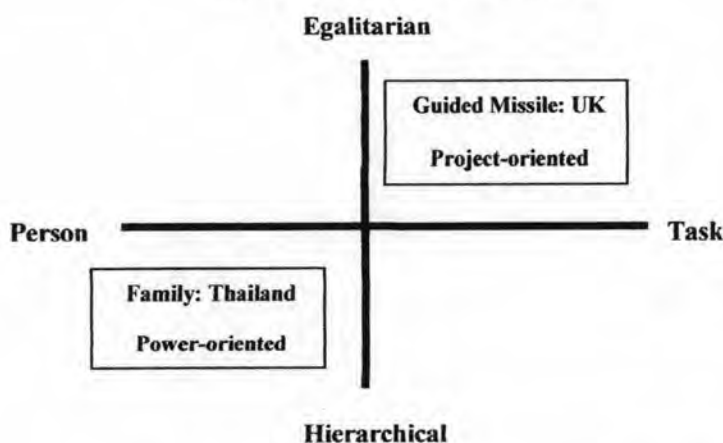
Another important cultural dimension that is likely to work together with the individualism-collectivism dimension in Thai and British recruitment advertisement writing is the level of power distance in the two countries. Individualism-collectivism and power distance are often interrelated (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). As mentioned in Chapter II, section 2.4.1.2, the two cultural dimensions are negatively correlated. That is, in Thailand in which collectivism is more dominant, the relationship between the employer and employee resembles a family relationship with mutual obligations of protection in exchange for loyalty (Holmes & Tangtongtavy, 1995; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). In this respect, the company is seen as a leader who is supposed to look after their subordinates (Hess, 2001). This attitude may influence the Thais to be more concerned about the status of the company when applying for a job, thus making Thai advertisements more inclined towards the company. Therefore, elaborating on company's credentials by placing *Establishing credentials (EC)* at the beginning of Thai advertisements is likely to help the applicants feel more secure about the company for which they apply. However, Gorden (1984: 78) explains that the British society whose cultural orientation holds individualism as a prime value tends to minimize authority and hierarchy in its organizations. Subordinates and superiors consider each other as existentially equal. Hence, the British believe in the efficacy and performance of the individual. It can thus be implied that job specifications are likely to be one of the most important issues for both employers when selecting new staff and employees when applying for a job. This helps explain why British advertisements tend to be

job-oriented as seen in the characteristics, frequency, sequence and cyclicity of *Detailing job specifications (JS)*.

The findings in the present study are congruent with those of Trompenaars (1993) who explored how differences between national cultures help determine the type of corporate culture. Three aspects are especially important in determining corporate culture: 1) the general relationship between employees and their organization; 2) the hierarchical system of authority defining superiors and subordinates and 3) the general views of employees about the organization's destiny, purpose and goals and their place in this.

In his study which included 52 national cultures, Trompenaars (1993) classified Thailand as having the *family corporate* culture and the United Kingdom the *guided missile* culture. In the family culture, the emphasis is placed upon personal relationships and hierarchy. The result is a power-oriented corporate culture in which the company is supposed to take care of its employees, and in return the employees should look up to their superiors and follow their leadership. In the guided missile culture found in the United Kingdom, work values are inclined to be egalitarian and impersonal. Everyone is treated equally and assessed by one's own performance and contribution to the organization's success. As a result, this corporate culture can be described as project-oriented because employees are more loyal to their professions than to their company. The different corporate cultures of Thailand and the United Kingdom can be visualized in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1: Corporate cultures



(Reproduced after Trompenaars, 1993: 140)

If one applies Trompenaars' work to the present study, it can be seen that the national culture does play an important role in how recruitment advertisements are written in each country. As Thailand has a family structure which combines collectivism and high power distance, Thai advertisements seem to be oriented towards the company whereby its credentials are highlighted. Nevertheless, it is clear from that British organizations pay more attention to the task, resulting in the orientation towards projects. Therefore, its advertisements place great emphasis on the job by giving details of job specifications.

An interesting point about the JS move concerns the specification of work location. In most British advertisements, work location is clearly stated at the beginning of the advertisements. However, the work location is seldom mentioned in Thai advertisements. If it is included, it normally occurs in the middle or penultimate part of the advertisements. This difference in the specification of work location between Thai and British advertisements suggests that the British care more about the work location than the Thais, and that they are more likely to move with their job. In fact, one of the important factors of migration in the United Kingdom is the labor demand and job creation in the major cities (Christie, 2002). It is reported that one out of eight British people move more than 200 kilometers due to employment opportunities (Champion, 2002). Apart from economic reasons, the higher labor mobility in the United Kingdom may also result from the individualist nature of its society. As the British are expected to be independent and look after themselves, it is speculated that they may move more freely than the Thais. On the contrary, Thais live in a collectivist culture, in which people are born in extended families and everyone has to take care of the in-group members. Breaking away from one's group by moving to work in another place may not be desirable.

The cultural perceptions of self and one's own place in relation to others in society can be seen to play an influential role in recruitment advertisement writing in Thai and British newspapers. As the Thai society is inclined towards collectivism and large power distance, Thais would like to belong to established organizations and expect their employers to look after them. In Thai advertisements, it is thus important for companies to give the right impression to their potential candidates. The company must look stable and well-respected in the eyes of the readers. This explains why *Establishing credentials (EC)* is given the

first priority in Thai advertisements. On the other hand, the British culture stresses the intrinsic quality of individuals and values equality in the society. The recruitment process is rather based on one's capabilities. Therefore, it is common for companies to emphasize the *Detailing job specifications (JS)* move. With clear job specifications, prospective candidates decide whether they meet the requirements of the job both in terms of work scope and location.

### **6.2.2 Stating Requirements: Education, Work Experience and Demographics**

Despite being a conventional move in Thai and British corpora, the frequency of the steps in this move show some striking differences. The frequency of occurrence of *Step 1: Indicating educational level* and *Step 4: Detailing demographic data* is much higher in Thai than British advertisements. Interestingly, Step 4 does not at all occur in the British corpus. This implies that education and demographic data of the candidates are one of the important qualifications that Thai organizations look for in the candidates. On the other hand, British companies may not place a great emphasis on these issues, but go into great detail about the candidates' previous work experience in *Step 3: Describing personal attributes*.

The importance of education in the recruiting process reflects the Asian value towards education. To most Asians, getting a high educational degree is one of the most important goals in life. In East Asian countries like Japan, China and Korea, the devotion to education derives from Confucianism which teaches people to respect knowledge and the well-educated (Chen, Chih and Chu, 2005). Although Thai society is not much influenced by Confucian teachings, education is also perceived with respect and associated with prestige. According to Komin's (1991:11) extensive research on values and behavioral patterns of the Thai people, education has been perceived more as a "means" of climbing up the social ladder, rather than an end value in itself. To elaborate, the significance of education is in the form rather than the content value. The knowledge-for-knowledge sake value does not receive high value in the cognition of the Thai in general. Instead, educational degrees and institutions are an important part of one's social qualifications. Degrees from well-respected universities would identify the owner



with the prestigious class of the society. This value is likely to play an influential role in the recruiting process (Komin, 1991). This Thai value towards education thus explains why educational level is mentioned more frequently in Thai than British advertisements. It is likely that Thai candidates are often judged by their educational level and background. Graduates from top universities, especially those with higher degrees are preferred, sometimes regardless of their work experience (Komin, 1991). However, the British may not look up to educational qualifications as much as Thais do. British advertisements do not include educational requirements of the candidates as frequently as Thai advertisements do. Instead, British companies need to make sure that the candidates can perform well in the job, because management entails management of individuals. That is, the selection of employees and their incentives should be linked with their performance (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Therefore, it is important to clearly state expected previous work experience in British advertisements as it can be indicative of the candidates' capabilities and suitability for the job.

With regard to the requirements on the demographics of the candidates, the difference between Thai and British advertisements may be related to each country's labor law enforcement. In Thailand, employers may specify criteria such as preferences for an applicant's age and sex (Thailand Board of Investment's Investment Review Publication, [http://www.business-in-asia.com/thai\\_labor\\_law.htm](http://www.business-in-asia.com/thai_labor_law.htm)). However, it is a British law that everyone should be treated equally in the workplace. It is unlawful to make gender the grounds to treat anyone less favorably than others in identical circumstances. The law covers any type of selection process for employment, whether it is recruitment to a new position, promotion with an existing employer, a transfer or a dismissal ([http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home\\_page/Handling\\_discrimination/Gender/Understanding\\_the\\_law](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Handling_discrimination/Gender/Understanding_the_law)). Due to the labor law enforcement of Thailand and the United Kingdom, Thai advertisements can include details on the employer's preferred demographic profile of the candidates, while this practice is not allowed in British advertisements. The difference in legal regulations between Thailand and the United Kingdom indicates that the two societies do have different views towards equality at least in the labor market. In Thailand, it seems that companies and candidates are not in the same position in the recruitment process because companies can choose their employees

on the basis of gender, age and even appearance. However, the hiring process in the United Kingdom is seen as an equal transaction between the employer and the employee. Therefore, British companies must give everyone equal opportunities.

### 6.2.3 Offering Remuneration

The findings in this study demonstrate that Thai advertisements do not include information pertaining to job compensation as frequently and extensively as their British counterparts. The frequency of the *Offering remuneration (OR)* move indicates that OR is categorized as an optional move in the Thai corpus, but a conventional move in the British corpus. Moreover, OR in British advertisements is likely to contain more information than that appearing in Thai advertisements. Most British advertisements include detailed information about remuneration such as annual salary, year-end bonus, health insurance, car and housing allowances, etc. However, information in OR of Thai advertisements tends to be general and unelaborated.

The difference in the frequency and explicitness of the OR move may result from how the relationship between the employer and employee is perceived in each culture. As mentioned earlier, individualism is highly valued in the British workplace, and the company and its staff are engaged in a business relationship. It can be assumed that both the employer and employee are free to express their needs and wants. In this respect, the company is open about compensation packages that they are prepared to pay the right candidates. Moreover, the pay implies the job level and responsibilities so that the candidates can decide whether the remuneration suits his qualifications, wants and goals. Nevertheless, the relationship between the employer and employee in Thai organizations is rather on unequal terms, as the company is perceived to be the leader and the staff is its subordinates. According to personal communication with a number of business people in recruiting business, Thai companies do not feel the need to include remuneration in the advertisements. They prefer to leave out details about compensation. Often, the compensation issue is likely to be discussed in the interviews after both the company and candidate have met and made acquaintance. Rather than being straightforward about the remuneration, Thai companies prefer to have room for negotiation with the

candidates. Meanwhile, the candidates should only mention the compensation when they are asked by their potential employers. This suggests that different cultural values do play a significant role in the manifestation of the OR move in Thai and British advertisements.

#### 6.2.4 Persuading Prospective Candidates

Another interesting difference in the organizational structure of Thailand and British advertisements can be seen in *Persuading prospective candidates (PC)*. Although PC is considered in both corpora as a conventional move, its occurrence in Thai and British advertisements varies considerably. PC is found in almost all Thai advertisements whereas its frequency of occurrence in British advertisements is relatively low. More importantly, PC is the most cyclical move in the Thai corpus, whereby it is most frequently found to be in cyclical patterns with *Establishing credentials (EC)*. This indicates that PC is one of the most important moves in Thai advertisements, but it is of minor significance in its British counterparts.

The occurrence of PC with EC suggests that Thai advertisements are oriented towards the company. The PC move in Thai advertisements does not merely persuade the candidates to apply for the job. When it occurs in cyclical orders with EC in Thai advertisements, it helps glorify the company's credentials by convincing the readers that the organization is well worth applying and working for. The following example shows how PC occurs in repetitive patterns with EC to emphasize the stability of the company in order to convince the readers to join the company.

**(EC)** *We are expanding the plant. (PC) Here's your excellent chance to join us. (EC) Now that the automotive industry is growing, we, AutoAlliance Thailand, the combined strength of Ford and Mazda, producing top quality vehicles for local and global markets, are expanding our plant to meet the production volume and customers' expectation. Quality of products is our first priority. Likewise, having high potential people is the main key to fulfill our quality determination. As we*

*continue to enjoy expansion and producing high quality vehicles, (PC) we invite you to be a part of our success: Corporate Financial Planning Analyst (BP 46)*

The above example shows that PC does not only invite the readers to apply for the job, but it is also used along with EC to emphasize the company's achievements. In other words, the advertisement tries to ensure the readers that this company is an established organization and can offer its employees prospective career development. Therefore, it seems more convincing for the readers to apply for the position being advertised.

In most British advertisements, PC simply announces job availabilities in the company, for example, *We are looking to appoint a Group Finance Director (T 38)* and *DZ Bank is looking to recruit an analyst (T 9)*. It seldom occurs in cyclical orders with EC. When it appears with EC, it does not stress the company's success. For instance,

- *(PC) Commercial Accountant required for (EC) an IT business (T 32)*
- *(EC) Our client, a manufacturing organisation, (PC) are seeking to recruit an Assistant Financial Controller (T 23).*

As seen in the above examples, when PC appears with EC in British advertisements, it is relatively short and direct. It merely announces job openings in the company and does not help support the company's credentials.

The frequency and cyclicity of PC in Thai and British corpora demonstrates that PC is an important move in Thai advertisements, whereas British advertisements do not underscore the use of PC. Moreover, the cyclical pattern of PC and EC also suggests that Thai advertisements tend to be company-oriented, as PC helps stress the achievements of the company. The cyclicity between PC and EC moves, however, does not often appear in British advertisements. When PC is used in a cycle with EC, its main function is to announce the job availabilities.

### **6.2.5 Providing Application Procedures**

As companies expect to receive applications from interested readers, it can be assumed that information on how to apply should be an essential part of all recruitment advertisements. While *Providing application procedures (AP)* is a conventional move in both Thai and British advertisements, its frequency and

characteristics differ across the two corpora. The frequency of AP in the Thai corpus is much higher than that in the British corpus. AP is invariably present in Thai advertisements, but it occurs only in almost three-quarters of British advertisements. Moreover, most Thai advertisements end with AP, while only half of British advertisements have AP as their closing move. A further examination in the details of the AP move reveals that AP of the Thai advertisements contains elaborate information on the company contact details, especially postal address. However, the information of AP in the British advertisements is relatively shorter because it includes primarily name of the contact person, his/her email address and the company's website.

The difference in the frequency and details of AP in Thai and British corpora points out that the Thais and British may make use of different means to contact the company when they apply for a job. It seems that Thais send their applications both via postal and electronic mail, while the British are more reliant upon making contacts via the internet, both in terms of finding out more information on how to apply and send their applications to the company. This may result from the volume of internet usage of both countries. In fact, the development of the internet in the United Kingdom started long before Thailand, resulting in a much more advanced technology in internet usage and a higher internet penetration in its population.

The introduction of the internet in Thailand began in mid-1987 by a few dedicated and visionary university professors. Networking in Thailand at that time was difficult due to limited infrastructure and numerous technical obstacles (Palasri, Huter & Wenzel, 1999). By 1995, the internet usage had grown extensively and expanded outside the academic realm to the business sector and the general public. According to the Thailand Internet and Communication Technology Indicators 2005 report by the National Electronics and Computer Technology Center ([www.nectec.or.th/pld/indicators](http://www.nectec.or.th/pld/indicators)), the percentage of Thai households with computers in 2004 is 11.1%. The growth of internet users reached 7 million users in 2004, equal to 11.9 users for every 100 population. They are primarily concentrated in Bangkok and big cities. Approximately 50% of these users access the internet by dial-up connection, while broadband users are estimated at around 200,000 users. As of 2006, the Internet World Statistics records the percentage of internet

penetration in Thailand at 12.5 or about 8,420,000 users. (<http://www.internetworldstats.com/asia/th.htm>).

In the United Kingdom, the internet development started in the mid 1960s with political considerations (<http://www.cs.ucl.ac.uk/staff/jon/arpa/internet-history.html>). Since then, various governmental agencies such as British Post Office, Science Research Council and Department of Industry have funded numerous internet research projects, resulting in a strong development in internet technology. According to the 2004 Ofcom Research (<http://www.statistics.gov.uk>), 59% of UK homes have a PC, and 52% of homes (around 12.8 million) have internet access. Out of the overall connections, 27% is broadband connections. More people in the United Kingdom can now access broadband. British's Telecom latest statistics (as of 2004) show that 96% of customers are within range of broadband connections. Subscriptions for dial-up and broadband internet connections show opposing patterns of annual growth. There was a decrease of 6.8% in dial-up connections between 2003 and 2004, but the number of households with broadband connections increased by 63% between 2004 and 2005. These trends are likely to continue with technology advancement. The increase in internet usage leads to a radical shift in media consumption. Now the new generation is turning away from television, radio and newspapers in favor of online services. Online advertising continues to grow as a mass marketing medium. As of 2006, the Internet World Statistics has recorded the percentage of internet penetration in the United Kingdom at 62.3 or about 37,600,000 users (<http://www.internetworldstats.com/eu/uk.htm>).

Taking the current status of internet usage in Thailand and the United Kingdom into consideration, it is plausible that Thai people are less likely to use the internet as a means of communication when they apply for a job. Although the internet in Thailand is gaining popularity among the general public, its availability and access are not widespread. Hence, people wishing to apply for a job may choose to contact the company by phone or send their applications by postal mail or fax. On the other hand, with the availability and easy access to the internet, the British are likely to rely heavily on the electronic channel of communication to get more information about the job and company they wish to apply for as well as make further contact with the company. Therefore, *Providing application procedures*

(AP) is always present with full contact and application details in Thai advertisements while British advertisements may overlook this information and assume that interested readers can find out more information from the company's website.

### **6.2.6 Overall Organizational Pattern**

Taking the sequence of all moves and their overall organizational patterns into consideration, the findings demonstrate that most Thai advertisements follow a unified pattern, whereas there are no distinct move patterns among British advertisements. A sequence of EC-PC-JS-SR-OR-AP is common in Thai advertisements. This means, most Thai advertisements often start with information about the company. Next, it either tells the readers that the company is recruiting new employees or invites readers to apply for vacant positions. Details about the job and required qualifications are then provided. After that, the remuneration package information is mentioned. Finally, the advertisement ends with contact details for interested readers who wish to apply for the job. Although some advertisements may not make use of all the six moves, the order of moves still remains similar to that of EC-PC-JS-SR-OR-AP. In contrast, British advertisements do not adhere to a particular organizational pattern. The sequence of moves in some advertisements may be as short as JS-SR-AP. Other patterns are as complicated as JS-OR-EC-PC-JS-SR-AP-EC or OR-SR-PC-EC-PC-SR-JS-SR-OR-AP.

One of the possible explanations for the variation in the move structures of the advertisements in Thailand and the United Kingdom deals with the status of English in each country. In Thailand, English is a foreign language which is mostly used among educated people in major cities. The understanding of the English is still limited to particular groups of people in the society. Due to the level of English language competency of the Thai people, it can be generally assumed that writing English-language advertisements may not be a simple task for most Thais. Thus, the Thais may need to follow certain patterns when they write English language advertisements. According to a personal communication with a human resource development and training manager from Jardine Flemings (Thailand) Co., Ltd.,

most Thais would rather follow existing writing styles seen in other advertisements than create their own advertisements. With their low English proficiency level, it is much easier and less time-consuming for most Thais to follow what has been done before. However, the British may be comfortable writing advertisements in their own language and do not feel the necessity of adhering to particular writing structures. As a result, a myriad of writing styles for finance, banking and accounting recruitment advertisements is exploited to respond to different contexts and purposes of the writers. Moreover, similar differences in the overall organizational patterns can also be found between English native-speaker countries and English as a-second-or-foreign-language countries. In the US or Australia, it is common to find various move patterns in recruitment advertisements. However, an examination of advertisements in Hong Kong, China and Malaysia reveal that advertisement writers in these countries tend to follow a similar move structure of EC-PC-JS-SR-OR-AP. Therefore, it can be assumed that the level of English language proficiency is a possible reason for different writing structures of advertisements in these countries.

### **6.3 Hypotheses Revisited**

The present study of Thai and British recruitment advertisements draws upon Swales' (1990, 2004) and Bhatia's (1993, 2004) theory of genre analysis. The analysis includes the identification of moves and steps in Thai and British advertisements and the comparison of move structures of these structures within four aspects: specificity/generality, frequency, sequence and cyclicity of moves. Analysis of the findings can prove the hypotheses of this study as follows:

**Hypothesis 1:** The recruitment advertisements in Thai and British daily newspapers are realized by the same set of moves and steps. This hypothesis is partially confirmed, because advertisements from Thai and British contexts share common moves but not steps. It is found that these advertisements present different types of information, namely company profile, announcement of job openings, job specifications, candidates' qualifications required by the company and the advertiser's contact information. In other words, Thai and British recruitment advertisements are realized by the following set of moves.



1. Establishing credentials (EC)
2. Encouraging prospective candidates (PC)
3. Detailing job specifications (JS)
4. Stating requirements (SR)
5. Offering remuneration (OR)
6. Providing application procedures (AP)

Nevertheless, one of the striking differences between Thai and British recruitment advertisements can be found in the occurrence of *Stating requirements (SR)*, *Step 4: Detailing demographic data*. This step is commonly found in Thai advertisements, but it does not appear in any their British counterparts.

Hypothesis 2: The move structures for Thai and British recruitment advertisements are different in terms of the characteristics, sequence, frequency, and cyclicity of moves. This hypothesis is supported, as the move structures of these advertisements do vary in all aspects.

With regard to the specificity/generality of moves, Thai advertisements tend to be more elaborate when providing contact details for interested readers to apply. By contrast, British advertisements give out more on information about the job, qualifications and remuneration.

When the frequency of moves is taken into consideration, the most striking difference between Thai and British advertisements is found in the status of *Offering remuneration (OR)* move. OR is categorized as a conventional move in British advertisements, but an optional one in Thai advertisements. Further differences can be found in the frequency of steps. Thai advertisements tend to announce the company's vacancies and stress educational level of the candidates more often than their British counterparts. On the contrary, British advertisements include details on job descriptions and work location more often than Thai advertisements do. It is also interesting to find that Thai advertisements specify the demographics of the candidates while this type of information never appears in British advertisements.

The sequence of moves between Thai and British advertisements also differ, especially in the opening move and overall move orders. Thai advertisements are most likely to start with information on the company, while work location and remuneration are placed at the beginning of most British advertisements. If overall

move orders are taken into account, Thai advertisements seem to follow a pattern of *Establishing credentials* (EC) - *Persuading prospective candidates* (PC) - *Describing job specifications* (JS) - *Stating requirements*(SR) - *Offering remuneration* (OR) – *Providing application procedures* (AP). However, British advertisements are realized with a myriad of move structures.

As for cyclicity of moves, British advertisements have more instances of move cyclicity than Thai advertisements. *Describing job specifications* (JS) is the most cyclical move in British advertisements, because it is generally used in the beginning and repeated in the middle part of most British advertisements. By contrast, most Thai advertisements tend to put more attempts to persuade the readers to apply for the job, as *Persuading prospective candidates* (PC) is repeated most frequently.

Hypothesis 3: Factors determining the move structures of Thai and British recruitment advertisements are the degree of power distance and collectivism of each country. This hypothesis is proved to be partially confirmed. In fact, the findings suggest that a number of factors are at play in the writing of Thai and British recruitment advertisements. A factor that is assumed to play an influential role in the writing conventions of these advertisements is the degree of individualism and collectivism of Thailand and the United Kingdom. In Thailand where collectivism is more prevalent, it is assumed that the Thais care more about who they work with. They consider the company more than the job when they submit their application, and thus are more inclined to place an emphasis on the company's reputation and recognition. In the individualistic society of the United Kingdom, however, the British are more concerned with job specifications. As task is deemed most important in an individualistic workplace, it can be implied that the British work for the job rather than the company. It is thus common for British advertisements to provide details on the job.

Power distance is seen to work with individualism and collectivism in determining the variation of advertisement writing in Thailand and the United Kingdom. Within a high power distance society, the Thais seem to accept their relationship with their employers as unequal. As the company is expected to take care of their staff, the Thais are more concerned with the company which they will work for, hoping to have a good leader. On the other hand, the British regard their

relationship with their employers as equal. As they value the efficacy and performance of the individual, they are more likely to concentrate on the job than to care about their relationship with the company.

Other factors that influence the writing style of Thai and British advertisements include attitudes towards education, labor law enforcement, the volume of internet usage and the English language proficiency of each country. Thai companies focus on education because education is highly valued in the Thai society, sometimes even more than one's work experience. In addition, Thai labor law allows companies to specify the candidates' demographics, but this practice is prohibited by the British law. In the application procedures of Thai candidates, applicants can contact the company via electronic or postal mail, as the internet always may not be easily accessed. Nevertheless, the internet usage in the United Kingdom is more advanced and widespread. Thus, British organizations prefer electronic channels of communication. Finally, it is speculated that Thais tend to follow a particular writing pattern because writing English advertisements may still be difficult for most Thais. In contrast, the British may feel more comfortable using their own language, thus resulting in a variety of advertisement writing styles.

It is important to note that these are plausible factors that determine the variation of recruitment advertisement writing conventions in Thailand and the United Kingdom. These views should be perceived as suggestive rather than conclusive. In fact, a number of factors work together to influence the advertisement writing styles of each country. It would be impossible to provide a clear-cut list of which factor directly contributes to a particular writing style. Therefore, it would be best to consider these factors as interrelated and not separate entities.

#### **6.4 Conclusion**

This study intends to compare and contrast the writing of recruitment advertisements in daily newspapers in Thailand and the United Kingdom by applying a theory of genre analysis based on the view of language as part of the social process. Although the advertisements are written in English, local socio-cultural constraints do play a crucial role in determining the rhetorical structure of

the advertisements in each country. The differences in the move structures of these advertisements indeed reflect the realities of the social contexts in which they appear.

While both Thai and British recruitment advertisements contain the same type of information, they do differ in how the information is structured. Thai advertisements underpin the importance of the company by elaborating on its company's credentials in the early position. However, information on job specifications and remuneration is relatively short and vague. Work location is often not stated. They explicitly persuade the readers to apply for the job by announcing job vacancies and providing full application details. On the contrary, British advertisements give first priority to the job. Job descriptions are provided with detail, while work location is clearly stated. Moreover, compensation is explicitly mentioned both in financial terms and other benefits. The company information is not emphasized as much as it is in Thai advertisements. For interested readers to apply, contact details are relatively short with the preference of electronic channel of communication.

The variation in the organizational patterns of Thai and British recruitment advertisements partly stems from different cultural orientations of the two countries. Influential factors that are most likely to determine the recruitment advertisement writing style is the degree of individualism-collectivism and power distance in each society. It is plausible that this writing style is influenced by the Thai value of being interdependent to maintain group harmony, as most Thais would like to have a sense of belonging to the company. The findings suggest that when applying for a job, Thais hope to work for a well-established organization in order to seek job security. Meanwhile, they expect the company to look after them. Moreover, being in a large power distance society, Thai companies are perceived to have an unequal relationship with their employees. That is, the companies are supposed to be the leader who takes care of their subordinates. In return, the employees respect and remain loyal to the company. Hence, the presentation of the company in the Thai advertisements must look reliable, while details of the job and compensation are trivialized. In contrast, British advertisements focus on the job and its remuneration. As an individualist society, the relationship between the company and its employees is considered a business transaction whereby both parties are of

equal status. Hiring process is likely to be based upon one's own merits and qualifications. It thus seems natural that recruitment advertisements underscore the importance of the job and directly state the remuneration that successful candidates will receive.

Recruitment preferences of Thailand and the United Kingdom can also be seen in these advertisements. An important qualification for Thai companies is the candidates' educational level. Thais prefer to recruit those with high educational degrees from respected universities, sometimes regardless of their experience or suitability for the job. Hence, the requirements of the candidates' educational qualifications occur more frequently in Thai advertisements than their British counterparts. However, the British tend to place a priority on the candidates' previous experience so as to be assured that they will be able to immediately fit in the job. That explains why most British advertisements provide elaborate details about the candidates' previous experience required by the company. Moreover, it is a common practice for Thai advertisements to include demographics of the candidates such as gender and age. However, the British labor law prohibits this practice, as everyone, regardless of gender and age, should be treated equally in the recruitment process.

Other factors also determine the writing of these advertisements such as the volume of internet usage and the status of English in each country. It is necessary for Thai advertisements to include contact and application details while British advertisements do not do so as often. It is speculated that Thai companies have to provide both postal and electronic communication for the candidates as the internet may not be easily accessed. In the United Kingdom, the candidates may be expected to contact the company electronically because the internet usage is more widespread and stable.

In conclusion, this study is a manifestation of cross-cultural variation in advertisement writing. The analysis of Thai and British advertisements allows us to understand how the writers manipulate their generic knowledge to serve their own communicative purposes and meet the demands of their socio-cultural professional settings.

## **6.5 Implications of the Study**

The genre analysis of English language recruitment advertisements in Thai and British daily newspapers has provided the following pedagogical and theoretical implications.

### **6.5.1 Pedagogical implications**

As a pioneering and influential work in the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Swales' first work of genre analysis (1981) was designed to help non-native learners of English read and write research articles. Although the language of advertising is only a small part of business English, it is hoped that the contribution of this research is not limited in the field of advertising. This research attempts to manifest how genre analysis can be applied in the teaching of ESP in the following aspects.

In the scope of advertising language, the study proposes two preferred writing structures of recruitment advertisements for English language daily newspapers in Thailand and the United Kingdom. In the Thai context, advertisements should follow an organizational pattern of EC-PC-JS-SR-OR-AP. In other words, advertisements should start off with the company profile. The information about the company should underscore the company's success and stability so as to convince the readers to apply for the job. Important information to be included is, for example, the company's position in the industry, the number of employees or clients, the number of branches or regions in which the company has its operations, awards or accolades as well as its goals and policies. The subsequent part of the advertisement should persuade prospective candidates by either informing the readers of the current job opening(s) or inviting their applications. Next, job specifications should be outlined to give the readers general ideas about the work scope that they are required to do. Requirements on the candidates' qualifications are later described. Emphasis should be placed on the candidates' educational qualifications, while the requirements on previous work experience can be brief and general. It is also possible for Thai advertisements to specify the candidates' demographics such as gender or age. Towards the end of the advertisement, the writer may include some information about the remuneration

package to be offered to the successful candidates. In this respect, the information does not need to be detailed especially in terms of financial rewards and other benefits. It is also acceptable to leave out this information. Finally, the advertisement should end with details on how to apply, namely required documents for the application, contact person and address (both postal and electronic address) and the company's website.

When writing for a daily newspaper in the United Kingdom, the recruitment advertisement writers should be aware that there is no fixed organizational pattern. Although several structures are acceptable, certain conventions do prevail in British advertisements. It is important to note that attention should be paid to the job being advertised and its remuneration. The advertisements are thus likely to begin with work location and compensation package. The information does not need to be elaborate, but direct and precise. Preferred linguistic forms are note-like bullet points containing mainly noun phrases, for example, *Location: London and Southwest, Salary: 55,000 plus car and health insurance*. In the body of the advertisements, three components are likely to be found: job descriptions, candidates' qualifications and company profile. Most importantly, details about the scope of work should be provided. To give the applicants clear ideas about the job they will encounter, it is common to include details on day-to-day operations, the role in which the successful candidates will perform, the goals and targets of the position as well as the people that they will work with and report to. As for the requirements on the candidates, writers should focus on the candidates' previous work experience, as it is considered as one of the major indicators whether the candidates will be able to perform according to the job descriptions. Other aspects, namely educational background and personal traits, are of minor significance. However, an important point to bear in mind is that it is against the British labor law to specify the candidates' demographic data. With regard to the company profile, it is up to the writers to choose the information to be included, whether short or long. It can be one sentence or a phrase about the company's current business or a paragraph about the company's status, size and policies. To end the advertisement, application procedures and contact details do not need to be elaborated. Electronic communication, namely e-mail address or the company's website, is normally preferred.

It is important to inform the learners that the organizational pattern can be flexible depending upon the communicative purposes of the advertisement writers. In some Thai advertisements, the writers may choose to omit or repeat certain information, especially job specifications and remuneration. It is common to find the majority of advertisement space in the Thai newspaper devoted to information on the company and application procedures while job specifications and remuneration are briefly mentioned or left out. It is suggested that when all six moves are not included in one advertisement, the organizational pattern of EC-PC-JS-SR-OR-AP should be followed. For instance, structures, like EC-PC-JS-SR-AP, EC-PC-SR-AP, should be maintained as they are familiar to Thai readers. On the other hand, British advertisements may underpin the importance of job specifications and remuneration by not only putting them in the early position but also repeating them in the body of the advertisement. Therefore, it is common for British advertisements to have more cyclical patterns of moves while a myriad of rhetorical structures is accepted.

In today's multicultural world of business, British and American English are no longer the dominant mode of communication in all professional activities. Multinational companies often recruit people in the host country and adapt local socio-cultural norms to avoid miscommunication and maximize operating efficiency. It is thus necessary to prepare ESP learners to meet the needs and challenges of multicultural business settings. In this respect, learners should be exposed to advertisements from many countries and taught to detect local socio-cultural constraints that underline the advertisement structures (See sample advertisements from other countries in Appendix E). Not only will learners learn about cross-cultural variation in a variety of contexts, they should also be guided to make appropriate style choice to suit the demands of the business settings in which they are likely to operate. Once the learners can answer why a particular text is written the way it is (Bhatia, 1993, 1997), they will fully understand and be able to successfully write a genre in the discourse community in which it is routinely used.

In the broader scope of the teaching and learning of ESP, this study demonstrates that *generic competence* should be considered a primary goal to equip learners with suitable knowledge for communicating in various professional settings. According to Bhatia (2004: 145), generic competence refers to the ability



to identify, construct, interpret and successfully exploit a specific repertoire of professional disciplinary or workplaces genres to participate in the daily activities and to achieve the goals of a specific professional community. Although grammatical and sociolinguistic competences are important, they are not adequate for learners to achieve the communicative purpose(s) in institutionalized social contexts (Bhatia, 1997). Generic competence will enable learners to gain understanding of practices and conventions of particular communicative tasks embedded within professional settings. In this respect, the teaching and learning should concentrate on four main aspects of genre, namely 1) knowledge of the code; 2) genre knowledge; 3) sensitivity to cognitive structures and 4) genre ownership (Bhatia, 1997). In other words, learners must learn the language code used in particular genres. However, the knowledge of code alone will not lead to the successful acquisition of the genre. With the understanding of communicative goals and purposes of a specialist discourse community, learners should be assisted to gain genre knowledge, which comprises *procedural* and *social knowledge* (Berkinkotter and Huckin, 1995). Procedural knowledge includes the knowledge of methods and interpretative frameworks generally used in a discourse community, whereas social knowledge refers to the familiarity with the rhetorical and conceptual contexts (Bhatia, 1997). After the acquisition of knowledge of code and genre, learners should be sensitive to different structures of genre usage especially in response to the demands of changing socio-cultural practices. Ultimately, to become professional genre writers of a discourse community, learners should not only know and follow the conventions, they should be able to manipulate their genre knowledge to serve their own intentions and also meet the demands of today's ever-changing and complex professional communities.

It is my opinion that the learners of ESP should be guided to be genre explorers themselves. In a class, students may be assigned a piece of writing, for example, business letters, job application letters, sales leaflets and recipes. Their first task should be a small discussion in which students are assigned to analyze the text and try to list the stages of those writings. Leading questions from the teachers may be "What is the writer trying to tell us?", "What kind of information is included in the writing?", "Is there any sequence of how the story is written?", "What kind of information is likely to be found in the beginning and end of the story?". In the

class discussion, the teacher may help the students bring out salient features or points from their inputs. When the students are more familiar with a genre, the teachers should ask them to design their own writing and share it with the class. In this manner, the students are likely to gain a better understanding of genre knowledge rather than teaching them formulaic patterns. At the same time, students should be provided the opportunity to compare across languages, cultures and disciplines. The comparison will enable students to be aware of variations and enhance their sensitivities to different characteristics of various professional writings.

### **6.5.2 Theoretical and Methodological Implications**

Theoretically, this study has integrated genre analysis with the study of advertising genre. As mentioned in Chapter II, genre analysis has been extensively applied in both academic and professional discourse, but not in recruitment advertising genre. With regard to advertising language, previous studies have concentrated in either the syntactic or pragmatic levels of language of either print advertisements or TV commercials. Although Bhatia (2004) briefly touched upon the move structures of print advertisements, discursal approach in advertising language has received little attention by genre analysts. It can be said that this study has advanced the application of genre analysis in a new area of professional discourse.

This study demonstrates that genre analysis can be somewhat viewed in two seemingly contrastive perspectives. On the one hand, as a research tool, genre analysis provides general descriptions of how recruitment advertisements are written in Thai and British national daily newspapers. It unravels the organizational structures of these advertisements and allows us to compare and find out the similarities and differences between writings from the two cultures. On the other hand, these genre-based descriptions should not be perceived as static or formulaic. As Bhatia (2002: 6) puts it, "... it (genre analysis) is versatile and dynamic in nature, essentially explanatory rather than purely descriptive, but broad in vision, and has a natural propensity for innovation and exploitation". Although recruitment advertisements from the two cultures may consist of similar basic elements, this

study shows that advertisement writers do make use of their generic knowledge and expertise to suit the demands of complex socio-cultural contexts in which the genre is used and aimed for.

As discussed in Chapter II, many genre-based studies did not include the analysis of inter-coder reliability. However, this procedure is crucial in genre-based studies (Crookes, 1984; Kanoksilapatham, 2003, 2005). Since genre analysis depends primarily on the analyst's understanding of the text and experience in the field, the analysis may raise certain criticism, especially in terms of its reliability and validity. In this study, an inter-coder reliability assessment was carried out. The coder is a well-respected professional in the media and advertising industry both locally and internationally. A high rate agreement between the researcher and the coder confirms the accuracy and validity of the analysis in the study.

## **6.6 Directions for Future Research**

This study has provided insights to the description of a professional genre by analyzing and comparing rhetorical structures of recruitment advertisements across two cultures. Nevertheless, more research is called for to expand our understanding of the recruitment advertising genre. Some suggestions for future research are outlined below.

Although this study has demonstrated that national cultures do play a major role in the recruitment advertisement writing in Thailand and the United Kingdom, a number of culture-related issues are worth further investigation, such as the relationship between recruiting practices and writing of recruitment advertisements. As the Thais value education in terms of its form, it is possible that some local Thai companies recruit and pay their employees based on educational degrees and institutions. However, the same practice may not be common in other countries. Companies in high individualistic countries may focus on individual capabilities and work experience while paying less attention to education. It would be interesting to explore the importance of education and work experience across cultures and investigate how they influence the writing of recruitment advertisements in different cultural contexts.

Comparative studies on advertisements of a multinational company operating in different countries or those of multinational and locally-owned companies will be illuminating for revealing the similarities and differences across different types of company. These studies will demonstrate the relationship between corporate and national cultures and their influence on the advertisement structures. It will be interesting to see how much multinational companies can adhere to the writing structures from the headquarters in their operations in local markets. If not, what do they need to sacrifice and adjust to meet the norms and requirements of the host country? On the other hand, can locally-owned companies operate the way they have been without keeping up with giant multinational corporations? Will this result in discernible uniformity or further convergences in the advertisement writing across different types of organizations?

The application of genre analysis in recruitment advertising genre should be further extended to other job sectors to help us better understand the writing of recruitment advertisements across disciplines. Based on previous studies (Kanoksilapham, 2005; Ozturk, 2006; Samraj, 2002; Swales, 1990), it is very likely that advertisements from different sectors will follow different writing conventions based on the nature and demands of jobs. For instance, it will be worth exploring jobs in manufacturing and service sectors such as production engineering and hospitality industries. These studies will shed light on how the practices and constraints of each job sector affect the advertisement structure and language use.

As more people are depending on the internet to look for jobs, additional research that investigates online jobs will be useful for our understanding of advertising language in this popular electronic medium. Since the internet has no boundaries, the empirical data collected should be large enough to represent the online language. In this respect, the use of computer-based technology and corpus linguistics should be combined to create a comprehensive and representative data bank. It is hoped that these studies will contribute to the ESP genre-based instruction because they will help both learners and teachers keep pace with this ever-changing channel of communication.

While this study focuses on the discourse structures of recruitment advertising by identifying moves and steps, a system of lexical items and linguistic features can be observed in particular moves. For instance, *Establishing credentials*

(EC), *Step 1: Announcing the company's achievements* is mostly realized by positive expressions such as *the market leader, global specialist, the world's No. 1,* and *ranked amongst top 10 in the country.* *Persuading prospective candidates (PC), Step 2: Inviting applications* can be found in many sentence structures such as declaratives, imperatives and interrogatives. Further studies on linguistic features will help us have a better understanding of the language of recruitment advertising. Not only do we know about the organizational patterns of recruitment advertisements, we will also learn how each text segment is realized linguistically.