

## An Analysis of Linguistic Features Used in Condominium Advertisements from Web Pages<sup>\*</sup>

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### Abstract

The objective of this research is to investigate the linguistic features, focusing on lexical and syntactic features used in condominium advertisements from web pages based on the adapted frameworks suggested by Leech (1966), Blake and Bly (1998), McCrimmon (1984), and Janoschka (2004). Data were collected from web pages selected from official websites of housing developers or companies, active in June - July 2011. Only the texts in the main body of web page presented on each website were taken for the analysis. The major results of the study were as follows: lexical features used frequently in condominium advertisements from web pages were favourite vocabulary, followed by nominal group and present tense respectively. Regarding syntactic features, the most frequently used syntactic features were imperative sentence, interrogative sentence: yes/no interrogative, and interrogative sentence: open interrogative.

**Keywords:** linguistic features; advertisements; websites

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<sup>\*</sup> This article is a part of thesis entitled “An Analysis of Linguistic Features Used in Condominium Advertisements from Web Pages” supervised by Dr. Wannana Soontornnaruerangsee.

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## บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้มีจุดประสงค์เพื่อวิเคราะห์ลักษณะทางภาษาในระดับคำและระดับประโยคซึ่งปรากฏอยู่ในโฆษณาอาคารชุดทางเว็บเพจ โดยงานวิจัยนี้วิเคราะห์จากกรอบความคิดที่ดัดแปลงจาก Leech (1966), Blake and Bly (1998), McCrimmon (1984), และ Janoschka (2004) โฆษณาที่คัดเลือกมาใช้ในการวิจัยนี้มาจากการสุ่มตัวอย่างโฆษณาจากเว็บเพจรวมทั้งสิ้นจำนวน 30 ชิ้น จากเว็บไซต์อย่างเป็นทางการของบริษัทอสังหาริมทรัพย์ ในช่วงเดือนมิถุนายน – กรกฎาคม พ.ศ.2554 โดยการวิจัยได้วิเคราะห์ข้อความโฆษณาหลักในหน้าเว็บเพจของแต่ละเว็บไซต์เท่านั้น

ผลจากการวิเคราะห์พบว่า ในระดับคำ ลักษณะคำที่ถูกใช้บ่อยในโฆษณาอาคารชุดจากเว็บเพจคือ คำกริยาและคำคุณศัพท์ (favourite vocabulary), กลุ่มคำ (nominal group), และ รูปแบบกริยาแสดงปัจจุบัน (present tense) ส่วนในระดับประโยคนั้น พบว่ามีการใช้ประโยคคำสั่ง (imperative sentence) บ่อยที่สุด รองลงมาคือ ประโยคคำถามแบบต้องการคำตอบ ใช่ หรือ ไม่ใช่ (yes/no interrogative) และลำดับต่อมาคือ ประโยคคำถามปลายเปิด (open interrogative)

คำสำคัญ: ลักษณะภาษา; โฆษณา; เว็บไซต์

## Rationale of the Study

The English language is considered a very important language in the world. It is used as a tool for people to communicate with each other. People from different parts of the world can communicate through this universal language. Though some people might have different accents, their English language can still be understandable. Moreover, due to the growth of globalisation, English plays a vital role in our lives. People can acknowledge and comprehend through the languages of business, science, technology, banking, medicine, tourism, music, and the Internet, which are

mainly presented in English. English language is a tool used to connect human beings and a variety of daily activities together.

Furthermore, in the era of growth of the Internet, many people in different parts of the world have access to the Internet. English is the primary language for Internet users. It can be seen that most information and messages are available in English. English in the Internet is truly an essential language that helps people have a worldwide vision and enables users to learn new things easily.

The real estate business is a business that is closely linked to the English language. Real estate companies or developers need to publicise and inform their real estate information and commercial messages via English language and the Internet. At present, the real estate business has become a large business in Thailand because of the rapid expansion of infrastructure, transportation, international travel, and tourism. The real estate business, especially residential condominiums, is rapidly expanding and launching new projects because of the demand on residential units. The demand which is increasing more and more, depends on the development of public transportation, the expansion of big cities, and the fast-growth of tourism industries.

According to a Real Estate Information Center (REIC) research report (2011), the Housing Developers Sentiment Index (HDSI) in Quarter 1/2011 is high. This reveals that housing developers intend to invest and launch many new residential projects in order to meet the need of their consumers.

Dunn and Bardan (1986) pointed out that advertising is a form of marketing communication which involves human activity directed at

satisfying needs. Consequently, in terms of real estate, advertising is utilised as the marketing tool in publicising and communicating the real estate information to buyers. Passweitz and Bull (2009) claimed that many products or services have failed in the market, not because of their quality, packaging or pricing, but because potential customers did not know they were there. Thus, it is the same case in the real estate businesses; advertising is necessary to inform the buyers where the properties are located, what the properties can provide to meet the individual demand of each buyer, and so on.

Due to the increasing growth of the Internet and the World Wide Web, the idea of doing business online has been a new dimension in the business world. As stated by Sterne (1995), since the 1990s, it has been fashionable for companies to have a home web page on the Internet. Hence, many companies plan to make use of the Internet and the World Wide Web in advertising and promotional efforts of products and services. Likewise, real estate businesses conduct web advertising on the Internet. Web advertising is one type of interactive media provided through the Internet and the World Wide Web. Morrison (2002) also pointed out that the interactive media is a component of interactive marketing which involves buyer-seller electronic communication. In addition, web advertising can provide information messages in a myriad of media: hypertext, graphics, video, and so on. As stated by Janal (1995), cyber advertising introduces a new set of paradigms to advertising. It is different in every way from print and broadcast advertising, creatively, functionally, and economically. For this reason, real estate businesses benefit more by using web advertising to inform potential customers about the concepts and facilities, attract the attention of the viewers, and persuade them to buy.

Importantly, in achieving the persuasive purposes, the language used in web advertising is very selective and powerful. Language has a powerful influence on people and their behaviour (Sells and Gonzalez, 2008). Thus, the copywriters of web advertising must be concerned with producing well written advertisements by selecting suitable and meaningful language. The choices of language, including word and suitable sentence levels, should be considered effectively to convey the specific messages of products and services.

Due to the importance of web advertising as a medium and language used in web advertising, it is undeniable that both parts are closely linked in order to achieve the specific communicative purpose of advertising. Thus, the researcher is interested in investigating language used in advertisements on the Internet in order to see the specific linguistic features which can effectively hold the viewers' attention. This research focuses on lexical and syntactic features used in condominium advertisements from web pages.

## Objectives of the Study

1.To investigate the lexical features frequently used in condominium advertisements from web pages.

2.To investigate the syntactic features frequently used in condominium advertisements from web pages.

## Methodology

In this study, the researcher intends to investigate the linguistic features used in condominium advertisements, focusing on web pages. Moreover, the researcher described the advertisements on the web pages. The analysis was based on 30 condominium advertisements which were

selected purposively. Thirty condominium advertisements selected for this study were available in the official website of each condominium project during the period June - July 2011. Each condominium website was accessed in order to collect the text from the main body of the web page. The written texts of the page, which provide information of project concept, were analysed. Only one web page from each official website was selected as the sampling data for the analysis.

### Data Collection Procedures

First, to find condominium websites, the keyword of (location + condominium) such as Bangkok + condominium, Pattaya + condominium, and Hua-Hin + condominium was inserted in the search box of [www.google.com](http://www.google.com). In this study, six main locations of condominium markets around Thailand were investigated: Bangkok, Pattaya, Hua-Hin, Phuket, Chiang Mai, and Samui Island. These were the keywords for searching the condominium websites because they are considered main target areas for potential consumers who are searching for condominiums (Kitsin, 2010). However, due to the large size of Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand, the name of the innermost district or street in Bangkok such as Sukhumvit, Narathiwat Rachanakarin, Pathum Wan, and so on were inserted in the search box. Then, the researcher considered the condominium websites that can provide the data for the study based on two criteria; the website must be the official website of the condominium project, and the website must provide the information regarding the project concept with a minimum of 50 words in the text of the main body of the page. Each website was purposively accessed to be the sampling data. Finally, thirty condominium advertisements from thirty web pages were obtained. The texts were copied and pasted in the Microsoft Excel program for convenient analysis.

## Data Analysis

The present study aims to investigate linguistic features: lexical and syntactic features used in condominium advertisements from web pages. The theoretical framework based on Leech (1966), Blake and Bly (1998), McCrimmon (1984), Janoschka (2004) was adapted and applied for this study. The analysis of this study was divided into two levels: lexical and syntactic.

**1. Lexical features** include favourite vocabulary, word-formation process, nominal group, simple and colloquial, personal and possessive pronouns, present tense, comparative and superlative of adjective, repetition, beginning sentences with simple conjunctions, ambiguity, and sensory words.

**2. Syntactic features** include imperative sentences, interrogative sentences, and clauses beginning with when, if and because.

To answer the two research questions, two data analysis check sheets were created based on the theoretical frameworks of this study. Next, the texts in condominium advertisements from web pages, were put in the check sheets in the column “The Sentence”. Then, the texts were read, analysed, and classified according to the frameworks mentioned above.

For example, “**The most valuable units leading your privileged life**” (From Up Ekamai Condominium) was recorded in the *comparative and superlative adjective* category. The researcher gave one point in the category of comparative and superlative adjective.

The results of the study were presented in the forms of the frequency and percentage according to the linguistic features framework

and calculated by the Microsoft Excel program. The most frequently occurring and highest percentage was interpreted to answer the questions of this study.

After the texts from condominium advertisements from web pages had been analysed, identified, and classified according to linguistic features as shown above, the researcher counted the linguistic features (lexical and syntactic found in each category) and calculated the percentage. Finally, for checking the frequency and making this research more reliable, the researcher conducted the Item Objective Congruence (IOC) (Rovinelli and Hanbleton, 1977) technique using three experts to analyse, verify, tabulate, depict, and describe the collection of the numeric data.

## Research Verification

To assure the reliability of the analysis of linguistic features, the researcher officially invited three English language experts to review and validate the findings. The three English language experts who participated in this research are one non-native English speaker and one native English speaker from the English Section, Department of Foreign Language, Faculty of Humanities, Kasetsart University, and one Thai advertiser and consumer research entrepreneur whose job involves marketing and advertising copies written in English. They were invited to review the accuracy of the analysis of linguistic features used in condominium advertisements from web pages. The consultation also confirmed whether there were any mistakes in the study. Finally, the analysis was adjusted according to the comments and suggestions of the experts.



## Results

### The Results of Lexical Feature Analysis

This section presents the results of lexical features used in condominium advertisements from web pages. The results can be seen in Table 1 below.

**Table 1** The Frequency of Occurrence of Lexical Features Used in Condominium Advertisements from Web Pages

No.	Lexical Features	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Favourite vocabulary	321	30.95
2	Nominal group	285	27.48
3	Present Tense	169	16.30
4	Personal and possessive pronouns	89	8.58
5	Word-formation process	77	7.43
6	Sensory word: Sight	47	4.53
7	Comparative and superlative adjective	21	2.03
8	Sensory word: Touch	9	0.87
9	Sensory word: Sound	7	0.68
10	Repetition	4	0.39
11	Simple and colloquial	3	0.29
12	Beginning sentences with simple conjunctions	3	0.29
13	Ambiguity	2	0.19
14	Sensory word: Taste	0	0
15	Sensory word: Smell	0	0
<b>Total</b>		1,037	100

As shown in Table 1, the total frequency of occurrences of lexical features used in condominium advertisements from web pages is 1,037. It was found that favourite vocabulary is the most frequently used lexical feature among all lexical features reviewed in this study. Listed below is the most frequently used lexical feature to the least frequently used lexical feature: favourite vocabulary (30.95%), nominal group (27.48%), present tense (16.30%), personal and possessive pronouns (8.58%), word-formation process (7.43%), sensory word: sight (4.53%), comparative and superlative adjective (2.03%), sensory word: touch (0.87%), sensory word: sound (0.68%), repetition (0.39%) simple and colloquial (0.29%), beginning sentences with simple conjunctions (0.29%), and ambiguity (0.19%), respectively. Sensory word: taste and smell were not found in the condominium advertisements from web pages reviewed in this study. The examples of each lexical feature used in condominium advertisements from web pages are as follows:

### 1. **Favourite vocabulary** refers to verb and adjective.

**1.1 Verbs** refer to the possession of the product, the mental disposition towards the product, a relationship between product and consumer, the distinctiveness or value of products, and the description of the consumer's sensation and feelings.

**1.2 Adjectives** refer to a word that modifies a noun or pronoun to describe and give an extra quality, or a condition of a person, or thing.

#### **Example:**

Situated on the headland south of Patong, Bluepoint **offers a stunning** location with **broad beautiful** views across the Andaman Sea and Patong Bay.

Begin your **new** chapter with **exclusive** residences that reflect your exceptional lifestyle.

**2. Nominal group** are group which have a noun as its head. A nominal group frequently consists of modifiers which is the interesting part of the noun phrase. Modifier can be pre-modifier and post-modifier. Pre-modifier can be noun, adjective, participle, adverb and –s genitive. Post-modifier can be prepositional phrase, relative clause and nonfinite clause.

**Example:**

The Seed Mingle is ***a new boutique condominium on a peaceful green space rarely found in the heart of Sathorn.***

***The spacious apartments of two, three or four bedrooms and penthouses*** are exquisitely finished and furnished with materials and specifications that are all hallmarks of excellence.

**3. Present tense** refer to the form of a verb used to show habitual actions, narration of historical events, true statements, and describing mental or emotional states.

**Example:**

Banyan Condominiums ***is*** a haven where you ***live*** precisely as you ***wish***.

Icon Park's striking and desirable design ***reflects*** its name and ***gives*** you an Icon status in a beautiful environment... "where your address ***stands out.***"

**4. Personal and possessive pronouns** refer to the use of personal and possessive pronouns in advertising to address the reader in order to create familiarity and a friendly tone.

**Example:**

**Our** design also gives **you** direct access from the Elevator into **your** own private corridor, for **you** convenience and security.

**We** also offers personal assistant to cater for **your** every need for **your** lifestyle.

The epitome of the luxury lifestyle **you** can own.

**5. Word-formation processes** refer to compounding and blending.

**Example:**

Baan Sansuk is situated in the **prime-location** of Hua Hin beach, only a few minutes to Chatchai Market and all other conveniences.

City and garden views are maximised by **three-meter-high floor-to-ceiling windows**, much higher than is usual, while **his-and-her bathrooms**, **built-in** wardrobes and **top-of-the-line international-standard** kitchens are all signature touches of a quality lifestyle.

**6. Sensory words focusing on sight** refer to an imaginative word used to make the readers see and experience what the copywriters are communicating.

**Example:**

Situated on the headland south of Patong, Bluepoint offers a **stunning** location with **broad beautiful** views across the Andaman Sea and Patong Bay.

The getaway experience that grants you more than privacy with patio allowing passage of warm sea breeze, **brehtaking** scenery of **glittering white-sand** beach and **clear blue** sky over ocean.

**7. Comparative and superlative adjectives** are normally in the form of one-syllable adjectives ending in –er and –est respectively. Longer adjectives have more and most respectively

**Example:**

Saranchol Pattaya Condominium Located on ***the finest and most idyllic*** spot at Wong Amat Beach is a modern architectural structure in an oval design.

Sky-high fitness, sauna and ***the most comfortable*** swimming pool along with pool bar for your healthy.

**8. Sensory words focusing on touch** refer to an imaginative word used to make the readers touch and experience what the copywriters are communicating.

**Example:**

Each unit has been masterfully designed in a refined modern and luxurious style, which helps create a ***warm*** and tranquil ambience.

Noble 09 has redefined living in a condo; “it’s just like living in a ***comfy*** home.”

**9. Sensory words focusing on sound** refer to an imaginative word used to make the readers hear and experience what the copywriters are communicating.

**Example:**

We have 6 room sizes available from 37 sqm Studio to 102 sqm 2 bedroom, all tastefully designed in ***transquil*** earth pastel shades, and all come with luxury bathrooms and kitchen as standard.

**10. Repetition** is the repeating of the same word in sentences or paragraphs. The same word can be placed at the beginning of every sentence.

**Example:**

Noble Solo, ***your own*** life in ***your own*** space.

First own ***with special*** package ***with special*** price.

**11. Beginning sentences with simple conjunctions** and **simple and colloquial** were both ranked eleventh among all lexical features reviewed in this study; 3 words (0.29%).

**Beginning sentences with simple conjunctions** refers to employ simple conjunctions such as for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so at the beginning of sentences.

**Example:**

***And***, from every room, residents will be able to look out over a view of the city as it sprawls in every direction, day and night.

***Or*** is it because the space of two buildings are so complete as to let you create your own unique world of luxurious serenity in the heart of the bustling city?

**Simple and Colloquial** is writing techniques consisting of a friendly and conversational style.

**Example:**

With a design concept that complements the original green elements of the site, ***we've*** successfully married today's urban lifestyle with yesterday's precious nature.

**12. Ambiguity** is mainly related to words that have the same spelling or pronunciation and have multiple meanings.

**Example:**

RESET **UP** STANDARD OF LIVING WITH DESIGN BY **UP** EKAMAI  
CONDOMINIUM.

**Up** Grade Your Life with 10 **Ups**

Such findings reveal that the main characteristics of lexical features used in condominium advertisements from web pages are favourite vocabulary, nominal groups, and present tense in order to describe the unique detail of products, show the favorable value of products, and express the feeling toward the products.

Interestingly, sensory words playing on the senses of taste and smell are not found in the condominium advertisements from web pages. It can be assumed that these lexical features are not the main purpose in writing condominium advertisements. With the distinction of condominiums, the writer focuses on the physical details of the project structure and design, which involve the sense of sight and touch and favourable surroundings. Evaluative adjectives, favourite vocabulary, and other techniques are utilised by the writer in order to create a sense of satisfaction.

In summary, the art of writing condominium advertisements is to make the condominium project touchable and arouse the readers to feel the in-depth details of the condominium project.

## The Results of Syntactic Feature Analysis

This section presents the results of syntactic features used in condominium advertisements from web pages. Table 2 shows the frequency of occurrences of syntactic features found in this study.

**Table 2 The Frequency of Occurrences of Syntactic Features Used in Condominium Advertisements from Web Pages**

No.	Syntactic Features	Frequency	Percentage
		(n)	(%)
1	Imperative Sentences	36	76.60
2	Interrogative Sentence: Yes/No interrogative	5	10.64
3	Interrogative Sentence: Open interrogative	3	6.38
4	Clause with when, if and because	2	4.26
5	Interrogative Sentence: Rhetorical question	1	2.12
6	Interrogative Sentence: Alternative interrogative	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>47</b>	<b>100.00</b>

From Table 2, the total frequency of occurrences of syntactic features found in the sample is 47. Imperative sentences appear most frequently (76.60%), followed interrogative sentences: Yes/No interrogative (10.64%), interrogative sentences: Open interrogative (6.38%), clauses with when, if and because (4.26%), and interrogative Sentences: Rhetorical question (2.13%), respectively. Interrogative Sentences: alternative interrogative was not found in this study. The example of each syntactic feature found in condominium advertisements from web pages are as follows:



**1. Imperative sentence** is a kind of sentence which is used to request, command, and urge the readers to do some action. Typically, an imperative sentence begins with a verb in infinitive form.

**Example:**

Be one of the first to own Wongamat's latest condominium today.

Call 0-2251-9955 today.

Don't go searching far away, your answer is here...at blocs77 ...a full option condominium

**2. Interrogative sentence: yes/no interrogative** is used to require a yes or no answer.

**Example:**

Is it the vertical community that provides a unique view?

Is it because you can live your life the way you deserve?

**3. Interrogative Sentence: open interrogative** is used to require various possible answers.

**Example:**

What makes A attitude so unique?

How convenience will it be?

**4. Clause with when, if and because** refer to a dependent clause beginning with when, if and because.

**Example:**

If you are too unique to live in the ordinary, Welcome to sophisticated living with its own unique culture.

If you enjoy and love the lively rhythm of a joyful city but still search and long for exclusive privacy, visit us at Noble 09 Ruamrudee: the latest and the last condominium project in Soi Ruamruedee, the finest neighborhood in downtown.

**5. Interrogative Sentence: rhetorical question** is typically found in the form of a common question, but it can pragmatically have the impact of a directive.

**Example:**

Are you ready to give yourself the ultimate quality of life...?

Such findings reveal that the copywriters of online condominium advertisements aim to employ the linguistic means of explanation and description with a clear content. They employ imperative and interrogative sentences in advertisements in order to make the reader easily understand, provoke immediate action, and arouse attention toward purchasing behaviour.

## Conclusion and Discussion

The purposes of this study were to investigate the linguistic features: lexical and syntactic features frequently used in condominium advertisements from web pages. The first research question was the lexical features which were frequently used in condominium advertisements from web pages. Results showed that there were thirteen lexical features frequently used in this study. Favourite vocabularies were the most frequently used, nominal groups were the second frequently used, and present tenses were the third frequently used. However, there were two lexical features which were not used in this study: sensory word: taste and smell.

The second question was the syntactic features which were frequently used in condominium advertisements from web pages. Results showed that there were five syntactic features frequently used in this study.

Imperative sentences were the most frequently used, interrogative sentences: yes/no interrogative were the second frequently used and interrogative sentences: open interrogative were the third frequently used. However, there was the only one syntactic feature which was not used in this study: interrogative sentences: alternative interrogative.

In terms of lexical feature, overall this study reveals that favourite vocabulary, including verb and adjective vocabulary play a significant role in writing condominium advertisements from web pages because of maintaining the readers' understanding and belief in the unique details of condominium projects. Favourite vocabulary used in condominium advertisements can describe a product, inform about the product looks, and describe how it will make the users feel.

Nominal groups are also used in condominium advertisements from web pages. The function of a nominal group is to make the advertisement copy concise. Due to the limited space of online advertisements, web sites, and web pages, the nominal group can compensate for the limitation of advertising online. Regarding present tense, the advertisers of condominium advertisements from web pages tended to use present tense to display facts related to the advertised products and make the advertised products appear up-to-date and lively.

In terms of syntactic feature, among the three main categories of syntactic, this study shows that the use of imperative sentence is the most frequently used syntactic feature. This kind of sentence can convey a mild command with a selling point and provoke immediate action in the readers. It can be concluded that the advertiser of condominium advertisements

from web pages aimed to give the reader a mild command and ask for the response or the action related to the advertised product.

Such findings reveal that the advertisers of online condominium advertisements aim to employ the linguistic means of explanation and description with a clear content. They employ favourite vocabulary, imperative and interrogative sentences in advertisements in order to make the reader easily understand, provoke immediate action, and arouse attention toward purchasing behaviour.

The findings reveal the most common linguistic features used in condominium advertisements from web pages. However, there are more aspects in condominium advertisement from web pages that should be studied so that the result may become clearer. Therefore, below are some recommendations for further studies.

Due to a time constraint, the corpus used in this study was only 30 condominium advertisements; therefore, generalizations could not be drawn. Consequently, a larger sample should be collected in future studies so that generalisations can be made. Besides the linguistic features in condominium advertisements from web pages, further research should be conducted about linguistic features used in other types of product and service advertisements such as airline ticketing, food, cosmetics, technology, clothes, etc. Advertisers employ various types of techniques and features in writing advertisements, which depend on the purposes of the advertisements and the target customers. Hence, it is interesting to investigate the distinctive features of various products. Since the present study focuses on linguistic features: lexical and syntactic features, further research on other

features or linguistic characteristics with deeper analysis is recommended such as genre analysis, rhetorical device and writing techniques.

Moreover, since the analysis of this present study focuses only on the home web page of condominium project web sites, it would be interesting to complete a linguistic analysis on the subsequent pages of the condominium project web sites. Such a study would be beneficial to professional advertisers or beginners who are interested in writing web advertisements.

Finally, an interesting aspect which should be noted for further study is the characteristics of other kinds of residential unit advertisements from web pages since the present study focuses only on condominium advertisements. Hence, it would be interesting to investigate the different linguistic features found in other types of residential units such as single homes and townhouses. In addition, the type of residential unit may influence the information provided and the writing techniques utilised in the web pages. In short, it is worthwhile to investigate advertisements from web pages of other types of residential units in order to investigate the different characteristics.

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