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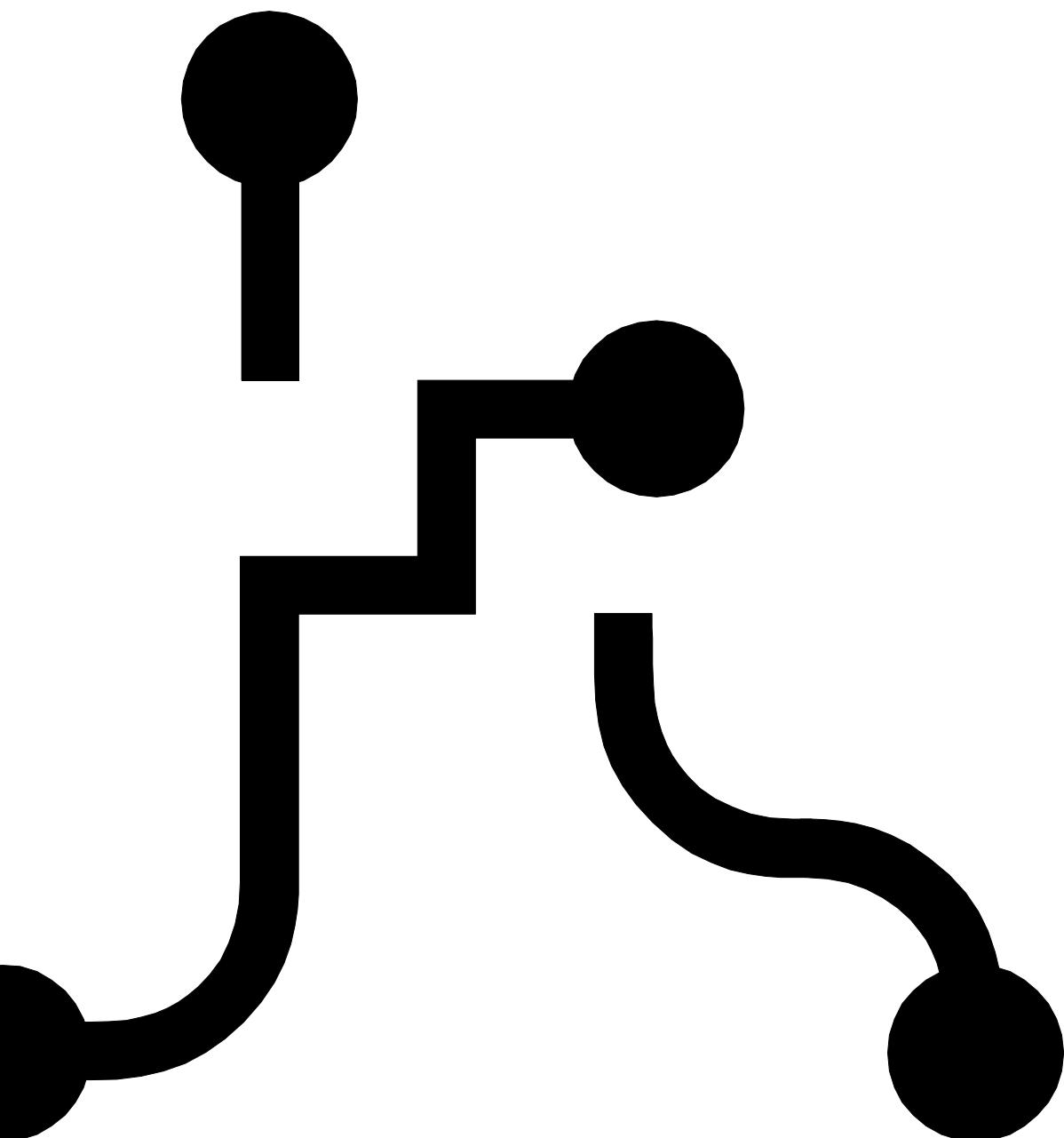
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# On the generic structure of managerial position job advertisements in tertiary education institutions

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## Abstract

Within the area of marketization of higher education in the last three decades, a key strand of research that continues to engage researchers concerns genres that are produced by universities themselves such as mission/vision statements, strategic plans, and job advertisements. Although there have been studies on job advertisements, very little attention has been given to the rhetoric of managerial positions' job advertisements (MPJAs) of tertiary education institutions in Ghana. The present study, therefore, explores the generic structure of 30 MPJAs from ten tertiary education institutions that were published in the major public newspaper *Daily Graphic*, by utilizing a qualitative research design, facilitated by content analysis. The analysis was informed by Swales' (1990) approach to genre analysis and Huttner's (2010) genre-related typology. The study revealed that MPJAs of tertiary institutions adopted a five-move pattern (institution identification, vacancy declaration, job details, application details, and authority signing), with variations in some of the steps. These findings suggest that tertiary education institutions in Ghana construct their MPJAs in a similar fashion, although this may differ in other cultural contexts. The implications for scholarship on MPJAs and texts construction pedagogy are discussed.

**Keywords:** tertiary institutions, managerial position advertisements, genre analysis, Ghana.

## 0. Introduction

In recent times, advertisements have become an indispensable tool in the recruitment of managers and heads for educational institutions such as universities, technical universities, and colleges. Leung (2007, p. 45) asserts, “in the recruitment process, job description is one of the major mechanisms utilized to transfer company and job information to job seekers.” These job advertisements are often found in newspapers, magazines, and on online platforms (Garzone, 2007; Xiong, 2012).

From the extant literature on print and online job advertisements (e.g. Bruthiaux, 1996; Fairclough, 1993; Łacka-Badura, 2015; Xiong, 2012) some elements of continuity emerged which are suggestive of an underlying generic structure. The main objective of this study is to ascertain whether this underlying structure is also evident in Ghanaian job advertisements where there is paucity of research on managerial level job advertisements. Consequently, the present study addresses the rhetorical structure of tertiary institutions’ MPJAs in *Daily Graphic*, a major state-owned newspaper in Ghana. This research was guided by the following question:

How are MPJAs for tertiary education institutions in Ghana presented in terms of schematic structure?

The findings of this research are expected to contribute to the literature on job advertisements in academic and other professional contexts by describing the peculiarities of the MPJAs of tertiary education institutions, while helping organisations boost their attractiveness to applicants (Askehave, 2010; Walters & Fage-Butler, 2014).

## 1. Literature review

Three strands of studies on job advertisements may be identified. The first one relates to advertisements produced within the corporate world (Asprey, 2005; Feldman et al. 2006; Ryan et al. 2000), aiming at investigating the impact of social media on the recruitment process and on job seekers’ behaviour (e.g. Broughton et al. 2013; Nigel Wright Recruitment, 2011). The second set of studies is devoted to employer branding (Ambler & Barrow, 1996; Barrow & Mosley, 2005). The third one relates to linguistic/discourse analytic approaches (Fairclough, 1993; Kheovichai, 2013; Kochelova et al. 2017; Kochetova & Volodchenkova, 2015; Nugroho, 2009; Xiong, 2012).

Within the third strand where the present study is positioned, one of the earliest and most pertinent studies was conducted by Fairclough (1993, 2010) who explored the generic structure of three university job advertisements, providing evidence of the marketization of the academic world. The study noted that the university job advertisements had four main implicit segments: institutional identification, main heading featuring the title of the post, details of the post including the qualities of successful applicant and conditions, and application procedures. The institutional identity began with such promotional features of the institution as the heading, logo, and slogan. It was also found that parts of the generic structure were composed of narrative, although this was less common. Characterising the form of job advertisements, Bruthiaux (1996), in a study of classifieds conducted on a 1991-1992 corpus, including 200 job advertisements, identified "conventionalised prefabricated segments ... in more or less predictable sequences", and a definable structure. He identified five main components: job description; information about the company or the individual placing the ad; specifying qualifications and experience; salary and benefits, if any; and a contact segment. Particularly relevant is a study by Rafaeli and Oliver (1998) which, on the basis of an empirical investigation of a large number of job advertisements published in newspapers in various English-speaking countries, identified four common elements: 1) an organizational identity 2) its human resources needs 3) information about what is required to fulfil these needs, and 4) information about how to contact the organization. Years later, Bhatia's (2014) more general studies on promotional genres led to a cursory discussion on job advertisements, providing some insights for the present study.

While still focusing on print advertisements, like Fairclough (1993), Nugroho's (2009) study examined their generic structure, using a Systemic Functional Linguistic and multimodal approach. The study pointed out that there was a well pre-conceived interplay between language and visual elements in the advertisements that conveyed specific messages to readers. The generic structure of advertisements comprised the combination of both linguistic and visual elements to present Primary Announcement which involved names and surrounding words, Secondary Announcement which involved detailing, and finally Enhancer which provided more information about the announcement in general. However, the rhetorical structure of advertising was not included in those elements. In a more explicit rhetorical study, Xiong (2012), following Nugroho (2009), explored the general structure of rhetorical moves in advertisements for academic posts in China, utilizing 48 advertisements posted in the *People's Daily Overseas Edition*, a leading official Chinese newspaper. A six-move pattern was identified as follows: a)

titling b) establishing credentials c) communicating future aspirations d) announcing posts and requirements d) offering remuneration and incentives and e) providing contact details. Kheovichai (2014) studied the discursive organisation of university job advertisements, just like Fairclough (1993). Apart from Identification of institutions, the study revealed that the job advertisements featured the structure of recruiting, working, financing, developing/creating, requiring, inciting contact, and promising works and conditions. To a very large extent, the description of the generic structure of this study differed from other findings (e.g. Fairclough, 1993; Nugroho, 2009). Although these expressions were not explicitly identified as different structural components of job advertisements in general, these parts were complemented by the typical generic structure of announcing vacancy, mandate of institution, aid support from outside, current development, requirements, and application invitation.

Adopting a more systematic approach, Łacka-Badura's (2015) book-length study analyses the structure of job advertisements posted online (ontelegraph.co.uk, guardian.co.uk, thetimes.co.uk, jobsite.co.uk and totaljobs.co.uk). Although she discusses the growing importance of e-recruitment (Łacka-Badura, 2015, pp. 15-16), she does not question the genre status of online job advertisements. Subsequently, other studies on job advertisements have been devoted to not only the print version of job advertisement, but also to the online and other technological affordances. Kudelova (2016), for instance, investigated MPJAs in online editions of British and American newspapers. Divided into two parts, the second part featured an empirical study where a corpus of 40 British and American job advertisements (JAs) on chosen managerial positions, published between September 2015 and April 2016, were analyzed from a linguistic point of view, according to pre-defined linguistic criteria. The focus was on lexis, grammar, and visuals. The study revealed that there has been a significant change in advertising during the recent years, from slowly fading printed media to digital forms of advertising. An interesting study in recent times is Garzone's (2018) work on job advertisements posted on LinkedIn, a Social Networking Site (SNS) tailored to the workplace environment. It provides evidence of a significant degree of generic integrity, with some changes due to the migration to the web environment, and even more meaningful changes due to the re-contextualization of the genre in a SNS. Furthermore, from a cross-cultural and cross-linguistic point of view, Lago and Hewitt (2004) present a comparative analysis of English and Spanish advertisements, while van Meurs (2010) undertakes a rather complicated book-length study on the role and effects of the use of English in job advertisements in the Netherlands.

At this stage, two studies from a diachronic perspective merit mentioning. First, Walters and Fage-Butler (2014) studied the genre of Danish job advertisement development over 50 years, using a Critical Discourse Analytic approach. The study revealed six principal sections: Title, organisational identity, job description, personal specification, practical information and contact information. This finding was in line with other findings (e.g. Fairclough, 1993; Łacka-Badura, 2015; Xiong, 2012) despite the diversity of rhetorical structures that were identified and the slightly different genres. Finally, Gillaerts' (2012) diachronic research on job announcements in Dutch from 1944 to 2010 where he identifies moves that partially correspond to the elements found by Bruthiaux (1996), but are categorized in rhetorical and cognitive terms, focused on the actions that are performed in each part of the advertisements.

## **2. Methodological framework**

### **2.1 Research design**

A qualitative research design was employed in this study, supported by content analysis. This approach was deemed appropriate as one of the main tasks of this research was to identify the recurring patterns of the generic structure of the tertiary MPJA texts by drawing on descriptive statistics. Subsequently, in line with Creswell (2008), the researcher identifies how the interpretive procedure contributes to the elucidation of the initial quantitative results. The research framework is incumbent on a social constructivist epistemological approach, as it seeks answers to questions regarding how social experience is created and given meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Since the study intends to explore the generic structure that university administrators use in drafting their advertisements, the process of allowing the data to speak for themselves further supports the choice of a qualitative research design. The descriptive statistics, in this context, enable patterns and trends to be identified for interpretive purposes (Heppner, Kivlighan, & Wampold, 1999; Houston, 2014).

### **2.2 Sampling framework**

The study's primary data comprise tertiary institutions' MPJA texts, stemming from the popular Ghanaian public newspaper *Daily Graphic*. The sample size consists of 30 MPJA texts from 12 public tertiary education institutions. Twelve institutions are featured in the sample, as a principal task was to identify the potential incidence of variation in the generic structure of the public MPJA texts. The names and abbreviations of the tertiary institutions are provided in Appendix 1. Table 1 offers details of the institutions and the number of sampling points represented by each case.

**Table 1.** Distribution of sampling points across the institutions.

Institution	Sampling points	Institution	Sampling points
ATU	3	UCC	2
GIMPA	3	UDS	3
HTU	2	UEW	3
KNUST	4	UHAS	4
UGL	3	UMaT	1
STU	1	UPS	1

### 2.3 Data analysis

This section takes into account Swalesean rhetorical move analysis, Bhatia's (1993) approach to the identification of moves, and Huttner's (2010) classificatory system in the determination of the status of the identified moves.

Moves are recognised as rhetorical units that help in the realisation of the overall communicative purpose of a text (here, MPJAs). Swales identifies sub-communicative intentions of parts of a text that come together to realize the main communicative purpose of the text as 'moves'. These *moves* may range from a single sentence to a series of sentences. As Swales and other genre analysts, such as Bhatia (1993) and Hyland (2000) caution, the term 'move' is not coterminous with grammatical categories. Apart from *moves*, other rhetorical strategies such as 'steps' (or 'sub-moves') may be used to realize the communicative purpose of a genre. Drawing on Bhatia's cognitive-semantic criterion, the moves in the texts were identified. The boundary of moves is determined by the cognitive-semantic structuring of parts of the text (Ngowu, 1990) which aims at realizing the main communicative purpose of the genre. Thus, "whenever a linguistic unit indicates a communicative intention subservient to the general communicative purpose of the discourse a move can be identified" (Liu, 2012, p. 2409). Furthermore, by utilising Huttner's typology, the identified moves, if any, were described as compulsory, core, optional and ambiguous.

Content analysis was employed as the main analytical procedure. The data were examined by looking at the contextual configuration of the texts, in an attempt to establish the generic structure of tertiary MPJAs. At the initial stage of data analysis, the data were coded to justify authentic sources, textual clarity and easy identification for the purpose of interpretation and

discussion. The code-naming procedure followed three parameters: the initials of each institution, the number of texts involved, and the date of each text's publication. For instance, the texts were labelled as follows: *UCC-1, UCC-2, KNUST-1, KNUST- 4, UMaT-1, UEW-1, UEW-2, UDS-1*. To ensure inter-coder reliability, samples of the primary data were independently examined by three postgraduate students who had been working in the same research area (that is, genre analysis) at the Department of English, University of Cape Coast: one of them was a PhD student, the other one was an MPhil holder, and the last one was a final year MPhil student who had successfully defended his thesis. This was based on detailed analysis and discussion, following the lead of Swales (1990), Bhatia (1997), and Kudelova (2016) on generic structure. After two weeks of independent examination of the generic structure, we met for discussion and the reliability test achieved 90%.

### 3. Findings and discussion

This section presents the results of the schematic structure analysis of the genre under study. The macro-structure of the MPJAs was identified, as per Table 2.

**Table 2.** Moves/Steps identification of MPJAs.

Moves/Steps	Functions
M1: Institution identification S1: Name S2: Logo S3: Motto	This move primarily provides the identity of the institution advertising a vacant position or where the addressees can apply to.
M2: Vacancy declaration S1: Position S2: Declaring authority S3: Background info.	This move projects the main theme or the focus of the entire advert.
M3: Job details S1:Function/Description S2: Qualification & experience. S3: Terms of appointment	This particular move provides details of what the position is all about and the qualification for applying for it.
M4: Application details S1: Mode of application S2: Deadline S3: Address & Contact S4: Shortlisting info.	It gives the details of how to apply for the advertised position.
M5: Authority signing	This move presents the authority whose signature is behind the entire advertisement.

As may be gleaned from Table 2, five moves were identified in total. With the exception of the last one, all other moves had steps; the greatest number of steps was found in Move 4. Further description of the configuration of the moves and steps in the data is offered next.

### **3.1 Moves/Steps' description of the MPJAs**

This section offers a detailed description of the MPJAs. Each move, with its subordinate steps, is discussed in turn.

#### ***Move 1: Institution identification***

Fairclough (1993) argues that the body of a job advertisement usually begins with the features of the institution advertising a vacant position. The function of this move is to point out the identity of the tertiary institution involved in the search for the managerial position that has been declared as vacant, thereby establishing the general source and credibility of the institution. This observation applied to the MPJAs; therefore, the first move was identified as the *Institution Identification* move, as the advertising institution with three steps as constituents. The first step indicated the specific name of the institution that run the advert, as shown below:

1. KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (KNUST)  
(KNUST-2)
2. UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA (UEW-3)

These institutions were presented as the owners of the advertisements in the newspapers. The two institutions reflect two different naming practices, with the first one containing the name of the first president of Ghana, whereas the second one displays no use of personal name. What is common to the two names is their deictic and ideological dispositions.

The second Step, Logo, was presented in the MPJA of the tertiary institutions for the specific purpose of identifying the institutions through their symbols, rather than onomastic disposition. The Logo largely appeared to be catchier than the names of the institutions. This allows readers to easily identify the institutions and, therefore, become “attention grabbers”, meaning that the logos are more conspicuous, especially the well-known ones, than the institutional names. The last step which assisted in identifying the institutions was the Motto. The mottos represent the principles or what the individual institutions stand for, as can be seen in Examples (3) and (4).

3. GHANA INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (GIMPA)  
Excellence in Leadership, Management and Administration (GIM-1)
4. UPSA UNIVERSITY OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES, ACCRA  
Scholarship with Professionalism (UPSA-1)

We can see in examples 3 and 4 that the mottos of the institutions have been placed under the names of the institutions for emphasis.

It should also be noted that the majority of the studies that describe the structure of job advertisements identify organisational identity as the first component of the adverts (e.g. Fairclough, 1993; Kheovichai, 2014; Łacka-Badura, 2015). The steps identified in Move 1 largely corroborate Walters and Fage-Butler's (2014) findings, although the logo was not discussed in that study.

### ***Move 2: Vacancy Declaration***

The second move was labelled *Vacancy Declaration* as it was used to declare to the public and readers what the institutional advertisement was about. This important move was presented through three steps: *Position*, *Authority declaring*, and *Background information* of the institutions. The first step, *Position*, was used in announcing the position the institution was seeking to fill. The Step is presented as a summary of the advertisement. This step announces the specific vacant position or, in some cases, general positions to be occupied. Examples are provided in (5) to (6):

5. STAFF VACANCY (UEW-1)
6. APPOINTMENT OF PROVOST (KNUST-2)

We can see that Example (5) presents the caption of the MPJA in general terms, but Example (6) is more specific than the former. An additional example of the more general orientation was *Executive search*, while a more specific one *Appointment of Vice-Chancellor*. Similarly, some studies identified the second component of the job advertisement genre as the title of position being declared vacant (e.g. Fairclough, 1993; Łacka-Badura, 2015). Specifically, this move served as a call to the general public and the main purpose of the entire advertisement.

Another means of declaring vacancy was to establish the authority behind the announcement of the vacant position. This part was labelled Step 2; it gives details of the caption or Step 1 under *Vacancy Declaration* to emphasise the specific source of the advertised information. What it

means is that the printed expressions used to announce the vacancy are taken to be the words unanimously decided by the Governing Council (the highest decision-making authority in public educational institutions in Ghana) or the authority behind the institution. Three examples are given in (7) to (9):

7. The Council of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, announces that the position of the REGISTRAR of the university shall become vacant on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2017. (KNUST-1)
8. The Council of the University of Mines and Technology (UMaT), Tarkwa, announces that the position of Vice Chancellor of the University shall become vacant on October 1, 2012. (UMaT-1)
9. The Council of the University of Education, Winneba, announces for the information of the Academic Community and the General Public, a vacancy for PRINCIPAL, COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE EDUCATION, MAMPONG-ASHANTI (UEW-1)

As can be gleaned from Examples 7-9, this Step reflected the authority and its declaration on the status of the position and the date of the vacancy. This was to establish and enhance the credibility of the source of the information beyond the name of the institutions.

The third Step in Vacancy Declaration is described as *Background information*. This information is provided by the institutions to further establish credibility by relying on the achievements of the institution and the legal instrument regulating it. This Step recounts the history of the institution or what the institution is all about in order to make it more appealing to the public and to suitable candidates. Extract (10) demonstrates how the institutions present themselves and their credibility in declaring a vacancy:

10. The University was established in 2004, by the University of Mines and Technology, Tarkwa Act, 2. The vision of the University is to become a Centre of Excellence in Ghana and Africa for producing world-class professionals in the fields of mining, technology and related disciplines. The mission of the University is to provide higher education with special reference to mining and related fields; promote knowledge through active research; and provide professional services to the national and international communities through extension activities. (UMaT-1)

We can see from Example (10) that the institution attempts to establish credibility in the background information, by indicating the establishing dates of the institutions, their legislature, achievements, and provided services.

### **Move 3: Job Details**

Move 3 of MPJAs informs the audience about what the job entails. To obtain both general and specific information about an announced vacant position, the prospective applicant has to pay attention to this move. This move was conveyed through three different steps. The first Step is identified as *Function or Description of Job*; the second is tagged *Qualification and Experience*; and the last one is described as *Terms of Application Step*. Step 1 was used to describe the duties and responsibilities of the position and to clarify the roles to be performed by the most suitable candidate. It is through this Step that the readers get to know what the vacant position is about. Examples (11) and (12) exemplify the way the institutions construct Step 1:

#### **11. THE FUNCTIONS**

The Vice-Chancellor is the Principal Academic and Administrative Officer, and also the Chief Executive of the University. Subject to general control by Council on policies, the Vice-Chancellor shall be responsible for the promotion of good order and the efficient management of the University. (UPS-1)

#### **12. THE POSITION**

The Registrar, who is the Chief Administrative Officer, is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the University under the Vice-Chancellor and in accordance with policy directives of the council. The Registrar is also Secretary to the University Council and the Academic Board. (KNUST-1)

In Extracts (11) and (12), we can see that the details relating to the nature of the position, its responsibilities and duties, are explicitly provided for prospective candidates to understand the position before applying.

The *Qualification and Experience* Step outlined the kind of skills, abilities, and personality that are deemed to be appropriate for occupying the vacant position. This step could be taken as the first stage of vetting or shortlisting, with the lines drawn to disqualify unsuitable candidates. In this Step, what the institutions expect from the respondents are clearly spelt out in relation to the academic qualifications, abilities, skills and experience of those who qualify and wish to apply for the position. Extract 13 exemplifies how the institutions construct the *Qualification and Experience* Step:

#### **13. THE PERSON**

Candidate seeking appointment as Principal must:

- Be of Professorial Status or equivalent Grade in an analogous institution.
- Possess a Ph.D. in Agriculture Science Education. Agriculture Science scholars with professional qualification(s) in education may apply.

- Be a distinguished scholar with a capacity to motivate and direct staff.
- Be able to attract grants and funds for Research and Development activities for the College.
- Be able to serve at least a full FOUR-YEAR term of Office before attaining the compulsory retiring age of SIXTY (60) years. (UEW-2)

Extract (13) contained a long list of qualifications required of a potential candidate, though only a few are presented here. This includes academic qualifications, personal experiences and expected skills to qualify the applicant for the vacant position. Xiong (2012) reveals that there are exceptional cases in the qualifications which are not mentioned in the advertisement and the readers are referred instead to the webpage. Ward et al. (2016) also claim that personal details are useful for shortlisting and the interview selection process of identifying the right candidate to occupy the announced vacant position.

The third Step, *Terms of Appointment*, describes and outlines the conditions of service. Mostly, Step 3 consists of two main issues about the position: tenure and salaries. The institutions specify the tenure of office of the advertised position, in order to screen those who are qualified, but have less years to serve the term. Though the salaries and other benefits of the vacant position are not disclosed, the way the institutions advertise them suggests that they are attractive. This section appears to be a bait to attract more applicants. Three examples of Step 3 are presented in (14) to (16):

#### 14. TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

The appointment which is fulltime shall be for a term of four (4) years and may be renewed for another term only. Salaries and fringe benefits attached to the post are very attractive and will be specified in the instrument of appointment by the Council (UPS-1).

#### 15. Terms of Appointment

- i. The Appointment, which is full-time, shall be for THREE (3) YEARS in the first instance and may be renewed for another term of Three (3) Years after evaluation of performance, altogether making a maximum of Six (6) Years. The Candidate may opt to be a Faculty Member after serving the Two Terms before his/her SIXTIETH (60<sup>TH</sup>) BIRTHDAY.
- ii. The Successful Applicant shall be expected to assume duty by AUGUST 01, 2016.

Salary and fringe benefits attached to the post are attractive (KNUST-2)

#### 16. Terms of Appointment

To be determined by the University Council consistent with the University Act and Statutes. Salary and fringe benefits attached to the post are attractive (UHAS-1)

Extracts (14) to (16) provide information about the condition of service attached to the announced vacant position. All of the examples highlight the benefits and salaries attached to the position. Given that the position lies within the public space, the actual benefits are undisclosed, a phenomenon which has been pointed out by Łacka-Badura (2015). Extracts (14) and (15) indicate the specific tenure of office, which is renewed after four and three years respectively. However, tenure of office information in (16) is not explicit. Fairclough (1993) adds this step to *Application Procedures* (referred to as *Application Details* in the current research). However, the current research considers this step as being more pertinent for *Job Details* because its communicative function seems to provide more information about the position to be occupied, rather than guiding candidates on how to apply for the new job.

#### ***Move 4: Application details***

The fourth Move, *Application Details*, was generally conceived as a means to respond to the vacancy announcement, as it guides interested or suitable applicants. Fairclough (1993) labelled this section as *Procedure for Applying* because it shows how to apply for the advertised position. Walters and Fage-Butler (2014) also labelled this component of the job advertisement as *Practical Information*, perhaps due to the fact that this is where potential candidates tend to act by responding to the announced job vacancy. The move was conveyed to the readers through 4 identifiable Steps.

The first Step, *Mode of Application*, shows the means through which candidates can submit acceptable applications for consideration. This Step usually directs candidates to compose a proposal and attach the necessary documents that the institution needs to appoint a new office holder. Some of the institutions provided the sources from which the application forms could be accessed, as in Example (18). Examples (17) and (18) demonstrate the presentation of the *Mode of Application* Step, usually with three common captions: *how to apply*, *mode of application*, and simply *application*.

## **17. APPLICATION**

Interested Candidates are requested to submit an application letter together with the following:

- Six (6) copies of Curriculum Vitae, including Names and Addresses of Three (3) Referees; and,
- Six (6) copies of Two-Page Statement of Candidate's Vision for the College. (UEW-1)

## 18. MODE OF APPLICATION

Suitable candidate should send 5 copies of each of the following documentation:

- i. Completed Application Form (UHAS 1): Application Form for Academic staff (available at the University's website): [www.uhas.edu.gh/staff-employment-forms](http://www.uhas.edu.gh/staff-employment-forms)
- ii. A detailed and up to date Curriculum Vitae
- iii. Names of two referees, one of whom should have served as candidate's superior officer within the past two years. (UHAS-1)

It is obvious that Examples (17) and (18) provide details about how to apply for the announced vacancy. The two examples indicate the number of copies each candidate is expected to provide, the accompanying documents such as CV, vision statements, where to obtain application forms, and a referee's report.

Step 2 is the Closing Date or *Deadline* for the submission of the applications. Applicants were asked to adhere strictly to the date stated in the advertisement, in order to have their application considered. Setawan et al. (2017) indicate that this part of the job advertisements provides the instruction of how to send the application, as seen in Extracts (19) to (22):

19. The closing date for submission of application is May 10, 2016 (UDS-1)
20. Applications in hard and soft copies should reach the following address not later than 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2016. (UPS-1)
21. Applications should be forwarded under registered cover marked "Application for Vice Chancellor, UMaT" to reach any of the following address, not later than JUNE 30, 2012 (UMaT-1)
22. Please note that it is the duty of the applicant to ensure that the package reaches the designated address before close of day on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2016 at 5:00 pm. (KNUST-1)

Examples (19) to (22) provide clear cases of instructions of the institutions to potential candidates relative to the deadlines they had to meet. All four examples are emphatic about the specific date for the submission of invited applications.

Step 3 was labelled *Contact Address* of the institutions where the completed applications were expected to be returned. It appears that only few studies labelled this step as *contact information* (e.g. Walters & Fage-Butler, 2014; Xiong, 2012), which means the same as contact address or relative information for potential candidates to contact the prospective employer. However, the majority of studies are not explicit about it; probably, the contact information was categorised as part of *application procedure* (Fairclough, 1993), as *urging contact* (Kheovichai, 2014), as *how to apply* (Łącka-Badura, 2015) or as *enhancer* (Nugroho, 2009). It simply

indicates the destinations of the applications and the specific source of the information to the potential candidates. Such addresses sometimes identify the committee that will process the applications, and because some of the applicants come from outside Ghana, the address indicates the country's name. Some of the addresses also indicate that those outside of Ghana may also apply, but due to constraints as regards documents' reaching the destination on time, external addresses are also provided. Two such addresses are exemplified in (23):

23. The Chairman

Search Committee for Provosts

C/o The Registrar

Kwame Nkrumah University  
of Science and Technology

Private Mail Bag

University Post Office

Kumasi

Ghana

OR

The Chairman

Search Committee for Provosts

C/o The Office Manager

University of Ghana Overseas Office

Ghana Universities House

321 Cite Road

London EC1V 1LJ

United Kingdom

(KNUST-2)

As can be noted, all that Example (23) expresses is the destination of the applications. We can see that some institutions (23) provide both local and foreign addresses to broaden the scope whereby the appropriate candidate may be sourced. This indicates the readiness of the institution to embrace internationalisation, as any person, regardless of nationality, will be accepted as long as s/he is deemed to be suitable.

The last Step, (4), was labelled *Shortlisting Information*. This Step provides information to the candidate on the expectations after their applications have been submitted. This step intends to help them understand what happens after applying for such positions, in terms of notifications. This also means that inability to obtain feedback suggests inability of the application to meet the expectations of the committee. Three examples (24-26) provide instances of how this Step was constructed:

24. PLEASE NOTE THAT ONLY SHORT-LISTED CANDIDATES WILL BE CONTACTED (GIMPA-1)

25. Only shortlisted Candidates will be contacted (KNUST-1)

26. (Please note that only short-listed applicants would be contacted). (UDS-3)

It is clear from Examples 24-26 that shortlisting information is provided for candidates. We can see that, apart from Example 25, the other two indicate the relevance of information by highlighting it either in bold, uppercase or both.

## **Move 5: Authority Signing**

Move 5 was labelled *Authority Signing* because it is not part of the application details. This move was specifically set aside for readers to understand the office or the authority signing the entire advertisement. Although the name of the institution advertising the vacant position is explicit, the specific authority who served as a secretary or the one behind the creation of the various segments of the advertisement is known through Move 5. In other words, we can simply refer to the writer as the organiser of the genre:

27. THE CHAIRMAN SEARCH COMMITTEE (POST OF VICE-CHANCELLOR)(UCC-1)  
28. REGISTRAR (UHAS-1)  
29. SIGNEDREGISTRAR (UEW-1)  
30. REGISTRAR (KNUST-2)

We can see from Examples 27 to 30 that only one item is significant: the main authority responsible for the construction of the job advertisement's text. In some cases, we find the REGISTRAR behind the text and on a few occasions the CHAIRMAN of the search committee. The literature seems to be absolutely silent on this Move. This move needed to be set aside because it is related to the entire genre, and not to a specific portion or move of the vacancy advertisement genre.

### 3.2 *Content analysis findings*

This section presents the results of the content analysis with regard to the incidence of Moves and Steps in the MPJAs. Table 3 summarizes how often the moves and steps appeared in the MPJAs.

**Table 3.** Frequency of occurrence of Moves/Steps in MPJAs.

Moves/Steps	Frequency (No. of MPJAs =30)	(%)
M1: Institution identification	30	100.0
S1: Name	30	100.0
S2: Logo	29	96.7
S3: Motto	7	23.3
M2: Vacancy declaration	30	100.0
S1: Position	30	100.0
S2: Declaring authority	19	63.3
S3:Background information	15	50.0
M3: Job details	30	100.0
S1: Function/Description	30	100.0
S2:Qualification& Experience	30	100.0
S3: Terms of appointment	20	70.0
M4: Application details	30	100.0
S1: Mode of application	30	100.0
S2: Deadline	30	100.0
S3: Address and contact	30	100.0
S4:Shortlisting information	13	43.3
M5: Authority signing	18	70.0

As we can see from Table 3, all moves were encountered in at least 70% of the entire corpus. Moves 1 to 4 noted had a 100% incidence across texts, indicating that the 30 MPJA texts which were studied contained the four elements of the moves at their core. The literature on the generic structure of job advertisements reveals that very few studies (e.g. Łącka-Badura, 2015; Xiong, 2012) are explicit about the frequency of occurrence of the functional sections of the text's structure. This finding largely confirms Łącka-Badura's (2015) claim that presenting the organisation, advertising the vacancy, indicating the responsibilities/requirements, providing information on benefits, and instructing candidates with the right information to respond to the recruitment job advertisement are compulsory steps. However, the occurrence of *Job Identification* and *Announcing the Availability of the Position Job Title* were optional elements (Łącka-Badura, 2015), which contrast the findings of the current study. This difference might be attributed to the samples employed in these studies: Łącka-Badura's (2015) study focused on general job advertisement texts, whereas the current research studied texts of MPJAs in tertiary education.

What was not considered compulsory by all the institutions was the authority or the office that signed the advert, i.e. Move 5 which occurred 18 times out of the 30 texts. These findings confirm Dudley-Evans' (2000) claim that it is these common conventions of the rhetorical elements shared by the discourse community that shape the creations of the text.

In terms of Steps, some of them were encountered across the entire corpus. In order to identify the institution, all adverts mentioned the institution's name. The Logo (Step 2) was also encountered in the entire corpus, with the exception of one institution. Out of the 30 texts, only 7 (23.3%) indicated the mottos of the institutions. This might be attributed to the institutions' intention to reinforce their core principles and remind the public of their heritage. Such institutions included Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration, Accra Technical University, and University of Professional Studies, Accra. The rest of the institutions did not present themselves explicitly through their motto, because such mottos were present in the logo.

Under Move 2, the three steps which were identified marked a 100% occurrence, except for Step 1 (Position) (see Table 4). This rate of occurrence might be attributed to the fact that the main purpose of the institutions was to announce a vacancy and invite suitable applicants. Consequently, all the institutions recognized the need to include this specific Step. Concerning which authority was behind each vacancy, more than half of the institutions were represented as either *Governing Council* or *a statutory act*. By this, 19 (63.3%) texts brought the second Step to justify the authenticity of the source of the information in spite of the integrity of the institutional names present. 11 texts left the specific authority vacant for the public to discern that once the information is coming from the institutions, there was a specific authority behind it, although not stated in clear terms. Step 3, which gave brief background information about the achievements and the heritage of the institutions, was encountered in 50% of the corpus. Some of these public institutions are well-known and they expect applicants from outside Ghana to also respond to advertisements on the vacant position. This might explain the reason why some of the institutions provided addresses which were UK-based; one of those institutions was Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.

Two out of the three Steps which occurred in Move 3 had 100% occurrence each; however, the last Step (*Terms of Appointment*) appeared 20 times in the corpus. All of the institutions used Step 1 to point out the functions or to describe the positions being advertised, in order to provide

details of what the vacant positions were all about. In all texts, some of the specific duties of the vacant positions were explicitly laid out. As can be gleaned from Table 4, all of the institutions presented the qualification, the experiences and/or skills they required of candidates, to be considered for the advertised vacancies. In terms of Step 3 (*Terms of Appointment*), 70% of occurrence was noted. This implies that more than half of the institutions indicated the tenure of office and the kind of remunerations or benefits a suitable candidate would be receiving, to make the position more appealing to the applicants. It also means that 10 of the texts did not contain any condition of service. Those managerial positions which mentioned condition of service included Vice Chancellors, Pro-Vice Chancellors, Registrars, Deans, Directors, Provost, Rectors and Principals. Surprisingly, some MPJAs that featured Directors, Deputy-Directors and Registrars did not feature any terms of appointment.

Furthermore, it merits noticing that the tenure of office is specified, but not the remuneration or incentives. Łącka-Badura (2015) asserts that there could be issues of controversy if the amount or range or salary were specified in the public domain. In certain cases, inconsistent formulations were also noted in this third Step. For instance, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, and Kumasi, mentioned the conditions of service in one case, whereas, in another, they omitted it altogether. In texts KNUST-3 and KNUST-4, the terms of appointment were mentioned with regard to *Director* and *Deans* respectively, but in the case of *Registrar* in text KNUST-1, no conditions of service were indicated. It could be that the institutions do not want to declare the conditions to the public, due to controversy. As Łącka-Badura (2015) argues, declaring openly salary information, for example, might breach privacy related clauses.

The only Move (Application Details) with four subordinate Steps was the fourth one. Overall, three of these Steps (*Mode of Application*, *Deadline and Address & Contact*,) were encountered in the entire corpus, whereas the last one (*Terms of Appointment*) in 45% of the texts (see Table 4). The former suggests that all of the institutions expected the potential candidates to respond to the vacancy in specific ways. For instance, Step 1 (*Mode of Application*) requests of applicants to prepare their applications by attaching certain important documents, like curriculum vitae, a statement of candidates' vision for the new positions, addresses of a required number of referees and guidelines for presenting them. The results also indicate that all of the institutions mentioned Step 2 (*Deadline*). The closing date was relevant in determining those that could meet the deadline and for the committee to process the applications on time.

The *Address and Contact Step* was very relevant in keeping the correspondence between the advertisers and the applicants, so all of the institutions realised the need to indicate these in the adverts. However, Step 4's (*Shortlisting Information*) frequency was less than 44% (see Table 4). This indicates that most of the institutions did not consider this Step as one of the most relevant elements.

#### **4. Conclusions**

The purpose of this study was to explore the generic structure of 30 MPJAs of tertiary education institutions in Ghana. Specifically, the positions involved Vice Chancellors, Pro-Vice Chancellors, Registrars, Deans, Directors, Provosts, Rectors and Principals. The study adopted a qualitative design to answer the research question regarding the schematic structure of MPJAs. Specifically, the study employed qualitative content analysis in conjunction with the Swalesean approach to genre analysis, to enable the identification of the rhetorical structure of MPJAs.

The analysis yielded the following findings. First, MPJAs of tertiary institutions were typified by five Moves: *Institution Identification* (M1), *Vacancy Declaration* (M2), *Job Details* (M3), *Application Details* (M4) and *Authority Signing* (M5). Each of the Moves comprised three Steps, except for Move 4 which had four Steps and Move 5 which had no Step under it. Secondly, apart from Move 5 (Authority Signing) which was encountered in 70% of MPJAs, the rest of the Moves occurred in the entire sample. The findings indicate that MPJAs of the tertiary institutions in Ghana follow a well-structured pattern, with relevant detailed information, which clearly depicts how recruitment advertisements are presented.

The key findings and conclusions drawn from the study have implications for current scholarship. First, the major point worth noting is the theoretical claim that a genre is a group of texts (also known as exemplars) that have the same features and communicative purpose that is shared by the members of the same discourse community (Bhatia, 1993; Hyland, 2002; Swales, 1990). Given these assumptions, and based on the findings of this study, MPJAs can be considered as a sub-genre of the genre called job advertisement. Moreover, as a case study, this research has been able to contribute a distinct Ghanaian perspective to the scholarship on the interface between MPJAs and marketization in higher education. Third, the findings of the study have methodological implications. Swales' (1990) and Bhatia's (1993)

approaches of analysing a text to explore its generic structure have proven to be viable tools for analysing the generic structure of texts.

Based on the findings and the above-noted implications, the following areas are suggested for further research. Firstly, the study focused on MPJAs of a public daily newspaper, the *Daily Graphic*, thus limiting the generalizability of the findings. A comparative study can be done on MPJAs in tertiary education institutions and other similar positions advertised in different institutions (e.g. finance, hospitality and tourism, international relations and other public institutions). Secondly, the present study focused on the generic structure of MPJAs. Therefore, further studies can be undertaken on linguistic resources such as the use of tense, mood, modality, polarity, and evaluative adjectives. Again, since the present study investigated MPJAs from one cultural context, future studies can consider the same data type in other cultural contexts.

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## **Appendix 1. Names and abbreviations of Ghanaian universities featured in the study**

University of Cape Coast (UCC)

Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi (KNUST)

University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ho (UHAS)

University of Ghana, Legon (UGL)

University of Education, Winneba (UEW)

Accra Technical University (ATU)

Ho Technical University (HTU)

University of Mines and Technology Tarkwa (UMaT)

University for Development Studies (UDS)

Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA)

Sunyani Technical University (STU)

University of Professional Studies (UPS)