

# THE CHARACTERISTICS OF USING FACEBOOK ADVERTISING LANGUAGE OF ONLINE SELLERS

Jutada Tabpawan, Rajamangala University of Technology Srivijaya,  
Thailand

## ABSTRACT

*This research aimed to study and analyse the characteristics as well as the factors that differentiate them of online sellers' Facebook advertising language usage. This research is quantitative research using a questionnaire administered to 300 online seller participants who have experience selling products via Facebook for six (6) months and live in the southern region of Thailand. Questionnaires were used to collect primary data. The results found that there are four (4) characteristics of online sellers' Facebook advertising language usage for posting their products which were found at a high level: 1) Using emojis to accompany the posted messages, 2) using the repetition of vowels, consonants and spellings, 3) using rhyme sounds, and 4) using words for expressing sounds, emotions and symptomatic. Sixteen characteristics were used and found at a moderate level which are as follows: 1) reduplication, 2) punctuation marks, 3) consideration of the correctness of language before posting, (4) acronyms, 5) opposite words, 6) clipped word, 7) English transliteration, 8) colloquial expressions or dialect, 9) meaning-changing word, 10) simile, 11) wrong vowel forms, 12) wrong consonant forms, 13) the familiar tones, 14) trendy words, 15) the words caused by keyboard limitations, and 16) vulgar language, colloquialism, and slang. As regards the factors affecting the different types of online sellers' Facebook advertising language usage, it was found that there was a statistically significant difference at 0.05 level of age, educational background, and profit.*

**Keywords:** Characteristics of Language Usage, Advertising Language, Online Sellers, Facebook.

## INTRODUCTION

Communication is the transmission of information from one person to another or a group of people in order to understand the meaning of the received information. There are many forms of transmission of information, such as verbal communication, written gesture, or symbol by using different communication channels that are sending a letter, talking on the phone, using LINE, posting on Facebook, etc. On a daily basis, people are constantly communicating both internally (i.e., within oneself) and externally (i.e., with others such as family members, friends, and co-workers). It can be claimed that communication is a process that makes society progress ceaselessly. For this reason, people have attempted to develop various forms of communication. Such forms are visual communication, signal communication, and interpersonal communication (Kongrach, 2011).

Nowadays, people are increasingly turning to social media instead of traditional media to communicate information with each other. At the beginning, social media was often been used as a hobby and tool to communicate among close acquaintances. The aforementioned application has been then expanded among the business sectors that have been widely accepted by people (Wichitbunarak, 2010). People are connected to each other and are able to get to know each

other through the Internet using Facebook as their platform. This allows them to communicate and do activities together such as asking and answering topics of interest, posting pictures, posting video clips, writing articles or blogs, and chatting online. These sites provide opportunities and avenues for people to get to know each other and service area of various tools to facilitate networking create content based on users' interests and connect to the Internet. This leads to networking, creating jobs, creating more careers through the online world. An electronic transaction finally takes place according to the increase of online activities. The aforementioned can be carried out anywhere, anytime, greatly reducing travel time, and waiting in line for numerous transactions. In addition, various forms of online payment have made it more convenient and fast which rapidly increase online trading business as these modes of payment offer certain level of security as well. Entrepreneurs selling goods and services will therefore inevitably have to adapt to the world of online trading. Many people leave their full-time jobs to produce products and turn themselves to own their brand. However, creating their own brand does not confirm that all entrepreneurs will be successful (Limpattamapanee, 2017). Unfortunately, some people sell their products online only for a while and stop selling nevertheless some are successful in selling online. This success comes from many components such as product design, product quality, and service. On the other hand, but one factor that influences sales is the use of language for advertising or having the art of selling to persuade consumers to change their concepts, attitudes and become more interested in the products being sold (Thongchuay & Srinuanpan, n.d.)

Chanprakhon defined '*advertising*' as a means to provide information. It is a motivational communication through various types of advertising media to motivate or persuade the target audience to behave in accordance with the content advertised. Moreover, advertisement facilitates the purchase or avail goods and services and it leads them to follow various concepts. Therefore, good advertising language is a great selling art.

In addition, to online sellers must have enough knowledge or experience selling the product in order to provide information to consumers. One important factor that can fully persuade the customers is to have selling skills wherein the sellers can use any methods or principles to convince consumers to buy the products offered. There are different types of incentives and advertisements these days, thus, several questions arise including: What types of advertising language are popularly used among online sellers? What advertising language can convince consumers? Can it create income or profit?. Additionally, posting can be done easily by copying the messages from the same brand group of sellers to promote one's goods and services. In other words, the sellers do not have to think of messages or captions every time they post. The persuasive language commonly used are using '*emojis*' to accompany the messages posted, repeating vowels and symptomatic, etc.

From the aforementioned, the researcher realizes that advertising of products through online channels nowadays, especially Facebook, plays a greater role that is of interest to both sellers and consumers. Importantly, in the current Covid-19 situation, it has resulted in an increasing number of online sales because both buyers and sellers want to reduce the risk of going to crowded places and meeting each other. In addition, online sales can be posted for sale easily just by having a Facebook page. As for consumers, they can use the service conveniently without having to travel to buy products. Hence, the study of the use of advertising language among online sellers to persuade consumers is very beneficial to help online sellers or groups of sellers to adapt and use it to generate sales in order to increase their profits that lead to a better quality of life in society.

## Research Purposes

1. To study the characteristics of online sellers' use of advertising language on Facebook
2. To examine the factors affecting the different online sellers' use of Facebook advertising language

## Expected Benefits

1. To attain the characteristics of online sellers' use of Facebook advertising language
2. To reveal the factors affecting the use of advertising language on Facebook of the different online sellers
3. To establish guidelines for online sellers as a way to improve and develop online product advertisement

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Population and Samples

**Participants:** Online sellers who live in the south of Thailand and advertise products through Facebook channels were the populations of this study. They sell all types of products having over six-month experience in selling products online with no limitation of gender, age, education level, and income.

**Samples:** The researcher collected data from 300 online sellers who advertise their products through Facebook by using a specific sampling technique (Purposive Random Sampling).

### Research Instruments Creating and Testing

This research used the questionnaire as an instrument in order to collect the primary data from the use of advertising language on Facebook of online sellers.

1. Documents, articles, research papers, Internet media related to the use of persuasive advertising language, general information of the respondents, and guidelines to construct a questionnaire, were determined to create the research instruments.
2. Ten online sellers were required to participate in the focus-group interview in order to obtain more information about the language characteristics used to create the questionnaire items.
3. The questionnaire was designed to cover the research variables. Selected experts examined the questionnaire for its content accuracy and validity.
4. The questionnaire was piloted by 10% of the respondents or 30 respondents in order to seek reliability.
5. After the revision, the validity rating of the questionnaire was 0.67-1.00.
6. The results from the pilot test were utilized to create the complete version of the questionnaire which also had been examined for both content validity and reliability. The actual questionnaire was then administered to the participants.

### Data Collection Procedures the Data were Collected According to the Following Procedures

1. The researcher explained the aims of this research to create understanding and credibility to the participants.
2. The obtained data were then checked for completeness and later were analyzed.

- Each questionnaire was coded and the Statistical Product and Service Solutions SPSS (Hejase & Hejase, 2013) software program was later run to analyze the data.

## RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The findings of the study on the characteristics of 300 online sellers using Facebook advertising language were discussed according to each topic below:

### General Information of Respondents

Hejase et al. (2012) contend that informed objective decisions are based on facts and numbers, real, realistic and timely information. Furthermore, according to Hejase & Hejase (2013), “*descriptive statistics deals with describing a collection of data by condensing the amounts of data into simple representative numerical quantities or plots that can provide a better understanding of the collected data*”. Therefore, this paper analyzed data collected with descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations supported with tables for clarity. Most of the respondents were female (272 sellers or 90.7%) whose age range from 15 to 25 years old (190 sellers or 63.3%). With regard to their educational attainment, majority of them (127 sellers or 42.3 %) graduated with a bachelor’s degree. In terms of their profits, they would earn 1,001 to 5,000 baht from selling online products each month (108 sellers or 36%) and mostly doing online selling from a period of 1-2 years up to the present time (101 sellers or 33.7%). Among them, 286 sellers (or 95.3%) sell 1 to 5 brands wherein cosmetics and dietary supplements were the most popular products (260 sellers or 86.7%). Furthermore, 205 sellers (68.3%) sell their products in Songkhla Province, Thailand. The group comprised 104 sellers (34.7%) who are still students and who mostly sell their products online. When asked about their reason for selling products online, 266 sellers admitted that they want to have an extra income. Lastly, 281 sellers (93.7%) do not own the brand they sell.

### Characteristics of Using Facebook Advertising Language of Online Sellers

There are four (4) characteristics of Facebook advertising language commonly used by online sellers. 1) The use of emoji to accompany the posted messages. Emoji is a symbol used to communicate or express emotions along with the message, such as using emoji (pin) and followed by the message, for example 📦 “*The product is shipping to your hands very soon.*” or using the emoji expressing surprise (Wow) e.g., 😲 “*Celebrate Valentine’s Day with double set promotion and 100-baht discount. This feature collectively obtained the highest mean score of 2.65.* 2) *The use of repetition of vowels, consonants, and spellings, by holding down the keystrokes to express an emotion and to emphasize a large quantity, or to express a special feeling. The sentences were read out with high tones and dragged in long tones, for instance, “This (cream) jar is very nice*”. This set of characteristics garnered a mean score of ( $\bar{X}$ )= 2.46. 3) The use of rhyming sounds to highlight the product. This third set of characteristics obtained a mean score of ( $\bar{X}$ )= 2.38. Lastly, 4) the use of words to express sound, emotions, and gestures in order to attract attention and show the uniqueness of the product, for example, oh my, so many qualities, you must try it! This set of characteristics garnered a mean score of ( $\bar{X}$ )= 2.34.

The characteristics of Facebook advertising language used by online sellers that are moderately popular, are ‘*reduplication*’, the use of familiar tone marks, trendy words, words caused by keyboard limitations, and vulgar/slang words (Table 1).

<b>Characteristics of using Facebook advertising language of online sellers</b>	<b>Mean <math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
(1Using acronym	2.21	.645	Moderate
(2Using English transliteration instead of Thai language	2.13	.603	Moderate
(3Using simile words	2.03	.696	Moderate
(4Using the opposite text	2.19	.673	Moderate
(5Using emojis to accompany posts	2.65	.512	high
(6Using words to express sounds, emotions, and gestures such as Ooh.	2.34	.606	high
(7Using reduplication	2.32	.636	Moderate
(8Decorating and word-coding	2.16	.680	Moderate
(9Using trendy words	1.95	.746	Moderate
(10Using meaning-changing	2.04	.714	Moderate
(11Using rhyme sounds	2.38	.614	high
(12Repetition of vowels, consonants, and spellings	2.46	.591	high
(13Misusage of consonants	1.98	.720	Moderate
(14Using wrong vowels	2.03	.710	Moderate
(15Using familiar tone marks	1.97	.744	Moderate
(16 Using words caused by keyboard limitations	1.80	.776	Moderate
(17Using punctuation marks	2.30	.597	Moderate
(18Using dialect in posting products	2.06	.727	Moderate
(19Using vulgar, colloquialism, and slang words	1.73	.738	Moderate
(20Always considering the correctness of the language before posting.	2.30	.616	Moderate
Total	2.15	.377	Moderate

### Factors that Differentiate the Use of Facebook Advertising Language among Online Sellers

The findings revealed that there was no difference in gender factor in relation to the online sellers' use of Facebook advertising language as shown in Table 2.

<b>Gender</b>	<b>N</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Male	28	2.23	0.417	1.135	0257.
Female	272	2.14	0.372		

\* $P \leq 0.05$

There are three (3) factors that differentiate the use of Facebook advertising language among online sellers: age, educational background, and profits from online sales as which are as follows:

**Factor 1: 'Age'** The age of the respondents was one of the significant factors that showed that different age ranges resulted in different usage of Facebook advertising language. It was found that two (2) pairs of the respondents' age possessed different average frequency regarding the characteristics of the use of advertising language based on the computed 0.05 statistical difference. The results of the pairwise comparison were that the first pair was the respondents aged 15-25 years old and the respondents aged 36-45 years old with the mean frequency of 2.16

and 1.83 as regards their use of advertising language on Facebook. The second pair was the respondents aged 26-35 years old and the respondents aged 36-45 years old possessing a mean frequency of 2.18 and 1.83 in relation to their use of advertising language on Facebook as presented in Table 3.

Variance	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.351	4	0.338	2.423	0.048*
Within Groups	41.118	295	0.139		
Total	42.469	299			

\*P ≤ 0.05

**Factor 2:** respondents' 'Educational Background' that affects the use of advertising language on Facebook was statistically significant (Sig=0.002<5%) as shown in Table 4. From the results of the comparison of individual pairs, it was found that there were four (4) different pairs: pair 1, the respondents with a high school diploma and the respondents with a vocational certificate; pair 2, the respondents with a high school diploma and the respondents with a vocational certificate level; pair 3, the respondents with a high school diploma and the respondents with a high vocational certificate; and pair 4, the respondents with a high school diploma and respondents with a bachelor's degree.

Variance	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.697	5	0.539	3.988	0.002*
Within Groups	39.772	294	0.135		
Total	42.469	299			

\*P ≤ 0.05

**Factor 3 'Profit from Online Sales':** It was found that the respondents' profit from online sales affected the use of advertising language on Facebook within a statistically significant level (Sig. = .004<5%) as shown in Table 5. Considering the results of the pairwise comparison, it was found that there were two (2) pairs: pair 1, the respondents who had a profit from online sales of 1,001–5,000 baht and the respondents with a profit of 5,001 - 10,000 baht, while the second pair were the respondents who made a profit from online sales 1,001 - 5,000 baht, and the respondents who made a profit of 10,001 - 50,000 baht.

Variance	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.391	5	0.478	3.507	0.004*
Within Groups	40.079	294	0.136		
Total	42.469	299			

\*P ≤ 0.05

## DISCUSSION

This research aimed to study the characteristics of online sellers' use of Facebook advertising language and the factors affecting their use of Facebook advertising language. The results showed that most of the online sellers were female of working age and students. The reason of selling online was due to their interest of products in beauty categories such as cosmetics and supplements, followed by fashion items, clothing, leather goods, textiles, and jewelry. These online sellers were also good at using social media, particularly Facebook application which is easy to utilize and is generally inexpensive as a means to earn extra income because it does not require investment or advertising costs. For these reasons, numerous students are interested in online selling. Apart from this, posting products is convenient because the sellers can copy the message and display the brand owner. In addition, the monthly income/profit ranges from 1,001 to 5,000 baht. If there is a continuous sale and the sellers attempt to find team members and customers, their revenues will increase. The research results also revealed that the online sellers subsequently earn profit between 5,001 - 10,000 baht. If any online seller owns his/her brand, the profit will increase to 100,001 baht. This requires a customer base and diligence to post products on an ongoing basis as a way to increase reliability. If the product being sold is one of the trends, it will motivate the sales because the customers always like to try new or trendy products. Additionally, online sellers need to constantly adjust their selling methods because they may be blocked by Facebook. Regarding the characteristics of Facebook advertising language that online sellers use, four (4) characteristics were mostly found in this study. (1) Using emoji to accompany the posted messages. This is because emojis can express emotions, feelings, and are as a “*visual language*” which is popularly used among people. Importantly, it can be claimed that everyone is a part of “*Emoji culture*” because from the moment we wake up until we go to bed, we communicate through emojis. Using emojis is, therefore, widespread in online communication. However, the researcher found that there is no research mentioned or examined about the emojis for posting to sell the products. This may be due to the fact that the popularity of emoji in the past was not as popular as today. Once using online media becomes more popular, the use of symbols, images, and emojis also increase. Thus, communication is not only limited to text messages. (2) Repetition of vowels, consonants, and spellings. Repeating of the sound can emphasize the clarity of the posted message and expresses special feelings. (3) Using rhyme words. This result is in accordance with Chiewchai's finding in 2015. He analyzed the language characteristics of advertisements from newspapers and found that rhyme words were also used in newspapers in order to develop consumers' interests and become more memorable for them. (4) Using words to express sounds, emotions, and gestures help consumers to associate with the feeling of using the product or the attractiveness of the offered product. This finding is in line with Noro-a et al. (2018) who studied the nature of language use on social media among Thai adolescents nowadays. They found that vowels, consonants, and spellings were repeated by holding down the keystrokes in order to express emotion and to emphasize a large meaning or to want a sentence to express intense feelings. The sentences are read out loud and long. Apart from this, using the words to express sounds, emotions, and word imitating voice were mostly found in photos and video talks, cooking, tourist attraction and ticket reviews, grades, and cosmetics. Its usage was found in the talks between friends, family and others. The results are also in accordance with Panyametheekul, who analyzed the language characteristics found in the advertising media that appear in the print

media, billboard, and TV and radio advertising. The results revealed that advertising language will be adjusted in both spelling and sound to emphasize or attract attention.

## CONCLUSION

Considering the factors that differentiate the use of Facebook advertising language among online sellers, it was found that the respondents' age ranges from 15-25 and 36-45. The language usage characteristics are different because they are of different ages, i.e., teenage and working age. Educational qualifications are another important factor because people with different educational backgrounds influence the use of word choice. In addition, the researcher discovered that the characteristics of the Facebook language used by the online sellers can likewise be useful to general business operators. They were able to attract customers by creating their own Facebook page, which means creating distinctive features, or their own uniqueness resulted in attracting customers and making their products be easily remembered by people, in general. When the business identity is clear and strong, there will be more acceptances from customers leading to more business opportunities for the sellers. There are also other ways of using language, such as writing captions with different messages from other sellers and creating their message to stand out. It is suggested that the sellers should use comparative words or attractive emojis, utilizing photo and video editing software/applications, and their overall production of their video presentations in order to gain more interests from customers because people commonly prefer seeing moving images more than still images. Talking to customers should be in suggestive and informal language. Worshipping, renting sacred things, or making merit to help trading and stimulating sales are other common practices done by online sellers. Another important strategy is regular and continuous posting of products online. Such strategy can establish reliability and assert trust from the customers.

## SUGGESTED FUTURE RESEARCH

1. Other factors should be examined apart from the personal factors influencing the use of Facebook advertising language of online sellers.
2. A study of other forms of language usage should be further investigated.
3. A comparison study of the use of advertising language on Instagram, Line, etc. which is equally popular platforms tools for online selling should likewise be carried out.

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