
The influence of the use of English in Dutch job advertisements

An experimental study into the effects on text evaluation, on attitudes towards the organization and the job, and on comprehension

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Abstract

Several authors have claimed that the use of English in advertising for products and services in non-English-speaking countries is associated with prestige and an enhanced image. Similar claims have been made in relation to job advertisements. English terms are, for instance, said to make a job sound more appealing. The present study aims to test the effects of the use of English in Dutch job ads.

In a between-subjects experimental design, three manipulated versions of the same job ad were presented to potential applicants, students who either had just graduated or were close to graduation in a relevant field, 30 for each version. One version was completely in English, the second version contained 11 different English words, and the third version was completely in Dutch. The respondents answered questions on text evaluation, on their attitudes towards the organization and the job offered. In addition, they indicated the degree to which they understood the meaning of the 11 English words and phrases and their Dutch counterparts in their version of the ad, and paraphrased the meaning of these words and phrases.

Results showed that there were no statistically significant differences between the scores of the three versions on the attractiveness and intelligibility of the ad as a whole, nor on respondents' attitudes towards the organization and the job offered. The Dutch version scored significantly better than the partly English version, but not significantly better than the completely English version, on the respondents' own estimation of their understanding of the manipulated words and phrases and on the number of correct paraphrases.

One important conclusion is that, contrary to claims in the literature, the use of English instead of Dutch does not affect potential applicants' attitudes towards

various aspects of the ad, the job and the organization, at least not in the case of young and highly educated respondents.

1. Introduction

Berns (1995) discusses the use of English in the European Union in terms of the model developed by Kachru (1985, 1992) to classify the spread of English throughout the world, with “inner circle” countries, where English is spoken as a first or primary language, “outer circle” countries, where English is not the first language but one of the official languages or state languages, and the “expanding circle” of countries where English functions as a foreign or international language. She puts the Netherlands – along with Germany and Luxemburg – in a special category of countries (“expanding/outer circle”) where the English used is more than a foreign language or international language but serves functions “in various social, cultural, commercial and educational settings” (1995: 8-9). Other authors have also observed that English is used increasingly in a number of domains of Dutch society, including the media (de Bot 1994; Claus & Taeldeman 1989; Gerritsen & Nickerson 2004; Ridder 1995; van der Sijs 1996). English is used widely in the Dutch media by companies to communicate with their potential customers through advertising for products and services (see Gerritsen 1995; Gerritsen, Korzilius, van Meurs & Gijsbers 2000), in line with international developments. Piller (2003: 175) says that “English is the most frequently used language in advertising messages in non-English-speaking countries (besides the local language, of course)”.

Several authors have commented on the use of English in another form of communication through the media between companies and their target groups in non-English-speaking countries: job advertisements in newspapers. Larson (1990) notes that the use of English is very obvious in Swedish job advertisements, particularly in work areas and job titles. Hilgendorf (1996: 10-11) gives a number of examples of the use of job titles “reflecting varying degrees of Englishization” from job ads for positions advertised in German in the German newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. That English is used increasingly in job advertisements in Dutch newspapers has been pointed out by Schreiner (1990) and Renkema, Vallen & Hoeken (2001). Gerritsen (2001) shows that there was a statistically significant increase – from 60% to 81% – in the use of English gender neutral terms in job titles in the headings of job ads published in the Dutch national daily newspaper *de Telegraaf* and in the national weekly *Intermediair* between 1989 and 1999. Korzilius, van Meurs, and Hermans (submitted) found that 39% of job advertisements in the Dutch national paper *de Volkskrant* (published in August 2001) contained one or more English words, and that 2.4% of the job ads were completely in English.

One of the reasons that is frequently mentioned for the use of English in advertising for products and services in non-English-speaking countries is that it

has prestige value (Friedrich 2002: 22; Griffin 1997: 38; Haarmann 1989: 234). Its use is supposed to be good for the image of the product or service (Takahashi 1990: 329; Gerritsen *et al.* 2000: 20). This same point is made in one of the few articles that discusses reasons for the use of English in job advertisements in countries where English is not the first language or an official language. In connection with Swedish job ads, Larson (1990: 367) says that a common reason for organizations to use English is the image they are trying to convey. He even claims that “[o]ften a less attractive and maybe more mundane job can be made to sound more appealing and challenging using an English-sounding job title” (1990: 368). In relation to Dutch and French job advertisements published in Belgium, Heynderickx and Dieltjens (2002: 101) make a more tentative claim when they observe that the use of English is one of the aspects of language use that may affect potential applicants' motivation to apply.

As far as we know, these claims about the effects of the use of English in job advertisements in non-English-speaking countries have seldom been studied empirically (the only exception being Renkema *et al.* 2001, to be discussed below). The present study aims to investigate these effects. Since job advertisements in newspapers are the most widely used medium for recruiting new personnel in the Netherlands (van Dalen 1999: 42), it is important for companies to know what impact the use of English in recruitment advertising actually has on potential applicants.

The current study links up with earlier research into the effects of the use of English in business communication through the Dutch media. Gerritsen (1996) studied respondents' comprehension and appreciation of completely English advertisements for products in Dutch newspapers and magazines. She found that respondents on average were not very positive about the English used, and that only 51 per cent of respondents were actually capable of translating the texts correctly. In a study into the effects of the use of English in Dutch television commercials, Gerritsen *et al.* (2000) found that respondents displayed a rather negative attitude towards the English used, and that only 36 per cent were able to paraphrase the meaning of the English words and phrases correctly. Renkema *et al.* (2001) found that the use of English instead of Dutch terms in job advertisements had no effect on respondents' evaluation of the image of the company and of the exclusivity of the job, nor on their appreciation of the text, although the use of English terms was considered less natural. Unlike Gerritsen (1996) and Gerritsen *et al.* (2000), Renkema *et al.* did not research respondents' understanding of the English terms used, and they did not use completely English texts.

The present study combines the approaches and research questions of the three above-mentioned studies. We have formulated the following research questions. What is the effect of the use of English as opposed to Dutch in job advertisements on respondents'

- 1) evaluation of the text (intelligibility, attractiveness, and naturalness)?
- 2) attitudes towards the organization and the job offered (image of the organiza-

tion, attitudes towards working for the organization and towards the position offered, and interest in working for the company)?

3) comprehension of the English and Dutch terms used?

We study the effect of three degrees of the use of English: completely and partly English job ads and a completely Dutch job ad.

2. Method

2.1. Design and respondents

In a between-subjects experimental design, three manipulated versions of a job ad were presented to potential applicants, 30 for each version. The number of respondents was based on a statistical power of .93, a large effect size and an alpha of .05 (cf. Cohen 1992). One version was completely in English, the second version (henceforth the “partly English version”) contained 11 different English words, and the third version (“the Dutch version”) was completely in Dutch.

The 90 respondents were students at the Faculty of Social Sciences (Communication Studies, Management Studies) and Faculty of Arts (Communication and Information Studies; Dutch; Theatre, Film and Television Studies) of the Universities of Nijmegen and Utrecht, the Netherlands. These students were either in their final (third, fourth or higher) years of study or had just graduated. This particular criterion was used because it was thought that these respondents would be interested in job offers. The mean age of the respondents was 22.8 (min. = 20, max. = 34; SD = 2.58). There were 23 male and 67 female respondents. The native language of all respondents was Dutch. The respondents had had seven to eight years of formal training in English ($M = 7.73$; $SD = 2.75$).

2.2. Materials

The position advertised in the three versions of the job advertisement was that of a management trainee in the communication department of a fictitious bank. It was chosen because it was thought to be a job that would be suitable for and would appeal to the respondents.

The English words used in the partly English version of the job advertisement and the length of the ad were based on an analysis of 119 job ads in the Dutch national newspaper *de Volkskrant*, published in August 2001 (Korzilius *et al.* submitted). The completely English version, the partly English version, and the completely Dutch version of the ad contained 341, 340 and 345 words, respectively, compared to an average of 328 words for the ads in *de Volkskrant*. Seven of the eleven different English words were among the most frequent English words in the corpus studied: *management*, *professional*, *business*, *assessment*, *service*, *team* and *player* – in the combination *team player*. The four less frequent English words from the corpus were *finance*, *core* (used in the combination *core business*), *hands-on* (used in the combina-

tion *hands-on professional*) and *trainee* (used in the combination *management trainee*). These words were a mixture of lexical items of English origin included in the authoritative dictionary of the Dutch language, Van Dale *et al.* (1999) – *assessment, business, corebusiness, management, service, team, trainee* – and English words that were not included, or not included in the right sense in that dictionary – *finance, core* (as a separate word in core business), *hands-on, professional, player*. This mixture was used because the job ads in the corpus from *de Volkskrant* also contained lexical items of English origin that were included in Van Dale as well as English words that were not included in this dictionary (see Korzilius *et al.* submitted). The Dutch translations were found in the English-Dutch Van Dale dictionary (1997), in the corpus of job ads from *de Volkskrant* and on Dutch websites. For a list of the English terms and the Dutch equivalents used in the experiment, see Table 1.

The completely English version was a direct translation of the partly English and completely Dutch versions, and included the 11 English words from the partly English version. The only major change was the use of the phrase “We are an equal opportunities employer” at the end of the completely English advertisement instead of the Dutch abbreviation “m/v” (literally “male/ female”) after the job title in the other two versions to stress that no discrimination on gender would take place, in line with the conventions of English job advertisements. The naturalness and idiomaticity of the translation was checked by two native speakers of English. In accordance with the method recommended by Brislin (1980) to safeguard the equivalence of translated documents, the equivalence of the English translation and the original ad was checked by having an experienced translator translate the English translation back into Dutch. It turned out that there was a very high degree of agreement between the back translation and the original partly English and completely Dutch versions, but a discussion of the differences led to some minor changes in the final version of the completely English job advertisement.

Table 1. English terms and Dutch equivalents used in the experiment

English term	Dutch equivalent
Assessment	<i>Psychologisch onderzoek</i>
Core business	<i>Kernactiviteit</i>
Finance	<i>Financiën</i>
Hands-on professional	<i>Praktijkgerichte deskundige</i>
Management	<i>Directie</i>
Management trainee	<i>Leidinggevende in opleiding</i>
Service	<i>Dienstverlening</i>
Team player	<i>U functioneert goed binnen een groep</i>

The three versions of the job ad were pre-tested by experts, personnel officers, who were asked whether the texts seemed authentic and whether they contained anything that was unclear or unusual.

The partly English and the completely Dutch job advertisements were evaluated by two Dutch personnel officers, who were also asked explicitly for their views on the English words used in the partly English version. The only comment they had in connection with the authenticity of the ads was that the ads contained too much text. They considered the English words in the partly English version to be good equivalents of the Dutch words in the Dutch version, but they did comment that the phrase *hands-on professional* might be difficult to understand. On the basis of these comments, no changes in the design of the ads were deemed necessary, since the length of the ads was roughly the average length of the ads in our corpus, and since the aim of our study was precisely to determine whether potential applicants understand the English used in job ads.

The completely English job ad was pre-tested by an English native speaker human resources manager working for a multinational company in the Netherlands. He pointed out an awkward formulation, which was subsequently changed on the basis of his comments. He also commented on the content of the job ad, observing that it implied that the activities of the management trainee would be limited to the communication department, whereas the activities of management trainees would usually be more wide-ranging. However, we decided not to change this, because we wanted the completely English job ad to be equivalent to the partly English and completely Dutch versions in what it offered the successful applicant.

2.3. *Instrumentation*

Seven-point semantic differential scales were used to test the effect of the use of English or Dutch on text evaluation (the intelligibility, attractiveness and naturalness of the job ad), attitudes towards the organization and the job offered (the image of the organization, respondents' attitudes towards working for the organization and towards the position offered), and estimated comprehension of the Dutch and English items. The scales were balanced to avoid response bias, that is, we made sure that the negative and positive qualifications did not always appear on the same side of the scales, in order to counteract the possible tendency of those who filled in the questionnaire to respond in a particular way to the questions or statements, regardless of their content. For each scale we calculated internal consistency in terms of Cronbach's α and determined its qualification using the criteria in Van Wijk (2000: 217). We tested actual comprehension by asking respondents to paraphrase the English and Dutch items. We assessed interrater agreement on the correctness of the paraphrases by calculating Cohen's kappa (K), defined in terms of the qualifications in Rietveld and Van Hout (1993: 221).

2.4. Text evaluation

The scales relating to the intelligibility and attractiveness of the text were based on Maes, Ummelen & Hoeken (1996: 208-209). Respondents were asked to indicate how easy/difficult, simple/complex, clear/unclear, well organized/poorly organized, logically structured/not logically structured, concise/wordy they considered the text to be (intelligibility; $\alpha = .68$, qualification: moderate) and how interesting/uninteresting, distant/appealing, uninviting/inviting, engaging/boring, personal/impersonal, monotonous/varied (attractiveness; $\alpha = .79$, qualification: adequate). In order to measure the naturalness of the job ad, respondents were asked to indicate how natural/unnatural it was, and to what extent they agreed or disagreed that it was a good example of a job advertisement (naturalness; cf. Hoeken *et al.* 2003; $\alpha = .69$, qualification moderate).

2.5. Attitudes towards the organization and the job offered

The scale used to measure respondents' attitudes towards the image of the organization contained the following bipolar adjectives (based on Maes *et al.* 1996: 209): reliable/unreliable, professional/unprofessional, efficient/inefficient, honest/dishonest, innovative/old-fashioned, careful/careless ($\alpha = .75$, qualification: adequate). Respondents' attitudes towards working for the organization were measured by asking them to what extent they thought working for the organization would be nice/not nice, positive/not positive, wise/unwise, uninteresting/interesting, exciting/boring, gratifying/ungratifying (partly based on Hoeken 1998: 73; $\alpha = .90$, qualification: good). Respondents were also asked whether they thought the position on offer carried a great deal of responsibility/very little responsibility, was monotonous/varied, low-level/high-level, interesting/uninteresting, important/unimportant, nice/not nice ($\alpha = .80$, qualification: adequate). Their interest in working for the organization was measured by asking them to what extent they agreed/disagreed that they would like to know more about the possibilities to work for the bank, that they were going to send an application to the bank after they had graduated, and that they would like to work for the bank (based on Hoeken 1998: 73; $\alpha = .89$, qualification: good).

In order to determine respondents' views on the exclusivity of the position, a multiple-choice question was included asking them about the gross monthly salary they would expect to get when they started the job (based on Renkema *et al.* 2001: 258). They could choose between five different amounts of euros: 1000 to 1500, 1500 to 2000, 2000 to 2500, 2500 to 3000, and 3000 or more.

2.6. Comprehension

The respondents' understanding of the 11 English words and their Dutch equivalents was measured in two rounds (based on the procedure in Gerritsen *et al.*

2000). First, the respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they understood the meaning of the manipulated Dutch and English items as they occurred in their version of the ad (estimated comprehension). The English words and their Dutch equivalents were presented as eight different items, made up of either single words or phrases, printed in bold as part of the sentence in which they were used in the job ad. Next, in a separate task, the respondents were given the same eight items, presented in the same way, and were asked to paraphrase the meaning of these terms, to measure their actual comprehension. The correctness of the paraphrases of the English items was evaluated on the basis of the degree to which they corresponded with the Dutch equivalents selected for the Dutch version. The correctness of the paraphrases of the Dutch items was evaluated on the basis of the degree to which they corresponded to the definitions in the Dutch dictionary Van Dale *et al.* (1999), where these were available, or to our own paraphrases. A paraphrase could be ‘completely correct’, ‘completely wrong’, but also ‘partly correct/wrong’. If an item consisted of more than one word, we evaluated the correctness of the paraphrase of the item as a whole. If a respondent’s paraphrase consisted of a number of alternative paraphrases which included a correct one, the paraphrase was judged to be completely correct. One of the cases in which a paraphrase was considered to be ‘partly correct/wrong’ was when it used the same term that was used in the item that was to be paraphrased, and added little or no additional information. We determined respondents’ actual ability to paraphrase the meaning of the items correctly by counting the number of completely correct paraphrases.

Interrater reliability for the evaluation of the correctness of the paraphrases was determined by having two independent judges (the first and third author of the present article) evaluate the correctness of the paraphrases of each of the eight Dutch items in the completely Dutch job advertisement and of each of the eight English items in the partly English job ad. We found percentages of agreement ranging from 55% to 93%, with a mean of 78%. We found kappas ranging from .37 (qualification: fair) to .68 (substantial), with a mean kappa of .56 (moderate).

3. Results

One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test whether the three versions of the job advertisement differed with respect to the dependent variables. The results are displayed in Table 2. As for *text evaluation*, no statistically significant differences were found between the scores of the three versions on attractiveness and intelligibility. However, the respondents in the three groups assessed the naturalness of the ad differently. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests revealed that the completely English version was considered more natural than the other two versions. There were no statistically significant differences between the three versions with regard to the respondents’ *attitudes towards the organization and the job offered*.

Table 2. Results of ANOVAs testing the effect of the use of English on text evaluation, on attitudes towards the organization and the job, and on comprehension in three versions of the job ad

Variable	Version	M	SD	F df = 2, 87	η	Post-hoc differences
<i>Text evaluation:</i>						
Intelligibility	1	4.46	0.71	0.40 ^{ns}	.10	
	2	4.61	0.90			
	3	4.64	0.94			
Attractiveness	1	3.89	0.95	0.88 ^{ns}	.14	
	2	4.12	0.93			
	3	3.83	0.86			
Naturalness of the ad	1	4.37	1.19	8.61 ^{***}	.41	1 vs. 2 1 vs. 3
	2	3.08	1.15			
	3	3.53	1.30			
<i>Attitudes towards the organization and the job:</i>						
Image	1	4.72	0.54	0.22 ^{ns}	.07	
	2	4.78	0.70			
	3	4.85	0.90			
Attitude towards working for the organization ^a	1	4.29	1.22	0.24 ^{ns}	.08	
	2	4.44	1.01			
	3	4.25	1.14			
Attitude towards the position	1	4.76	0.95	1.43 ^{ns}	.18	
	2	4.89	0.74			
	3	5.13	0.88			
Interest in working for the organization	1	3.28	1.64	0.37 ^{ns}	.09	
	2	3.54	1.61			
	3	3.21	1.49			
<i>Comprehension:</i>						
Estimated comprehension	1	5.84	0.80	4.51*	.31	2 vs. 3
	2	5.56	0.84			
	3	6.19	0.79			
Actual comprehension	1	5.03	1.30	5.29**	.33	2 vs. 3
	2	4.67	1.24			
	3	5.67	1.06			

Note. Version: 1 Completely English; 2 Partly English; 3 Completely Dutch.
df = 2, 86. ns = not significant, * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

For all variables, high scores indicate a positive attitude or better comprehension.

As far as *comprehension* is concerned, we found a statistically significant effect of version for both estimated and actual comprehension of Dutch or English items. Bonferroni tests indicated that on average the completely Dutch version scored better than the partly English version on the respondents' own evaluation of their comprehension of the eight manipulated Dutch or English items as well as on the number of correct paraphrases of these items (see Table 2). When we look at individual items, there were two cases where the Dutch version scored significantly higher than the other two versions on estimated comprehension: *hands-on professional* versus *praktijkgerichte deskundige* (tested with Bonferroni) and *assessment* versus *psychologisch onderzoek* (tested with Games-Howell). In the case of *team player* versus *u functioneert goed binnen een groep*, the estimated comprehension of the item in the completely English version was higher than in the completely Dutch version (tested with Games-Howell). When we look at actual comprehension, there were two Dutch items that had a significantly larger number of correct paraphrases than their counterparts in the other two versions: *hands-on professional* versus *praktijkgerichte deskundige* ($\chi^2(2, n = 90) = 13.20, p < .01$); *assessment* versus *psychologisch onderzoek* ($\chi^2(2, n = 90) = 17.72, p < .001$). The two English items were more often left unparaphrased than their Dutch counterparts, and examples of paraphrasing errors included *independent* (*zelfstandig*) for *hands-on* and *treatment* (*behandeling*) for *assessment*.

A Kruskal-Wallis test indicated that there was no significant difference between the estimated gross salary for the three versions ($\chi^2(2) = 1.37, ns$).

4. Conclusion and discussion

We can conclude that there was no overall effect of the use of English on respondents' attitudes towards various aspects of the job advertisement (except for naturalness), the job and the organization, even when the job ad was completely in English. This is in line with Renkema *et al.* (2001), who found no differences in the effect of the use of English as opposed to Dutch terms in partly English and completely Dutch job advertisements on the evaluation of the job ad, the image of the organization and the exclusivity of the position. These findings disprove claims about the prestige and image-enhancing effect of English in advertising in non-English-speaking countries (see Friedrich 2002; Gerritsen *et al.* 2000; Griffin 1997; Haarmann 1989; Takahashi 1990). Contrary to what is claimed (Larson 1990), the use of English did not make the job advertised sound more appealing and challenging, nor did it affect potential candidates' motivation to apply, either positively or negatively, as Heynderickx and Dieltjens (2002) speculate it might do.

Where Renkema *et al.* (2001) found that the use of English was considered to make a partly English job ad less natural than a completely Dutch one, we found that the completely English ad scored best on naturalness. We can only speculate why this should be the case. It may be that the cognitive effort that goes into processing a completely English test makes respondents less critical than they are

about a text which is completely or largely written in their own language. Alternatively, respondents may have taken a different view of the naturalness of the completely English job ad because they did not expect it to adhere to the conventions that apply to Dutch texts and to Dutch job advertisements in particular. Further research along the lines set out in the present article may profitably be combined with psycholinguistic research into the ways speakers of a language process texts that are partly or completely written in another language.

A second conclusion that can be drawn from our study is that respondents' comprehension of English words and phrases in the partly English job ad was worse than their comprehension of their Dutch equivalents, both in terms of their own estimation of how well they understood the items and in terms of their ability to paraphrase the meaning of the items. This is in line with Gerritsen *et al.* (2000), who showed that only 36% of respondents were able to paraphrase correctly the meaning of English words and phrases in Dutch TV commercials, and with Gerritsen (1996), who found that only 51% of respondents were capable of correctly translating completely English job ads for products in Dutch magazines and newspapers.

In contrast to these earlier findings, and contrary to what may be expected, however, there were no statistically significant overall differences in estimated and actual comprehension of the manipulated items between the completely English and the completely Dutch job ad, although the Dutch ad scored better on two individual items. We have no explanation for the fact that the overall differences in comprehension we found were only significant for the partly English and completely Dutch version, and not for the completely English and completely Dutch version. As for estimated comprehension, we can only speculate that the specific English items questioned did not stand out in the fully English context of the completely English job advertisement, whereas they did stand out in the Dutch context of the partly English advertisement, and that it was this difference that made the English items in the completely English ad seem easier.

The findings of the present study apply to highly educated young respondents and may not be generalized to older and less highly educated populations. Renkema *et al.* (2001) found no differences between younger (18- to 22-year-old) and older (45 or older) respondents, but Gerritsen (1996) found that respondents over 45 were more negative about completely English advertisements than were respondents under 25, and that the older respondents made more mistakes in translating English into Dutch. Gerritsen *et al.* (2000) found that younger (15- to 18-year-old) respondents and respondents with a higher level of education had a more positive attitude towards English in Dutch TV commercials and were better at paraphrasing English than older (50- to 57-year-old) respondents and respondents with a lower level of education. We deliberately chose to use only young and highly educated respondents, since they, and not older and less highly educated respondents, were the likely target group for the job advertisement in our experiment.

Our study has a number of limitations. One limitation relates to the way we

tested actual comprehension (based on Gerritsen *et al.* 2000). The question is whether a paraphrase task is a very precise way of testing whether respondents have understood a particular word or phrase. It may well be that they know what it means, but cannot put this into different words. When respondents' paraphrases cover only one aspect or some aspects of the original item, they may still fully understand its meaning. In our case, the difficulty of the task may have been compounded by the fact that some items did not consist of one word, but of combinations of words. In future research, additional methods may be used to measure comprehension, such as Cloze tests and recording reading time (Hans Hoeken and Wilbert Spooren, personal communication).

Another limitation of the present study is that, unlike Renkema *et al.* (2001), we only tested the effects of the use of English in versions of one advertisement. In this one advertisement, the attitudes of the respondents towards the position offered and the organization may have outweighed the effects of the use of English instead of Dutch.

Further research should test the effect of the use of English in job ads aimed at potential applicants belonging to various age groups and with different educational backgrounds, with more than one job ad per target group. It would also be interesting to test the effects of the use of English on potential applicants from other countries where English is not spoken as a first language. If we limit ourselves to the European Union, research on the status of English in general offers a basis for hypothesizing that respondents in the Netherlands have a more positive attitude towards English and that they understand English better than is the case in other countries where English is not the primary language. Eurobarometer data from 2001 indicate that 75% of the Dutch population claims to be able to speak English well enough to take part in a conversation, compared to an average of 32% of the population in EU countries where English is not the mother tongue (European Commission 2001: 83-84). Cross-cultural research of the kind proposed here has obvious relevance for the decisions of organizations in different non-English-speaking countries regarding their use of English when trying to recruit new personnel.

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Appendix

The three versions of the job advertisement used in the experiment

Version 1: The completely English version

Van Breederode isn't a bank like other banks. We believe that banking isn't only about finance, but also about style and personal contact. Van Breederode is a trusted name and has an excellent reputation when it comes to client-oriented banking. Offering high-quality service focusing on advice and personal attention is our core business.

In order to guarantee this high level of quality, we pay particular attention to the wishes of our customers. Our Communication department has a special role in this. For this department we are seeking a

Management trainee with an eye for service

Content

The communication department consists of five communication staff members and looks after both external and internal communication.

At Van Breederode we want to know at all times what matters to our clients. Not only in the area of finance, but also in the area of general service.

Advising Management about these areas is one of the main tasks of the communication department. In addition, the department is responsible for developing external communication means, promoting our organisation, and organising events such as information evenings for our clients. Furthermore, the department ensures that the internal communication flows are streamlined.

As a management trainee you will become familiar with all aspects of our communication.

Requirements

- You are expected to have a relevant academic degree, for instance in Communication or Management Sciences.
- Some experience in the field is an advantage.
- After a period of two to three years as a management trainee, you will be expected to be able to run the communication department independently as a hands-on professional and to be able to motivate your staff.
- You are a team player and you have excellent communicative skills.

Procedure

If you are interested in this position, please telephone Ms. J. Hermans, tel. 024-452978, for an information package.

Application letters should be sent within two weeks after publication of this advertisement to Van Breederode Bankiers, P.O. Box 335, 6500 HC Nijmegen, att. Mr. P. Jacobs. Ref. 5578.

An assessment may be part of the application procedure.

We are an equal opportunities employer.

Version 2: The partly English version

Van Breederode is geen bank als andere banken. Bankieren heeft in onze optiek niet alleen te maken met finance maar ook met stijl en persoonlijk contact. Van Breederode is een vertrouwde naam en onze bank heeft een uitstekende reputatie als het gaat om cliëntgericht bankieren. Kwalitatief hoogwaardige serviceverlening waarin advisering en persoonlijke aandacht centraal staan, is de core business van onze organisatie.

Om dit kwalitatief hoge niveau te kunnen waarborgen, hebben wij bijzondere aandacht voor de wensen van onze klanten. Hierbij is een speciale taak weggelegd voor onze Communicatieafdeling. Voor deze afdeling zijn wij op zoek naar een:

Management trainee m/v met oog voor serviceverlening

Functie-inhoud

De communicatie-afdeling bestaat uit vijf communicatiemedewerkers en draagt zorg voor zowel de externe als de interne communicatie.

We willen bij Van Breederode te allen tijde weten wat er bij onze cliënten speelt. Niet alleen op financieel gebied, maar ook op het gebied van de algemene serviceverlening.

Het adviseren van het Management over deze gebieden is één van de hoofdtaken van de communicatie-afdeling. Daarnaast is de afdeling verantwoordelijk voor de ontwikkeling van externe communicatiemiddelen, de promotie van onze organisatie en het organiseren van evenementen zoals informatieavonden voor onze cliënten. Verder zorgt de afdeling voor het stroomlijnen van de interne communicatiestromen. Als management trainee raakt u vertrouwd met alle aspecten van onze communicatie.

Functie-eisen

- U wordt geacht een relevante academische opleiding te hebben genoten, bijvoorbeeld Communicatie- of Managementwetenschappen.
- Enige ervaring binnen het vakgebied is een pre.
- Na een periode van twee à drie jaar als management trainee wordt u geacht zelfstandig als een hands-on professional de communicatie-afdeling te kunnen aansturen en uw medewerkers te kunnen motiveren.
- U bent een team player en u beschikt over uitstekende communicatieve vaardigheden.

Procedure

Indien u geïnteresseerd bent in deze functie, kunt u telefonisch een informatiepakket opvragen bij Mevrouw J. Hermans, tel. 024-4529788.

Sollicitatiebrieven dienen binnen twee weken na het verschijnen van deze advertentie gestuurd worden naar Van Breederode Bankiers, Postbus 335, 6500 HC Nijmegen, t.n.v. de Heer P. Jacobs. Ref. 5578.

Een assessment kan onderdeel uitmaken van de sollicitatieprocedure.

Version 3: The completely Dutch version

Van Breederode is geen bank als andere banken. Bankieren heeft in onze optiek niet alleen te maken met financiën maar ook met stijl en persoonlijk contact. Van Breederode is een vertrouwde naam en onze bank heeft een uitstekende reputatie als het gaat om cliëntgericht bankieren. Kwalitatief hoogwaardige dienstverlening waarin advisering en persoonlijke aandacht centraal staan, is de kernactiviteit van onze organisatie.

Om dit kwalitatief hoge niveau te kunnen waarborgen, hebben wij bijzondere aandacht voor de wensen van onze klanten. Hierbij is een speciale taak weggelegd voor onze Communicatieafdeling. Voor deze afdeling zijn wij op zoek naar een:

Leidinggevende in opleiding m/v met oog voor dienstverlening

Functie-inhoud

De Communicatieafdeling bestaat uit vijf communicatiemedewerkers en draagt zorg voor zowel de externe als de interne communicatie.

We willen bij Van Breederode te allen tijde weten wat er bij onze cliënten speelt. Niet alleen op financieel gebied, maar ook op het gebied van de algemene dienstverlening.

Het adviseren van de directie over deze gebieden is één van de hoofdtaken van de

Communicatieafdeling. Daarnaast is de afdeling verantwoordelijk voor de ontwikkeling van externe communicatiemiddelen, de promotie van onze organisatie en het organiseren van evenementen zoals informatieavonden voor onze cliënten. Verder zorgt de afdeling voor het stroomlijnen van de interne communicatiestromen.

Als leidinggevende in opleiding raakt u vertrouwd met alle aspecten van onze communicatie.

Functie-eisen

- U wordt geacht een relevante academische opleiding te hebben genoten, bijvoorbeeld Communicatie- of Managementwetenschappen.
- Enige ervaring binnen het vakgebied is een pre.
- Na een periode van twee à drie jaar als leidinggevende in opleiding wordt u geacht zelfstandig als een praktijkgerichte deskundige de communicatieafdeling te kunnen aansturen en uw medewerkers te kunnen motiveren.
- U functioneert goed binnen een groep en u beschikt over uitstekende communicatieve vaardigheden.

Procedure

Indien u geïnteresseerd bent in deze functie, kunt u telefonisch een informatiepakket opvragen bij Mevrouw J. Hermans, tel. 024-4529788.

Sollicitatiebrieven dienen binnen twee weken na het verschijnen van deze advertentie gestuurd worden naar Van Breederode Bankiers, Postbus 335, 6500 HC Nijmegen, t.n.v. de Heer P. Jacobs. Ref. 5578.

Een psychologisch onderzoek kan onderdeel uitmaken van de sollicitatieprocedure.