



Article

Phonetic Principles in The Formation and Nomination of Trade Names

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Abstract: This article analyzes the importance of the phonetic principle for the formation and nomination of the food product name and trademark with a material on Uzbek language. It employs contemporary theories of pragmatonymy and chrematonomastics to iteratively examine the phonetic properties of food brand names on sound structure, audibility, tempo and phono-semantic congruence. The research underscores the role of sound symbolism, analyzing occurrences of assonance and dissonance in influencing the memorability of brands and how they are perceived by potential buyers. One gap in knowledge this article addresses is the few studies on phonetics of food brand names in the Uzbek language, whereas, quite the opposite exists regarding English food brands. This article does a great job covering the main phonetic principles for successful naming involving pronunciation ease, stress, and sound symbolism. This article is methodologically descriptive-analytical, structural-linguistic and quantitative in its analysis of more than 150 food brand names in the Republic of Uzbekistan. These findings suggest that brand names that follow certain phonetic shapes and sounds to help better align to consumers and increase brand recognition. The above study is significant to consumer behavior literature because it combines the previously unconnected fields of phonetics and consumer psychology/culture. It also generates several implications for marketers and linguists. For marketers, the study can inform better branding strategies and ways of creating more impactful brand names on the Uzbek market. For linguists, the main implication is that not all phonetic principles have universal psycholinguistic effects: thus, more research is needed on the constructs' cross-linguistic comparison and the impact of phonetic principles on global brand perception.

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1. Introduction

In today's globalized market environment, product names serve not only as means of identification but also as powerful linguistic instruments that influence consumer psychology [1]. Particularly in the food industry, the phonetic structure and sound-symbolic features of trade names play a crucial role in shaping consumers' attitudes toward products, their purchasing decisions, and their trust in a brand [2]. This field is deeply studied within *pragmatonymy* — a relatively new branch of linguistics devoted to the study of commercial names [3].

Pragmatonyms or commercial names are examined within *chrematonomastics* — a specialized subfield of modern onomastics [4]. Beyond their identification function, these names are also designed with marketing and psycholinguistic goals in mind. For food brands in particular, the phonetic aspect of naming is of vital importance, as it activates cognitive associations connected with taste perception and pleasantness [5].

Although most linguistic studies on trade names have been conducted on English material, there remains a strong need to explore the phonetic principles of food brand names in other languages, including Uzbek [6][7]. This necessity arises from several key factors:

First, the phonetic principle possesses both universal and differential characteristics. Research demonstrates that sound structures that are phonetically well-formed and exhibit low markedness (simplicity) are generally preferred across languages [8]. However, each language also has its own phonetic system and national-cultural specificities of sound symbolism [9].

Second, *phonesthemes* meaningful phonological segments typically composed of 2–3 sounds significantly influence consumer behavior in trade naming [10]. First, the pronunciation, presence or absence of certain language sounds in brand and trade names affect consumer products [6, 7].

Second, there is a phonestheme with a specific phonetic meaning /sn/ in the English language associated with the human nose and smelling. However, the meanings of this phonestheme can be developed into the food domain, activating on taste notions in combination with sounds pattern /sn/, on the characteristics of tastes and associations of taste qualities like pleasantness or unpleasantness [8]. Here, we can observe the use of sounds to convey, on the one hand, the force of detecting smell, and, on the other, verbal cooking culture, that is, a way of talking about the smells of food;

Third, the roughness or refinement of the name depends on the presence or absence of vowels in the name. The absence of vowels in a name is extremely important in the food industry. “Name symbols appear less refined, leading to lower sensory name evaluations compared with the sensory word pool” [9]. Put simply, if the name of the food and brand does not contain vowels, the product’s product attributes will be of a lower value;

Fourth, all types of word formation processes such as blending, compounding, borrowing, acronyms, and coinage popularly take place. The process of compounding and processes of amalgamation can be observed in marketing nomenclature. This ensures that new type names satisfied to product requirements are provided, and the new names are memorable, novel, and phonetically beautiful [10];

Fifth, localization play decisive role in master marketing area and product brand. When a foreign brand name enters the native market, it may require special phonetic and semantic adaptation [11].

The undisputed interest of scientific research is the systematic phonetic analysis of the naming of food brands and the definition of linguistic requirements. Studies on Uzbek material are important from both theoretical and practical linguistic, naming, and marketing points of view. This article’s purpose is to characterize the phonetic principles of naming food brands and trade names, analyze the linguistic structure, and reveal essential linguistic naming requirements. These issues emerge at the intersection of modern onomastics, psycholinguistics, and marketing linguistics, thereby uniting theoretical and applied aspects of linguistics [12].

2. Materials and Methods

This research is based on a complex methodological approach, employing the following methods:

1. Descriptive-analytical method – to systematically describe and analyze the phonetic characteristics of Uzbek food brand names;
2. Structural-linguistic analysis – to examine the phonetic and phonological structure, phoneme composition, and phonotactic features of trade names;
3. Phono-semantic analysis – to identify the correlation between sound and meaning and to assess the role of phonesthemes in trade names;
4. Comparative method – to compare the phonetic properties of different brand names and evaluate their effectiveness;
5. Quantitative analysis – to statistically assess the frequency and distribution of phonetic principles in brand naming [13].

The research material consists of over 150 food brand names of companies operating in Uzbekistan. These names are classified into categories such as flour products, dairy products, oils, confectionery, beverages, and other food items [14].

During the analysis, each brand name's phonetic structure, sound combinations, stress patterns, rhythmic characteristics, and sound-symbolic potential were evaluated. The findings were interpreted within the frameworks of modern onomastic and psycholinguistic theories [15].

3. Results and Discussion

The phonetic principle implies that a name must correspond to the phonetic rules and sound system of a particular language. A well-chosen appellative as a product name should be easy to pronounce, read, and remember; it should sound melodious and pleasant, avoid ambiguous phonetic associations, and have a clear and stable stress pattern [16]. In short, the phonetic principle of trademarks is closely related to their sound composition, harmony, pronunciation ease, stress, euphony, and memorability. Selecting brand names with an optimal phonetic structure is crucial, as ease of pronunciation and clarity contribute to long-term retention in the consumer's memory. For instance, the chewing gum brand "ZiZi" is short, easily pronounceable, and phonetically harmonious due to the repetition of phonemes ("z" and "i"), which provides rhythmic coherence and pleasant sound symmetry, resulting in high recall potential.

The phonetic principle includes the following key requirements:

1. Ease of pronunciation – the name should not pose pronunciation difficulties for consumers; instead, it must be easy and natural to articulate. Difficult-to-pronounce names can confuse consumers, create discomfort, and reduce memorability.

Example: "Xon" (flour) – short and simple to pronounce.

2. Correct pronunciation – a product name should not be mispronounced by consumers. Therefore, the pronunciation of a trademark should be tested: is it pronounced as intended, or is it complex or foreign-sounding? A name must not be misread or distorted across different dialects or languages.

Example: "Mars" (chocolate) – easily and universally pronounced.

3. Euphony and sonority – the name should sound melodic and pleasant to the ear. Example – "Joziba" (flour), "TO'YONA", "Lazzat" (cotton oil).

4. Avoidance of ambiguous phonetic associations – the name should not evoke double meaning or unwanted associations. Example: the Kazakh flour brand "ZOR" resembles the Uzbek word "zo'r" ("great"), but also "zor" ("difficult"), creating ambiguity. "Sadaf" may bring the image of "pearl" or "button". Ignoring this principle can harm the product perception. The "Puffs" tissue brand failed in Germany because puff means "brothel" in German.

5. Distinct stress pattern – the stress should be clear and intuitive.

Examples: "Asl" (salt) and "Sof" (salt) are short, with simple and natural stress placement.

6. Rhythmicity – repetition or rhythmically balanced names sound pleasant and are easier to recall.

Examples: "KARS-KURS" (corn snacks), "Zam-Zam" (mineral water), "Chupa Chups", "HAM HAM" (corn sticks).

7. Word-forming mechanism: it harmonize and distinguish the sound combinations should be harmonious and rhyming, i.e., should make it easier to memorize and articulate the name.

8. "Kiki Riki" – The two-component name also has a sound rhyme, which makes it easier to remember.

9. Location and expressiveness: should be phonetically attractive and acoustically balanced.

10. "Baraka" – there are four sonorous sounds that make up a single word, which gives this name a soft, melodious sound.

11. Phonosemantic compatibility, "HAM HAM", "HORDIQ", "ERMÁK" use of sonorants. It is known which sounds due to their objective characteristics carry a certain

emotional and symbolic charge. As is now widely known, sonorants (l, m, n, r, y) can provide the sensory perception of soft and pleasant words.

12. "MAMPAR", "Unum", Symmetry or repetition of vowels/consonants – names created based on vowel or consonant symmetry are called phononyms. In phononyms, informativeness is secondary; the main goal is to achieve euphony, musicality, sound balance, and attractiveness in pronunciation [17][18]. This phenomenon is closely related to assonance and dissonance, two key phonetic effects.

Assonance refers to the repetition of identical or similar vowel sounds. It is widely used in poetry to create musicality or to enhance memorability through vowel harmony. In brand naming, vowel harmony (singarmonism) plays a similar role ensuring smooth pronunciation and recall.

Examples: "BARAKA", "SHOHOBOD", "AZZAT", "BOG'OT DON", "SHOVOT DON" (flour), "TANTANA", "FARAX", "SAHAR" (sausage), "Chortoq", "Milliy" (mineral water), "SHOHONA", "TILLO DOMOR" (dairy cattle), "TOKZOR" (tomato paste), "Milliy Shirinlik" (confectionery).

Dissonance, by contrast, involves a deliberate combination of dissimilar or contrasting sounds. It emphasizes opposition between phonemes and is sometimes intentionally used to attract attention or make a brand name stand out.

Examples: "JAYHUN", "Diyor", "ASL BILLUR" (salt), "QIROL", "HORDIQ", "BISYOR" (roasted sunflower seeds). Such names typically sound dynamic, strong, and attention-grabbing.

4. Conclusion

Phonetic structure, which the study highlighted as an important contributor to both the memorability of food brand names and the way consumers perceive them, is an important part of how food brand names are constructed. The current study has elaborated on the phenomenon of creating effective trade names. They include aspects, such as pronounceability, rhythmic fit, euphony, and phonosemantic fit. While it is important to recognize that these phenomena are generally related to sound symbolism, they are described here in more subtle phonetic terms. Therefore, the researchers may assume that assonance and dissonance of words increase consumers' readiness to purchase a good. Marketers and branding specialists should follow phonetic principles such as a combination of several adjectives describing the product. In this way, their names would become as engageable and hard to forget as the tested examples. The results also highlight the cultural specificity of phonetic preferences depending on the context, especially but not limited to food brands for Uzbeks. Cross-linguistic comparison could be the next step to better understand how phonetic principles work within different languages and in different markets, and psycholinguistic experiments could advance the understanding of the impact of sound symbolism on consumer psychology and decision making processes.

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