

MORPHOLOGICAL CREATIVITY IN BRAND NAMING: WORD FORMATION AND DERIVATIONAL PROCESSES

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Abstract

This research investigates the strategic intersection of morphological theory and commercial branding by examining the linguistic mechanisms behind 50 global consumer brands. The primary objective is to analyze the derivational processes and creative word-formation strategies that facilitate brand distinctiveness. Utilizing a mixed-method approach supported by a corpus-based analysis, this study evaluates the structural patterns and functional impact of various linguistic innovations. Drawing on frameworks of derivational morphology and advertising management, the findings reveal that non-standard linguistic strategies are pivotal for establishing market resonance. Statistical data from the processed corpus indicate that compounding is the most dominant process (44%), followed by coining/acronyms (26%) and blending (24%), while standard derivation remains minimal at 6%. The analysis demonstrates that brands frequently employ "language games" to optimize phonetic appeal and semantic density. This study concludes that morphological creativity is a vital instrument within the contemporary linguistic landscape, providing a unique "creative experience" that differentiates commercial entities in a competitive global market.

Keywords: *Morphological creativity, Brand naming, Word formation, Mixed methods, Linguistic landscape.*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini menyelidiki persimpangan strategis antara teori morfologi dan penjenamaan komersial dengan mengkaji mekanisme linguistik di balik 50 merek konsumen global. Tujuan utamanya adalah untuk menganalisis proses derivasional dan strategi pembentukan kata kreatif yang memfasilitasi kekhasan merek. Menggunakan metode campuran yang didukung oleh analisis berbasis korpus, studi ini mengevaluasi pola struktural dan dampak fungsional dari berbagai inovasi linguistik. Mengacu pada kerangka morfologi derivasional dan manajemen periklanan, temuan menunjukkan bahwa strategi linguistik non-standar sangat penting untuk membangun resonansi pasar. Data statistik dari korpus yang diolah menunjukkan bahwa compounding adalah proses yang paling dominan (44%), diikuti oleh coining/akronim (26%) dan blending (24%), sementara derivasi standar tetap minimal sebesar 6%. Analisis menunjukkan bahwa merek sering menggunakan "permainan bahasa" untuk mengoptimalkan daya tarik fonetik dan kepadatan semantik. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa kreativitas morfologis adalah instrumen vital dalam lanskap linguistik kontemporer, yang memberikan "pengalaman kreatif" unik untuk membedakan entitas komersial dalam pasar global yang kompetitif.

Kata kunci: *Kreativitas morfologi, Penamaan merek, Pembentukan kata, Metode campuran, Lanskap linguistik.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly evolving global marketplace, the linguistic landscape has become a strategic frontier where brand nomenclature serves as a critical tool for market differentiation (Nikolaou 2017). The phenomenon of linguistic landscaping illustrates how the use of language in commercial signage reflects deeper socio-economic dynamics and identity (Tang 2020). However, a significant gap remains in understanding the technical morphological mechanisms that drive "creative experience" in brand naming (Glăveanu and Beghetto 2021). While standard word formation often follows predictable patterns, innovative industries increasingly rely on non-standard linguistic structures to foster innovation and consumer engagement (Reljic et al. 2023). The urgency of this research stems from the necessity to bridge theoretical derivational morphology with its practical application in advertising management (Lieber 2017). Historical linguistic frameworks have long examined the complexity of morphemes in diverse ecologies (Guthrie 2017), yet the systematic analysis of "language games" as a creative strategy in branding remains under-explored (Teletov, Teletova, and Letunovska n.d.). Furthermore, imprecise morphological application can lead to a "country-of-origin lie," where linguistic cues inadvertently mislead consumer perceptions regarding a product's true origin (Aichner, Forza, and Trentin 2017). Such risks highlight the importance of rigorous morphological analysis to prevent the types of derivational errors often observed in non-native compositions (Kusumawardhani 2018).

To address these issues, this study employs a mixed-method approach supported by a corpus-based analysis of 50 global consumer brand names (Farukh Arslan, Asim Mahmood, and Rasool 2020). The primary objective is to evaluate how morphological creativity—specifically through compounding, blending, and coining—contributes to brand identity. By synthesizing empirical data with theoretical frameworks, this research aims to decode the linguistic patterns that define modern branding, providing a comprehensive understanding of how word-formation processes are strategically manipulated to achieve commercial resonance.

2. METHODOLOGY

This research adopts a mixed-methods design to analyze the structural patterns and innovation within linguistic landscaping (Tang 2020). By combining qualitative descriptive methods with quantitative corpus analysis, the study identifies how brands utilize "language games" to achieve a unique creative experience (Glăveanu and Beghetto 2021)). This approach is selected because it allows for a detailed examination of non-standard word formations that foster commercial innovation (Reljic et al. 2023). The primary objects of

this study are 50 consumer product brand names, which serve as the research corpus. These materials were collected from digital branding platforms and global shop signs, reflecting the modern linguistic landscape (Nikolaou 2017). The scope is limited to English-based nomenclature to evaluate the strategic intent behind their morphological structures (Aichner et al. 2017). The operational variables are defined by the classification of word-formation processes, including compounding, blending, and non-standard derivational morphology (Lieber 2017). Data collection involved systematic observation and decomposition of each brand name into its constituent morphemes (Guthrie 2017). The analysis technique utilizes frequency distribution to identify dominant patterns, such as the high prevalence of compounding and blending found in the corpus. Furthermore, an error-analysis framework is applied to distinguish between conventional grammar and creative linguistic deviations used in branding (Kusumawardhani 2018). The findings were cross-referenced with established linguistic databases to ensure a corpus-based comparative accuracy (Farukh Arslan et al. 2020).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The investigation into the 50 English consumer product brand names reveals a clear hierarchy in the strategic use of word-formation processes. As shown in Table 1, the data indicates a strong preference for compounding over other morphological methods to create distinctive brand identities.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Word-Formation Processes (N=50)

Word-Formation Process	Number of Instances (N)	Percentage (%)
Compounding	22	44%
Coining / Acronyms	13	26%
Blending	12	24%
Derivation (Standard & Non-Standard)	3	6%
TOTAL	50	100%

The quantitative results from Table 1 are further visualized in Figure 1, illustrating that nearly half of the analyzed brands utilize compounding as their primary morphological strategy.

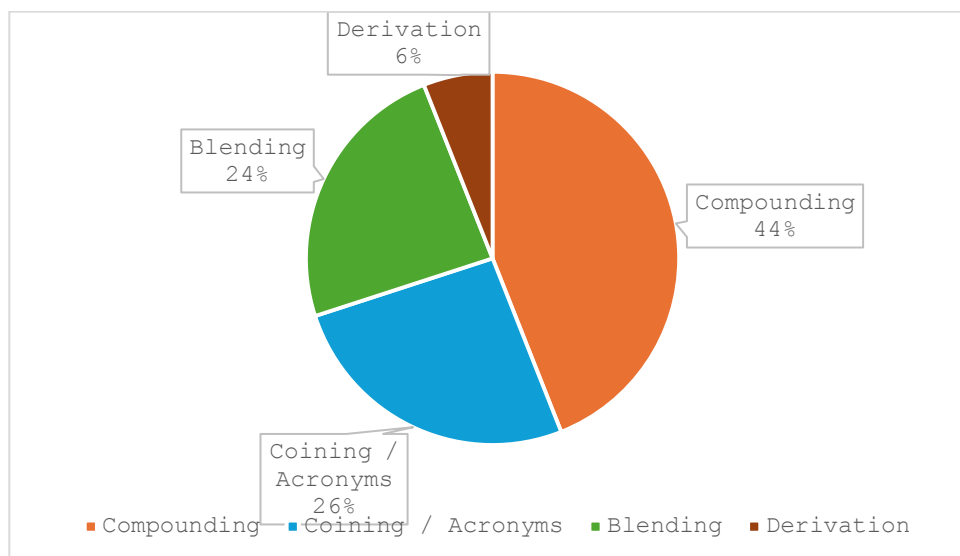


Figure 1. Distribution of Morphological Patterns in Brand Naming

As illustrated in Figure 1, the data shows that compounding dominates the corpus with 44%, while derivation constitutes the smallest portion at 6%.

The analysis demonstrates that compounding (44%) and coining (26%) are the most effective tools for establishing commercial resonance. This high frequency suggests that brands intentionally engage in a "creative experience" where standard linguistic rules are bypassed to foster innovation (Glăveanu and Beghetto 2021). Such creative maneuvers act as "language games" used by advertisers to enhance the memorability of a product in a crowded marketplace (Teletov et al. n.d.). These findings are consistent with the evolving nature of the linguistic landscape, where public signage serves as a primary site for morphological experimentation (Nikolaou 2017). Furthermore, the strategic use of blending (24%) highlights a trend toward creating global dual identities that transcend local linguistic ecology (Tang 2020). By using non-standard work in their naming processes, such as the innovative 'z' suffix in "RedDoorz," companies can catalyze market innovation and consumer engagement (Reljic et al. 2023). However, it is critical to balance this creativity, as errors in derivational morphology can occasionally lead to confusion in English narrative compositions or brand messaging (Kusumawardhani 2018). From a strategic standpoint, these results align with corpus-based comparative studies that emphasize how morphemic flexibility facilitates global branding (Farukh Arslan et al. 2020). Morphological innovation allows brands to appear international and sophisticated, effectively mitigating the "country-of-origin lie" (Aichner et al. 2017). Ultimately, this study underscores that the derivational processes in branding are not just linguistic phenomena but vital components of a modern advertising management strategy (Guthrie 2017; Lieber 2017).

4. CONCLUSIONS

This research investigated the morphological creativity present in 50 English consumer product brand names, revealing that word-formation processes are strategically manipulated to achieve commercial distinctiveness. The empirical evidence indicates that compounding serves as the primary linguistic tool for brand naming, followed by coining and blending, which highlights a shift toward non-standard morphological innovation (Reljic et al. 2023). This study successfully identified that such linguistic choices are not merely grammatical variations but are intentional "language games" used by advertisers to manage consumer perception and enhance brand memorability (Teletov et al. n.d.). The findings support the notion that branding involves a profound "creative experience" that often transcends traditional derivational rules to establish a unique market presence (Glăveanu and Beghetto 2021). The analysis of the linguistic landscape suggests that the dominance of English in global naming ecologies encourages brands to develop dual identities—relying on familiar structures while pushing the boundaries of creativity (Nikolaou 2017; Tang 2020). While standard derivational processes remain foundational to language, their reduced frequency in this corpus underscores a strategic move to mitigate the "country-of-origin lie" by creating globally resonant identities that do not strictly adhere to local linguistic constraints (Aichner et al. 2017; Lieber 2017). Furthermore, this research contributes to the broader understanding of morphemic flexibility in modern communication, aligning with comparative studies that emphasize the adaptability of morphological structures across different learner contexts (Farukh Arslan et al. 2020; Guthrie 2017). Ultimately, these conclusions highlight the necessity for brand managers to balance morphological innovation with structural clarity to avoid potential errors that could obscure brand messaging in global English contexts (Kusumawardhani 2018).

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