A Linguistic Study of Brand Names of Oral Care Products in Thailand
การศึกษาเชิงภาษาศาสตร์ของชื่อแบรนด์ผลิตภัณฑ์ดูแลช่องปากในประเทศไทย

Sirawit Nimkanjana

สิรวิชญ์ นิ่มกาญจนา

Saranya Jamnongrak

ศรัณยา จำนงรักษ์

Athita Binlateh

อธิตา บินล่าเต๊ะ

Wanwisa Hattapot

วันวิสาข์ หัฐพจน์

Kongphob Sukpon

ก้องภพ สุขผล

Pairote Bennui

ไพโรจน์ เบ็ญนุ้ย

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Thaksin University, Songkhla

คณะมนุษยศาสตร์และสังคมศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยทักษิณ สงขลา

Abstract

Linguistics plays a crucial role in brand names of products to persuade consumers. Oral care products which are necessary items of humans' health worldwide seem to have English brand names because of the language of modernization and marketing. This qualitative and quantitative research thus studies the way brand names of domestic and imported oral care products in Thailand are linguistically formed. It aims to analyze word formation strategies and semantic characteristics in the brand names of domestic and imported oral care products in the country. A total of 62 brands were morphologically examined using Yule's (2010) theory and were semantically investigated using Leech's (1981) work. The results showed that the oral care products are branded with different word formation processes – coinage, borrowing, compounding, blending, conversion, derivation (affixation), and multiple processes. Moreover,

their brand names are outstanding as they have affective, social, conceptual, connotative, reflective, collocative, and thematic meanings. Overall, this study contributes to an understanding of linguistic elements and conveys the brand's image and values presented in the oral care products in Thailand. This will also enrich the prominence of English in branding in the oral care industry.

Keywords: word formation, semantic analysis, linguistics, oral care products, brand names

บทคัดย่อ

ภาษาศาสตร์มีบทบาทสำคัญในการตั้งชื่อแบรนด์ผลิตภัณฑ์ต่าง ๆ เพื่อดึงดูดใจผู้บริโภค ผลิตภัณฑ์ดูแลช่องปากซึ่งเป็นสิ่งจำเป็นของคนทั่วโลกมีชื่อแบรนด์เป็นภาษาอังกฤษ เพราะเป็นภาษาที่ทันสมัยและเป็นภาษาของการตลาดโลก ดังนั้นงานวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพและปริมาณเรื่องนี้มุ่งศึกษาวิธีการทางภาษาศาสตร์ที่ใช้ในการสร้างชื่อแบรนด์ของผลิตภัณฑ์ดูแลช่องปากในประเทศไทย การวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อวิเคราะห์กลยุทธ์การสร้างคำและลักษณะทางความหมายในชื่อแบรนด์ของผลิตภัณฑ์ดูแลช่องปาก ทั้งที่มีการขายในประเทศและนำเข้าจากต่างประเทศ การศึกษาครอบคลุมแบรนด์ทั้งหมด 62 แบรนด์ โดยการใช้ทฤษฎีของ Yule (2010) เพื่อตรวจสอบกลยุทธ์การสร้างคำในชื่อแบรนด์ และใช้ทฤษฎีของ Leech (1981) ในการวิเคราะห์แง่มุมทางอรรถศาสตร์ ผลการวิจัยแสดงให้เห็นว่าผลิตภัณฑ์ดูแลช่องปาก 62 แบรนด์มีการสร้างชื่อแบรนด์ด้วยกลยุทธ์การสร้างคำที่หลากหลายคือ การสร้างคำใหม่ การยืมคำ การประสมคำ การผสมคำ การแปลงคำ การเติมคำ และกระบวนการเชิงซ้อน นอกจากนี้ ชื่อแบรนด์เหล่านี้มีความโดดเด่นเนื่องจากมีความหมายทางอารมณ์ ความหมายทางสังคม ความหมายชิงแนวคิด ความหมายเชิงนัยยะ ความหมายเชิงสะท้อน ความหมายร่วม และความหมายเชิงแก่นสาร โดยภาพรวมการศึกษานี้ส่งเสริมความเข้าใจองค์ประกอบทางภาษาศาสตร์และการสื่อภาพลักษณ์และคุณค่าของชื่อแบรนด์ของผลิตภัณฑ์ดูแลช่องปากในประเทศไทย ตลอดจนช่วยเพิ่มความสำคัญของภาษาอังกฤษในการสร้างชื่อแบรนด์ในอุตสาหกรรมผลิตภัณฑ์ดูแลช่องปาก

คำสำคัญ: กลยุทธ์การสร้างคำ การวิเคราะห์ความหมาย ภาษาศาสตร์ ผลิตภัณฑ์ดูแลช่องปาก ชื่อแบรนด์

Introduction

Teeth function as chewing, aiding speech, enhancing appearance, and the first barrier against food. Maintaining oral health is crucial as damaged teeth can affect overall well-being. Regular brushing, using tools for cleaning interdental spaces, and visiting a dentist every six months are necessary practices for good oral hygiene (Siriraj Piyamaharajkarun Hospital, 2023).

Indeed, individual people can deal with their oral hygiene by using toothbrushes, toothpaste, mouthwashes, and dental flosses, among others. These products seem to be available worldwide. In a certain country, a number of oral care products are locally produced to suit local consumers' wants. In the meantime, several products with famous brands are imported into particular countries. Oral care products in both national and international brands represent choices for the consumers. Thus, it is important for oral care entrepreneurs to create their own brands for the local and global marketing.

Likewise, in Thailand, oral care brands appear in toothpastes, toothbrushes, and mouthwashes. Thai people can have many options to buy them. For example, Amornchai (2007) states that Thai teenagers in Ubon Ratchathani province seem to consider the brand names and prices of toothpastes rather than their quality; brand names of oral care products imply a key factor for some Thai consumers. The oral care market in Thailand is growing. In the mouthwash category, the brand 'Listerine' stands out as the top-selling brand, with a 130-year history (Ayosiri, 2024). Further, 'Medent' frequently appears in reviews for herbal toothpaste, recognized for its effectiveness in controlling undesirable breath (Medent Thailand, 2022). This shows how brand reputation shapes consumer preferences. Those brands are thus formed in English, the language of modernity, resulting in their popularity among Thai consumers.

A unique brand provides a competitive edge and helps retain customers. This seems to depend on language use of branding. The term 'brand' is a name or symbol that identifies and distinguishes a product or service (Barbara, 2006). It is noted that linguistic elements of the English language formed in brand names of oral care products are the prominent factor to enhance the outstanding quality. This can be evident in what Siripipatthanakul and Sixl-Daniell (2021) found that 'branding' image communicated to the customers is one of the factors why the Colgate brand of an oral care product in Thailand succeeded in marketing. Although this study does not directly convey linguistic features which can affect the branding strategy, it can be implied that contents and communication in this oral care brand can enrich the product's quality. From this instance, the importance of contents and communication is realized by the Colgate brand marketizer, leading to its achievement. This seems to show that the notions of 'content' and 'communication' can be related to linguistic and communicative

strategies which are raised in the present study. It is possible that branding in oral care products in Thailand can represent linguistic and communicative strategies. Through those notions, brand names seem to embody specific contents or 'semantic features' communicated in their morphological creation, namely 'word formation'. Thus, word formation strategies and semantic characteristics of oral care products' brand names should present linguistic distinctiveness which can attract customers.

However, research studies in oral care products in Thailand seem to focus on dental health such as those of Vilaseth et al. (2007), and Areemit and Sripanichkulchai (2019), among others. Meanwhile, linguistic studies in brand names or product names in Thailand do not pay attention to oral care products, but others such as Thai economic news (Lertcheva & Aroonmanakun, 2011), top Thai exports (Children's clothes, mobile phones, and instant noodle) (Saithong, 2013), and Thai food (Low, 2023).

Therefore, there is a need to conduct this study. It aims to analyze morphological and semantic features of oral care brand names in English in Thailand. This study is significant in that it will provide a better understanding toward linguistic structure of oral care products' brand names and will fulfill linguistic scholarship used in branding strategies of the local and global market of oral care products.

Review of Literature

Literature review covers previous studies and theories. They are reviewed subsequently.

Previous studies

It is found that previous studies with regard to linguistic features of brand names of oral care products are very rare. There appear to be some relevant studies, however. First of all, Syaputri et al. (2023) studied snack brand names from Alfamart and Indomaret in Indonesia by exploring six-word formation processes. It showed that compounding is the most prevalent strategy. In addition, Kwon (2010), investigated the linguistic features of 66 formal wear brand names in Korea with highlighting morphological aspects such as word class and name length. Moreover, Francesco and Vittoria (2017) studied Unilever's brands, focusing on their brand identity and communication strategies. They analyzed how different tactics impact on Italian

consumers and how branding is influenced by linguistic choices. In accordance with Nur et al. (2019), food brand names on Grab and Go-Jek applications were examined with identifying word formation techniques namely 'compounding' and 'borrowing'. The research highlighted the morphological creativity behind popular food brands. Next, Jeremić and Josijević (2019) examined the compounding and blending in baby product brand names. Their analysis of 150 names highlighted particular morphological processes that create memorable and suggestive product names. Furthermore, Emilia (2020) analyzed 40 antidepressant brand names, especially regarding their morphological structures and semantic inspirations. It revealed that many names referred to generic terms and positive imagery, with affixation and clipping which are the most common morphological processes. Besides, Caciciafoco and Lim (2020) conducted a semantic analysis of 50 Singaporean brand names, categorizing them by semantic structure and appositeness. The result revealed that most brand names were nouns, often utilizing local languages and conveying key information about the products. Finally, Rizki and Ferry (2022) analyzed 25 cosmetic brands on the website 'Shopee', by identifying five-word formation processes. The findings showed that brands are formed in borrowing, compounding, blending, acronyms, among others. Overall, these studies are based on a wide range of products, namely food, clothes, drugs, and cosmetics with regard to word formation, semantic elements, and brand identities. Only the study of Francesco and Vittoria (2017) is relevant in that there are oral care products offered in Unilever's brands. However, all the studies collectively illustrate the diverse methodologies and linguistic approaches to understanding brand names across various sectors, emphasizing the significance of morphology and semantics in branding.

Theoretical Framework

Two theoretical frameworks are used in this study. Morphologically, Yule (2010) theorizes 11 word formation processes which consist of the following: (i) etymology which refers to the way words are studied in terms of origin and history and with regard to evolution of new words from old words; (ii) coinage involving the creation of new words from sources, especially regarding products and tradenames; (iii) borrowing concerning the process of adopting words from other languages and the process of loan translation (calque) or a word-by-word translation from other languages; (iv) compounding that combines two words to form a new

single one; (v) blending that involve merging parts of two words to create a new term; (vi) clipping referring to shortening longer words to create more concise forms; (vii) back formation in which a word, especially a noun, is reduced to another type, normally a verb.; (viii) conversion occurring when a word's grammatical function is changed without altering its form; (ix) acronym or abbreviation which is related to the way a new word is formed with the basis of its initial letters – 'acronym' representing more linguistic notion than 'abbreviation' ; (x) derivation that concerns small bits of English called 'affixation' in which prefixes, infixes and suffixes are added to a base word to change its meaning; and (xi) multiple processes involving words which are created with more than one processes.

In line with semantic features, Leech's (1981) work is considered. There are seven types of meaning in utterances as follows: (i) conceptual meaning or 'denotative meaning' with positive and negative senses as seen in the literal dictionary definition of a word such as 'boy' defined as + human , +male, and -adult ; (ii) connotative meaning embodying the emotional or cultural associations that a word carries such as 'woman' previously appearing in its prone to tears and inconstant attributes; (iii) social meaning involving the implications of language in specific social contexts which include 'evaluative' representing positive or negative judgments, 'emotive' reflecting emotional associations based on social contexts, and 'stylistic' indicating the formal or informal registers of language, for stance, slang and colloquial English with socially informal meanings ; (iv) affective meaning that pertains to the emotional implications and associations tied to words such as the use of impolite tone; (v) reflected meaning demonstrating the way language reveals the beliefs and perspectives of the speaker such as taboos; (vi) collocative meaning involving the associations and common combinations of words that typically occur together such as a handsome guy and pretty woman; and (vii) thematic meaning arising from the overall meaning generated by the relationships among words in a phrase – an utterance's meaning depending on active or passive structure because of emphasis.

Methodology

The methodology consists of research design, research design, data sources, language samples, data collection methods, and data analysis used in this study.

In light of research design, this study relies on a method of qualitative research (Bhandari, 2023) and quantitative one. Qualitatively, content analysis was exclusively used to examine morphological and semantic features of brand names of oral care products available in Thailand. Quantitatively, the frequency of each word formation category and semantic feature was also manually identified to provide a comprehensive overview of trends in the data. The study considers the origins of these brand names and how they create the distinctiveness for the companies. Overall, this mixed-research method was used to gain an understanding towards prominent linguistic strategies in the Thai oral care market.

The major data source of particular brand names of oral care products was taken from official websites of the companies in both English and Thai. They demonstrated the name of oral care products sold in Thailand. These websites provide key linguistic data of the selected brand names of the oral care product with a special focus on their four types – toothpastes, toothbrushes, mouthwashes, and dental flosses – which are commonly used by Thai people.

The samples of brand names of oral care products in Thailand were collected using a web-based brand name search method. The selection criteria were given as follows: (i) the product must be available for sale in Thailand; (ii) it must be found in the official and commercial websites; (iii) it can be based on either local brands or imported brands; and (v) it must have only English words used as its brand name.

In line with data collection, there were three steps. Firstly, the researchers needed to understand the meaning of 'oral care'. Secondly, in the first week of July 2024 after the research outline had been approved by the advisor, they had been searching for as many websites as possible by typing the keywords 'Brand names of oral care products in Thailand' through the google website in order to access the official company websites and commercial websites of the products. It was found that there were many brand names and many products. Lastly, the researchers gathered particular brand names by storing the data of each brand with its pictures and linguistic information in the computer files.

In terms of data analysis, the researchers started counting the frequency of the selected brands in order to display their quantitative data. After that, they employed the content analysis to analyze word formation strategies used for the selected brands as well as

to examine their semantic features. In this regard, the theoretical framework of the morphological strategies (Yule, 2010) and semantic types (Leech, 1981) were used to interpret the selected brands. Before the interpretation, the similar word formation strategies and semantic features found in certain brands were classified into the same morphological and semantic categories. To assist the analysis of the results, the researchers read the textual and background information of the websites and other online references regarding the selected brands for understanding their word formation strategies and semantic features. Once the linguistic features of the chosen brands were investigated, they were discussed with the use of the previous studies.

Results and Discussion

There appeared to be 62 brand names of oral care products in Thailand taken for this study. They are shown in the following table.

Table 1: List of oral care products in Thailand

No.	Brand Names	Functional Types of Oral Care products				Website
		Tooth paste	Tooth brush	Mouth wash	Dental Floss	
1	Zact	✓				https://thebeautrium.com/item/zact-stain-fighter-toothpaste-160g/20637
2	Glister	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://www.amway.co.th/glister?srsltid
3	Sparkle	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://sparklethailand.com/accessories/
4	Hydent	✓		✓		https://shopee.co.th/search?keyword=hydent
5	Crest	✓	✓	✓		https://crest.com/en-us
6	Sunstar	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://sunstargum-sea.com/th/product_category/products/
7	Darlie	✓	✓	✓		https://www.darlie.com.hk/en

No.	Brand Names	Functional Types of Oral Care products				Website
		Tooth paste	Tooth brush	Mouth wash	Dental Floss	
8	Veldent	✓				https://veldent.co.th/
9	Dentiste	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://store.boots.co.th/th/brands/5fdb1b82681405762889b480
10	Colgate	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://www.colgate.com/th-th
11	Median	✓	✓	✓		https://www.amoremall.com/kr/ko/display/brand/detail?brandSn=35
12	Sensodyne	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://www.sensodyne-me.com/en_AE/products.html
13	Beyond	✓	✓			https://www.facebook.com/pinsuda888888/
14	Metoo			✓		https://www.metooglobal.com/probiotic-mouthwash-series-en.html
15	Listerine			✓		https://www.watsons.co.th/en/search?text=listerine&currentPage=0
16	Skynlab	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://online.karmarts.com/all-brands/skynlab.html
17	Parodontax	✓				https://www.parodontax.co.th/products/toothpaste/
18	Oralpeach	✓				https://oralpeace.com/en/
19	Moredent	✓				https://moredentthai.com/
20	Superdoc	✓	✓		✓	https://superdocbangkok.com/
21	Medent	✓	✓	✓		https://www.medentthailand.com/product_index.html
22	Oralshark	✓				https://shopee.co.th/Oralshark-

No.	Brand Names	Functional Types of Oral Care products				Website
		Tooth paste	Tooth brush	Mouth wash	Dental Floss	
23	Remild	✓	✓		✓	https://www.lazada.co.th/tag/remild/
24	Dragcura		✓			https://www.eveandboy.com/product/search/
25	Circles		✓			https://www.eveandboy.com/product/search/
26	Fluocaril	✓	✓	✓		https://www.konvy.com/brand/fluocaril/?searchTit=Fluocaril
27	Marvis	✓	✓	✓		https://marvisthailand.com/products/
28	OkHerbal	✓				https://www.watsons.co.th/th/search?text=OK%20Herbal&useDefaultSearch
29	TwinLotus	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://www.dokbuaku.com/th/products
30	Dentamate	✓				https://www.eveandboy.com/product/search/
31	Salz	✓	✓	✓		https://www.lionshoponline.com/all-brand-salz.html?
32	Oral B	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://www.oralb.com.sg/th-th/product-collections
33	Afterdent	✓		✓		https://shopee.co.thAFTERDENT-Cranberry-Deligh
34	Propolinse			✓		https://www.watsons.co.th/th/search?text=propolinse
35	Prodental	✓				https://shopee.co.th/prodental-herbal toothpaste
36	Dedent	✓				https://shopee.co.th/search?keyword=dedent
37	Minedent	✓				https://shopee.co.th/-(Minedent)-
38	Usmile	✓	✓		✓	https://www.usmile.com/electrictoothbrush/newinfo.html?id=14

No.	Brand Names	Functional Types of Oral Care products				Website
		Tooth paste	Tooth brush	Mouth wash	Dental Floss	
39	Lion	✓				https://www.lion.co.jp/en/products/category/oral/9
40	Gosmile	✓	✓			https://www.amazon.com/GoSmile-Luxury-Toothpaste-Mint-Ounce/dp/B01HYCMSS
41	Snake	✓				https://www.snakebrandfamily.com/products-brand-list/Snake-Brand/toothpaste
42	Oralmed	✓				https://shopee.co.thORALMED-PLATINUM
43	Mistine	✓	✓			https://www.lazada.co.th/catalog/?q=mistine%20toothpaste
44	Grant	✓				https://www.eveandboy.com/product/detail/fresh-mint-with-teatree-oil?product
45	Giffarine	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://www.giffarine.com/products?group=8
46	Linko		✓			https://www.eveandboy.com/product/
47	Isme	✓	✓	✓		https://www.isme.co.th/
48	Aquafresh	✓	✓	✓		https://www.aquafresh.com/products.html
49	Biorepair	✓				https://www.lazada.co.th/tag/biorepair/
50	Pepsodent	✓	✓	✓		https://www.pepsodent.in/products.html
51	Oralherb	✓				https://www.lazada.co.th/tag/oral-herb/
52	Dontodent	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://euro2b.com/brand/dontodent/
53	Denticon	✓	✓		✓	https://www.firster.com/brand/denticon
54	Nude	✓				https://gourmetmarketthailand.com/en/nude_liquid_toothpaste

No.	Brand Names	Functional Types of Oral Care products				Website
		Tooth paste	Tooth brush	Mouth wash	Dental Floss	
55	Systema	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://www.lionshoponline.com/systema-01.html
56	Freshmint	✓				https://shorturl.asia/wX2E9/
57	Propolis	✓		✓		https://www.propolizspray.com/product/
58	Reach	✓	✓	✓	✓	https://www.reachoral.com/th/brand/brand.jsp
59	Saltrain	✓	✓			https://www.chyaaa.com/enth/collections/saltrain?
60	Herberry	✓				https://www.herberryshop.com/
61	Jordan	✓				https://www.lazada.co.th/products/jordan-expert-white-
62	Closeup	✓				https://www.lazada.co.th/close-up/

Regarding Table 1, some brand names of oral care products in Thailand could represent more than one functional type. Thus, the number and percentage were calculated according to the product. From the total amount of 62 brands, toothpaste was the most common product, offered by 55 brands with 40.74 %. The second most popular product was toothbrushes, with 34 brands, accounting for 25.19 %. Moreover, mouthwash had 29 brands with 21.48 %. Dental floss, while, was least frequently offered, that is, 17 brands (12.59 %). Overall, the result indicated toothpastes dominate the oral care market while dental floss remains a more specialized product, so toothpastes appear in the most various brands.

Word formation strategies

The following part highlights the findings of this study. It was found that the 62 brand names are constructed with seven morphological strategies – coinage, borrowing, compounding, blending, conversion, derivation (affixation), and multiple processes – according

to the theoretical framework. Their subsequent frequency is displayed as follows: blending (14, 22.58%), borrowing (13, 20.97%), coinage (13, 20.97%), compounding (12, 19.35%), derivation (6, 9.67%), conversion (2, 3.23%), and multiple processes (2, 3.23%). Meanwhile, the other processes – etymology, back-formation, clipping, and acronyms are not found. Each strategy is described below.

A. Blending

There appeared to be 14 brand names which are based on the blending strategy, accounting for 22.58% of the total. This type of blending is categorized based on the omitted morphological elements. Firstly, two brand names are created by omitting the front parts: *Usmile* (from 'you' and 'smile') and *Dontodent* (from 'odontos' and 'dent'). Secondly, four names are produced as the middle parts are omitted: *Propolinse* (from 'propolis' and 'rinse'), *Dentamate* (from 'dental' and 'mate'), *Herberry* (from 'herbal' and 'berry'), and *Pepsodent* (from 'pepsin' and 'dent'). Next, two names are produced when the back parts are omitted: *Skylab* ('sky' and 'laboratory') and *Superdoc* ('super' and 'doctor'). Finally, five names are formed by blending that omits both the middle and final parts of the original words, including *Dragcura* ('dragon' and 'curative'), *Minedent* ('mineral' and 'dental'), *Denticon* ('dental' and 'concept'), *Fluocaril* ('fluoride' and 'caries'), and *Oralmed* ('oral' and 'medical'). Overall, this analysis showcases the creative use of blending techniques in branding, reflecting how different morphological segments of words are combined or omitted to create distinctive names for oral care products.

B. Borrowing

Words borrowed from various languages are found to present the linguistic identity of the products' brands as they involve the adoption of terms that carry inherent meanings contributing to the brand's significance. This strategy is made up of 13 brands accounting for 20.97 percent. There are six foreign languages borrowed into the English brands – Latin, German, French, Greek, Hebrew, and Thai – reflecting a historical and cultural contact with the English language. First of all, six brand names are borrowed from Latin: *Crest, Median, Lion, Nude, Systema*, and *Beyond*. Furthermore, the names *Salz* and *Snake* are loaned from German. Additionally, the brand *Dentiste* is derived from French, meaning 'dentist'. Moreover, *Propolis* is borrowed from Greek which refers to the defender of the city, implying a resin-like

substance produced by bees. Meanwhile, *Jordan* originates from Hebrew, namely *Yarden* which is the name of a river that flows through the Middle East. In this regard, the brands *Propolis* and *Jordan* can also be proper names of places; however, they are not formed innovatively. They are categorized under borrowing because of their outstanding language background that contacts English in which a few people are aware of. Outstandingly, the brands *TwinLotus* and *Closeup* are considered 'loan translation'. They are directly translated from Thai brands – *Dokbua* (Lotus) + *Khoo* (Twin) and *Klai* (Close) + *Chid* (Up). As a whole, these selected foreign brands are based on the lexical borrowing from European, Middle Eastern, and Thai languages.

C. Coinages

Thirteen oral care brand names are created through coinage, accounting for 20.97% of the total. These can be categorized based on their historical background, innovative approaches, market recognition, and regional prominence. First of all, the brands *Darlie, Parodontax, and Marvis* are noted for their historical significance. *Darlie*, originally named *Darkie*, was rebranded in 1989 due to its use of blackface imagery (DeWolf, 2020). Similarly, *Parodontax*, created in Germany in the 1930s, focuses on periodontal care (Parodontax, n.d.) while *Marvis* has evolved from a toothpaste for smokers to a luxury brand. Moreover, *Veldent, Sensodyne, Medent,* and *Listerine* emphasize their therapeutic and scientific innovation. *Veldent* is promoted for 'Dental Wellness', *Sensodyne* is recognized for addressing tooth sensitivity, and *Medent* is coined because of scientific research with natural ingredients. Meanwhile, *Listerine* is known for its germ-killing formula. Further, *Colgate* and *Glister* are recognized for their strong market trust. *Colgate* is considered synonymous with reliable dental care, and *Glister* is created for its natural ingredients. However, *Linko* and *Zact* are noted for their natural and eco-friendly approaches; *Linko* uses sustainable practices and (Ex)*Zact* conveys effective stain removal. Finally, Thai-based brands *Mistine* and *Giffarine* are formed for their strong regional presence. *Mistine* is targeted at young women, and it is based on incorrect spelling from 'Misteen' while *Giffarine* focuses on natural beauty, with its names of the producers' daughters 'Gift' and 'Fa' (Ministry of Science and Technology, Foundation of Science and Technology Council of Thailand (FSTT), 2015). Those names can also be called proper names with creative linguistic forms from the Thai language. Overall, these brands are coined with innovative linguistic elements.

D. Compounding

Twelve brand names were formed through compounding, accounting for 19.35 percent of the total. These are divided into three sub-strategies: compound nouns, compound adjectives, and compound adverbs. Compound nouns had the highest number, comprising 9 brand names and accounting for 75% of the compound forms. Meanwhile, only two brands are constructed in compound adjectives, which accounted for 16.67%, and the least one belonged to compound adverbs, that is, only one brand with 8.33%. In light of compound nouns, they convey different morphological structures. Most of them are patterned by "adjectives + nouns" – *Oralpeach, Moredent, Oralshark, Oralherb,* and *Freshmint*. In this regard, the word 'oral' is outstandingly used for the compounding process because it presents the obvious term that is related to oral care. This adjective +noun construction is considered compounding because their meaning is much innovative for oral health contexts. Further, the pattern of nouns + nouns falls into the brands *Sunstar* and *Saltrain*. Outstandingly, the brand *Gosmile* differs from the others as the verb 'go' is compounded to a noun 'smile. For compound adjectives, the three brands have different morphological elements. The brand *Aquafresh* has an adjective as the base form; however, the adjective is not the base form for the brand *Isme*. In line with compound adverbs, the brand *Metoo* is morphologically invented with the obvious base form of the adverb.

E. Derivation (Affixation)

Six brands of the selected oral care products are formed with affixation – prefixes and suffixes, accounting for 9.6% of the total, but there is no infix found. They are formed with five prefixes (*Hydent, Dedent, Remild, Prodental*, and *Biorepair*) and one suffix (Circles). Outstandingly, the brand *Hydent* shows that the prefix 'Hydro' attached to the noun 'dent' is reduced into 'Hy'. This suits its form of water or moisture, potentially indicating a hydrating or cleansing quality. Meanwhile, the rest provide the remaining prefixes – "de, re, pro, and bio". The only instance of suffixation (the inflectional suffix) '-s' for plurality is attached to the noun 'circle', leading to more than one circle.

F. Conversion

Only two brand names (3.23%) of the selected oral care products are formed with the conversion strategy, illustrating how words shift between grammatical categories without

changing their form. Firstly, the brand *Reach* as a verb 'to verb' is converted into a noun. Likewise, the brand *Grant* which is originally a verb, *to grant*, is functioned as a noun. In summary, these two brands highlight the flexibility of language in branding, facilitating effective communication of meaning through different grammatical forms.

G. Multiple Processes

Two brand names fell into the multiple processes of word formation, accounting for 3.23%. The first is *Oral-B* which is reduced from 'Oral-Brush'. This brand is formed with compounding and clipping. The word 'oral' combines the clipped word 'B' (Brush). Another is the brand *OKHerbal* grounded in the acronym and compounding strategies. The acronym 'OK' or 'orl korrect' in American English (all correct) (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, n.d.) combines the word 'herbal' for this branding.

In summary, blending is regarded as the most commonly used word formation strategy among the selected brands. It is followed by 'borrowing' and 'coinage', which occurred with equal frequency, and then by 'compounding'. In contrast, 'conversion' and 'multiple processes' were the least frequently observed strategies.

Semantic features

Based on the theoretical framework, the brand names of the oral care products conveyed seven semantic features: conceptual, connotative, social, affective, reflective, collocative, and thematic. Their distribution is as follows: conceptual meaning appeared most frequently (21, 33.87%), followed by connotative meaning (16, 25.81%), thematic meaning (10, 16.13%), affective meaning (5, 8.06%), collocative meaning (4, 6.45%), reflective meaning (3, 4.84%), and social meaning (3, 4.84%). Each feature is explained in detail below.

A. Conceptual Meaning

Twenty-one brand names conveyed conceptual meaning, representing 33.87% of the total, and encompassed several themes. In light of innovation and effectiveness, the brand *Zact* conveys precision, *Prodental* emphasizes dental health and professionalism, *Biorepair* focuses on restoring dental health, *OralB* has a strong identity on oral hygiene, *Dedent* provides protection and repair in dental care, and *Minedent* shows an ownership of oral health. In line with natural care, *Hydent* links cleanliness and hydration, *Oralherb* highlights

sustainability, *Medent* prioritizes natural ingredients, *Propolis* evokes strength and natural resilience, and *Saltrain* embodies salt crystals' quality. In terms of family focus, *Median* fosters connections while *Grant* reflects family values. For specialized care, the brand *Parodontax* targets periodontal health, and *Afterdent* emphasizes post-care. Regarding uniqueness, *Salz* stands out for its flavor, and *Dontodent* offers a catchy name. With regard to quality, *Jordan* showcases craftsmanship, and *Systema* underscores comprehensive care. Additionally, the brand *Remild* suggests gentleness while *Moredent* indicates a commitment to enhanced dental quality.

B. Connotative Meaning

Sixteen brand names displayed connotative meanings, accounting for 25.81% of the total. These meanings relate to users' emotional response and symbolic associations with the brands. First of all, *Fluocaril* implies medical effectiveness, and *Lion* symbolizes strength. Moreover, *Propolinse* offers gentle care, *Herberry* is linked to wellness, and *Closeup* conveys confidence and freshness. Further, *Nude* embodies simplicity and transparency, *Usmile* captures positivity, and *Reach* indicates thorough cleaning. Meanwhile, *Circles* suggests a holistic approach. In addition, the classic brand *Colgate* evokes trust and reliability in dental care that communicate to the global customers. Apart from these, *OkHerbal* mirrors a natural and eco-friendly image, suggesting plant-based ingredients. The word 'ok' semantically enriches the naturalness of 'herb'. Additionally, *Sparkle* denotes cleanliness and brightness in oral care, suggesting innovation and modernity. Besides, *Oralpeach* presents enjoyment, and *Oralshark* implies strong effectiveness. Finally, *Oralmed* suggests a sense of expertise, professionalism, and trustworthiness in oral health, and *Listerine* evokes trust in scientific effectiveness, honoring Dr. Joseph Lister as the founder in antiseptic surgery (Smith, 2018).

C. Thematic Meaning

It revealed that 10 brands carry thematic meanings, which is 16.13 percent of the total. First of all, the brands focusing on care and comfort include *Veldent* which is seen as clean and efficient, *TwinLotus* symbolizing balance and purity, and *Mistine* suggesting elegance and soothing experiences. In light of innovation and excellence, *Beyond* is considered a brand conveying exceeding expectations while *Linko* bridges traditional care with modern technology, and *Skynlab* emphasizes scientific research. Moreover, *Giffarine* represents luxury and

premium quality, and *Isme* underscores tailored hygiene solutions. Lastly, *Superdoc* addresses trust and expertise, and *Dragcura* combines strength with a gentle approach.

D. Affective Meaning

Five brand names (8.06 %) have their affective meanings, focusing on how emotional associations influence semantic elements. First, *Glister* evokes brightness and clarity, appealing to consumers' desire for a radiant smile. Second, *Darlie,* with its complex history, mirrors social awareness by fostering inclusivity. Third, *Sensodyne* in which 'senso' and 'dyne' are combined to convey comfort and effectiveness, resonating with those seeking relief from sensitivity. Fourth, *Mavis* embodies simplicity and elegance, suggesting reliability and sophistication. Last, *GoSmile* shows happiness and confidence in oral care, offering effective oral care for beautiful smiles.

E. Collocative Meaning

Collocative meaning appeared in four brand names, which made up 6.45% of the total. First, *Freshmint* demonstrates the meaningful collocation of the words 'fresh'(ness) and 'mint'. Second, *Aquafresh* combines the notions of 'water' and 'freshness'. Third, *Sunstar* shows that 'sun' and 'star' are related in terms of their astronomical entities. Last, *Pepsodent* is semantically formed with the basis of 'pepsin' which is "a digestive agent designed to break down and digest food deposits on the teeth" (Crystal Group of Companies, 2020) and 'dent' (dental). These four words have collocative senses.

F. Reflective Meaning

Three brand names were found to indicate reflective meanings, representing 4.84% of the total. It is noted that reflective meaning involves personal interpretations and views based on consumer experiences. First of all, *Denticon* shows that the prefix 'dent' indicates a commitment to oral health while 'icon' reflects excellence, positioning the brand as a reliable provider of high-quality product. In addition, *Dentamate* combines 'dent' and 'mate,' suggesting friendly, supportive relationships with consumers. Finally, *Snake* senses intrigue and strength, suggesting a bold, unconventional approach, while also carrying aggressive connotations that reflect a distinctive market presence.

G. Social Meaning

Brand names in the oral care market are examined for their social meanings, focusing on how these names denote specific values, emotions, and cultural relevance. It was found that three brands signify social meaning, accounting for 4.84% of the total. First, the brand *Crest* connotes excellence and leadership, suggesting high quality and effectiveness, which establishes an evaluative social meaning as a premium choice for the consumer. Next, *Dentiste* evokes professionalism and sophistication, implying expertise in dental care. It creates an emotive social meaning that appeals to consumers who seek trust. Last, *Metoo* implies inclusivity and relatability, resonating with modern social movements and conveying a stylistic social meaning which mirrors approachability and contemporary relevance. Overall, these meanings seem to reflect the brands' significance in social contexts and influence the consumers' perceptions.

Conceptual meaning is regarded as the most frequently occurring semantic feature among the brands of oral care products. It is followed by connotative meaning and thematic meaning. Affective meaning and collocative meaning come next in frequency. Meanwhile, social meaning and reflective meaning are the least represented, each appearing with equal frequency.

Discussion

These findings correspond with those found in some studies. Firstly, the word formation processes in this study align with those of Syaputri et al. (2023) who identified 50 similar processes in snack brands, including coinage, blending, compounding, borrowing, and affixation. Moreover, they are also similarly found in the study of Nur et al. (2019) who explored brand name creation in food brands on the Grab and Go-Jek applications, highlighting various processes which are compounding and borrowing. Additionally, they parallel the study of Jeremić and Josijević (2019) on baby product names, especially regarding compounding and blending. Overall, these diverse word formation methods underscore the interplay between language and marketing, reflecting cultural dynamics in brand naming.

As previous studies regarding a linguistic study of brands of oral care products are not found, the mostly related one can be that of Saithong (2013) on top Thai exports. Its result

shows borrowing is the most frequent word formation strategy found in the Thai exported products. This is similarly evident in the present study in which 'borrowing' is the second most used strategy in the oral car product brands in Thailand. This can imply that the lexical borrowing plays a significant role in branding products in Thai society.

Semantically, the findings highlight notable brand names with connotative meanings. *Sparkle* and *Oralshark,* in particular, seem to have emotional associations related to oral healthcare. This aligns with Emilia (2020), which highlights how brand names elicit specific feelings and associations. Moreover, such brands can be similar to what Cacciafoco and Lim (2020) analyze brand names based on semantic structure and appositeness, assessing how effectively names convey important information about the products. Overall, this analysis emphasizes the sentimental significance of semantic features in branding strategies.

Theoretically, 'etymology' and 'borrowing' have some relations. However, examples of word formation using etymology are not found because the strategy 'etymology' focuses on "the constant evolution of new words and new uses of old words" (Yule, 2010, p. 53). Thus, the results seem to be analyzed in terms of adopting terms from foreign languages into English – which can be more borrowing. Under the borrowing strategy, the brands *TwinLotus* and *Closeup* seem to represent a Thai variety of English from loan translation in which their brands in the Thai language appear. Similarly, the brands *Mistine* and *Giffarine* can also be 'Thai English' through the coinage process with the Thai sociolinguistic background.

Regarding Yule (2010), the brands *TwinLotus* and *Closeup* can be part of compounding, namely a compound noun and a compound adjective respectively. However, they are more outstanding in that they incorporate into English through the loan translation process from Thai, reflecting a globalized approach to marketing. This strategic use of English, intertwined with local linguistic elements, plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions. The use of English not only elevates the brand's prestige but also allows companies to reach a broader audience, positioning their products as part of a global market while maintaining cultural relevance.

It is a new phenomenon that the brands *OKHerbal* and *OralB* are formed with the multiple process strategy offered in Yule (2010). In the former brand, the exclamation 'OK'

which has been widely used in spoken English can also be a linguistic element marking the multiple strategy. Likewise, in the latter, the acronym 'B' in the dentistry term 'Brush' can be suitably used to mark this multiple process.

Furthermore, all types of meaning revealed in this study are found with regard to Leech (1981). This shows this theory can be valid and suitable for analyzing the underlying semantic features of the brand names which can be regarded new words in the English language.

Semantically, the analysis focuses on seven types of meanings: conceptual, connotative, thematic, affective, collective, social, and reflective. The emphasis is on conceptual, connotative, and thematic meanings, which significantly shape the branding elements. Conceptual meanings highlight product features, while connotative meanings suggest emotional responses. The semantic analysis provides insights into how brand names communicate values and emotional connections to the linguistic formation of the oral care products' branding strategies.

Conclusions

This study has revealed that the 62 brand names of the oral care products for Thai consumers carry their distinctive linguistic strategies. Morphologically, they are formed with the strategies of coinage, borrowing, compounding, blending, conversion, derivation (affixation), and multiple processes. Semantically, they embody affective, social, conceptual, connotative, reflective, collocative, and thematic meanings. These linguistic elements represent the prominent features of branding identity mainly embedded in English that contacts other foreign languages. They seem to mirror an innovative approach used by the entrepreneurs and advertisers to marketize Thai customers of oral care products through realizing English as a language of modernization and globalization. This parallels with Kaenmuang et al. (2025), who state that "most cafés in Bangkok are named in English, contrasting with the primarily Thai language names of noodle shops. Café names tend to be short, modern, and easy to remember, frequently incorporating wordplay and alliteration to attract attention" (p. 76). In other words, English represents the language of modernity used by the local entrepreneurs to name café in the capital of Thailand. Likewise, the present study suggested that Thai customers can be captivated by the distinctive English branding names of

the oral care products. Furthermore, this study implies the importance of brand names in advertising oral care products in Thai society. The power of English in naming the brands can have strong appeals for Thai customers, leading to increased sales. Recognizing this linguistic phenomenon can help Thais understand how creative English usage in branding contributes to the emergence of innovative language practices both locally and internationally.

About the Author(s)

Mr. Sirawit Nimkanjana, Ms. Saranya Jamnongrak, Ms. Athita Binlateh, Ms. Wanwisa Hattapot, and Mr. Kongphob Sukpon: *The fourth-year English majors, Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, Thaksin University, Songkhla*

Dr. Pairote Bennui: Associate Professor, Faculty of Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Thaksin University, Songkhla

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