

THE LINGUISTIC NATURE OF EPONYMS IN MODERN BRAND NAMES.

Ziyadullayev Akmal Raupovich

A PhD teacher Bukhara State University

Xamidova Azizakhon Umidjon qizi

A master student of Bukhara State University

**Abstract**

This article explores the linguistic role of eponyms in terms of modern brand names, through emphasizing how proper names evolve into common lexical units via commercial and social usage. The study examines *eponymization* as a linguistic process involving its *semantic change*, *lexicalization*, and *pragmatic adaptation* in marketing discourse. Eponymous brand names such as Tesla, Ford, and Dior illustrate how personal or corporate identities become immersed in everyday language with their meaning in value. Linguistically, an *eponym* is a word derived from a person's, place's, or thing's name, or even it can refer to the name-giver him or herself, which is able to enhance a term with cooperatively made-chain between function and meaning.

**Key words:** eponym, eponymization, lexicalization, linguistic mechanism semantic change

**Introduction**

Language is a dynamic system that mirrors human ingenuity, cultural development, and commercial advancements. A notable linguistic process illustrating this change is eponymization, where a proper noun transforms into a general word. Eponyms, originating from personal, place, or company names, frequently extend beyond their initial significance to signify wider concepts or products.[1] For example, Tesla now signifies not just a company but also innovation and green technology, and Dior represents sophistication and high level goods beyond its founder's name. These instances demonstrate language's capacity to adjust to societal and economic environments, integrating identity, culture, and marketing. Eponyms, words derived from proper nouns, represent a fascinating intersection of language, culture, and branding. These linguistic entities, born from the names of individuals, places, or even fictional characters, undergo a semantic shift, evolving from specific referents to encompass broader concepts or products. This transformation, known as eponymization, highlights the dynamic nature of language and its capacity to adapt to social changes and cultural influences. The process of eponymization is directly linked to lexicalization, where a proper noun gains permanence within a lexicon of language, often becoming a common noun or a brand identifier. This linguistic phenomenon reflects the power of names to improve their original meaning and make symbols of innovation, quality, or cultural significance. Understanding the mechanisms behind eponymization provides valuable insights into how language evolves and reflects the values and experiences of a society.

**METHODOLOGY**

B.Zimmer said that eponyms illustrate the dynamic relationship between individuals, language, and society. U.Slabin observes that the elimination of eponyms through anti-historicism is comparable to the destruction of «contentious» material memorials and aligns with «cancel culture». While challenges exist in determining the priority of eponyms, their



educational importance is substantial and warrants respect, echoing Einstein's sentiment that despite science being primitive and childlike when measured against reality, it is humanity's most precious possession. Science instruction, as a challenging issue in cutting edge instruction. Words shaped from a person's name, such as «volt» from Alessandro Volta and «sandwich» from John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich, are cases of eponyms. [2] Eponyms can be utilized to honor conspicuous people, such as researchers, trend-setters, or well-known figures. They moreover illustrate how society prioritizes particular achievements or properties, as within the circumstances of «Fahrenheit» and «Celsius» which are named after two spearheading researchers within the field of temperature estimation. Eponyms may also be utilized for branding or showcasing, as within the case of the word «Jeep» which was shaped from the title of a World War II military vehicle. The ponder has finished with a few comes about that eponyms are widely used to honor and immortalize these people, cultivating commitment and regard within the community.

The term «eponym» is inferred from the Greek word *epónimo/epónimos*, which was shaped utilizing the fastens *epi* and *nóma*, implies “something or someone giving the title”. According to D. Crystal Eponymy is characterized by anomastics, an region of semantics that investigates the roots of institutionalized appropriate names, as the title of a individual after someone, such as an innovation or a area, is called, such as “biro” and “Sydney”. [3]

R. Harris considers eponymy to be one of the figures of discourse; he characterizes an eponym as the title of a well-known individual who is eminent for having a particular characteristic, and accepts that this handle includes substitution. [4] The person could be a virtuoso. In this case, the person is supplanted by an Einstein since he has characteristics with Einstein (he is brilliant, savvy, and has encounter) Eponyms are the names of those who to begin with portrayed a affliction or ailment; these individuals are as often as possible specialists, researchers, or anatomists. Filatova & Kolesnikova said that Thomas Addison's ailment, for illustration, is called after the specialist who found it in 1855. Löwe, B mentioned that an illustration of an eponym is the express »Bachmann's bundle« within the heart, named for the German anatomist Wilhelm His Jr. An eponym may be a term or title shaped from the title of individual, living or fanciful. In this regard, White characterizes an eponym as a word or express inferred from the title of individual, most regularly a specialist or researcher, who is credited with finding or characterizing a certain affliction, side effect, or anatomical characteristic. [5]

According to Trahair: Eponyms begin with a name, and the name is usually that of a person. Sometimes people give their own name to an item, and sometimes others do it in their honor. Most eponyms come from people who are living and lived some time ago, but others are based on a fictional character, a legendary hero, or even monster. [6] E.M.Kakzanova said that eponyms are substantial historical and cultural components in their semantics, motivating the user's cultural perspectives. Eponyms direct our attention to the inherent antropology and sociality of unique realities investigated by many fields of research and science disciplines.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this modern era of digital globalization, names of brands have not only evolved symbols of linguistic and cultural significants but also their commercial purpose to appear. The occurrence of eponymization, in which a proper name levels up into a common lexical item, through demonstrating how language and marketing converges. Linguistically, eponyms exhibit several features:

1. Nominal transformation: turning a proper name into a common noun (e.g., Jeep -originally a brand name (from GP = General Purpose vehicle))



2. Metonymic shift: the name stands for something associated with the person (e.g., Gucci = luxury, Ford = cars).

3. Semantic broadening: the meaning extends beyond the original referent to cover a wider category (e.g., Kleenex for tissues).

4. Phonetic adaptation: many eponyms undergo sound modification for easier pronunciation or memorability (e.g., Adidas from Adolf Dassler)

Today's consumers often use brand names as part of their daily vocabulary, transferring them from individual identifiers into collective cultural references. This linguistic process not only reflects the dynamic nature of language but also reveals how social and economic factors influence lexical change. There are some names and surnames which are too famous brand names. They are called eponyms. For example:[7]

1. Gabrielle «Coco» Chanel opened her first shop in Paris in 1910 and became famous for its products. It is named after her name, symbolizing timeless elegance, simplicity, and modernity.

2. Christian Dior was French fashion designer and founded his fashion house in Paris in December 1946 symbolizing elegance and high fashion.

3. Guccio Gucci founded a leather goods and luggage workshop in Florence in 1921 and the family name became the business's trade name as it diversified.

4. Gianni Versace launched his eponymous label in Milan in 1978 and became recognized for bold prints, bright colours and stage-ready glamour.

5. Ralph Lauren started his business with menswear and neckwear in 1967 and extended the Ralph Lauren name into an international lifestyle brand.

6. Calvin Klein launched his label in 1968 and the Calvin Klein name became especially prominent in underwear, denim and scent.

7. Tom Ford recognized an eponymous label in 2005 after a career as a creative director at main fashion houses and the Tom Ford name brands luxury clothing, accessories and beauty.

8. Vera Wang began as a bridal designer in 1990 and the Vera Wang name became synonymous with wedding gowns and evening wear.

9. Thomas Burberry originated the company in 1856 and the Burberry name is historically related to outerwear, chiefly the trench coat.

10. Kenzo Takada founded a label under his given name in 1970 and the brand became known for colourful prints and a diverse aesthetic.

11. Jean-Paul Gaultier founded his eponymous label in 1982 and gained recognition for theatrical design and the reinterpretation of traditional silhouettes.

12. Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana founded their label together in 1985 and the brand name combines both surnames.

13. Dolce & Gabbana trades under the founders' names across clothing, accessories, fragrance and licensing.

14. Emilio Pucci lent his surname to the brand in 1947, famous for colourful geometric prints and silk scarves, which began as a personal collection. Tesla - the person Nikola Tesla : a Serbian-American inventor and electrical engineer known for his work on AC electricity, the Tesla coil, and radio, whose discoveries profoundly impacted modern technology.

15. Ford - "Ford car" refers to vehicles made by the Ford Motor Company, named after its founder, Henry Ford, who pioneered mass-produced, affordable automobiles with assembly lines, making the brand synonymous with American engineering, innovation.

They no longer directly represent the people who were founders of these brands. Instead, nowadays they represent values of innovation, luxury, and fashion on the minds of people. Therefore, the study of these eponyms provides insight into how proper names acquire new



semantics through commercial usage and how the transformation of a proper name into an eponym occurs through several interrelated linguistic mechanisms.

Firstly, *semantic shift* occurs when a name extends its meaning beyond its initial reference. For instance, Tesla no longer merely identifies a company, but it has already come to represent the broader concept of innovation in electric technology. Secondly, *lexicalization* integrates the name into everyday vocabulary as a stable lexical unit. Expressions such as “driving a Ford” or “wearing Dior” can be examples of how personal names acquire the function of common nouns within linguistic usage. Thirdly, *pragmatic adaptation* refers to the deliberate employment of eponyms in marketing discourse to make links among brand values and emotional associations. In this process, eponyms gain pragmatic strength by symbolizing reliability, quality, or prestige even. For instance, Chanel (fashion brand) represents elegance and sophistication, while Rolex (hand-watch brand) has become synonymous with luxury and timeless excellence. In each case, the brand name functions as a linguistic sign loaded with connotative meaning, transforming a proper noun into a powerful symbol of identity. Finally, phonetic and morphological adaptation ensures the memorability of brand names for individuals. Many eponyms undergo phonetic simplification or creative modification to achieve a smooth, appealing sound that easily attracted by consumers across languages. For example, Adidas originates from the founder’s name, Adolf Dassler, but was phonetically shortened and morphologically stylized for easier pronunciation and easily achieved to brand recognition.

These examples illustrate how phonetic and morphological adaptation plays a crucial role in transforming proper names into eponyms that are not only linguistically effective but also commercially enduring. Through these linguistic processes, eponymous brand names evolve into recognizable marketing discourse, emotionally resonant, and semantically enriched elements of modern language.

## Conclusion

The occurrence of eponymization in modern brand names illustrates how language, culture, and human creativity are mutually connected. If we comprehend, behind every brand name lies a person’s vision, which gradually becomes part of our shared vocabulary. Names like Tesla, Dior, and Adidas no longer belong only to their founders—they have grown into living symbols of innovation, beauty, and excellence that speak to people around the world. Through time, these names have changed in sound and meaning, but they have been continueing to remind us how language evolves with us through absorbing our values, and social progress. Studying eponyms, therefore, is not only about words; it is about understanding how people contribute their share on language and how language, in return, carries several meanings even in one word.

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