HYBRID ERGONYMS AND YOUTH BRANDING PRACTICES IN UZBEKISTAN'S ONLINE

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Abstract

This study explores the ergonomic aspects of ergonyms (brand names) used by Uzbek youth on digital platforms, particularly focusing on their phonetic simplicity and visual appeal. The research examines how brand names are crafted to be catchy, memorable, and modern, often incorporating English or hybrid elements. By analyzing a selection of popular ergonyms on Instagram and Telegram, this paper identifies common ergonomic features and discusses how these contribute to the success of digital branding in Uzbekistan.

Keywords: Ergonymy, branding, phonetics, visual design, Uzbek youth, Instagram, Telegram, digital marketing, ergonomics, hybrid names.

In the digital era, names function not only as identifiers but also as semiotic tools for branding, self-representation, and cultural positioning. Uzbek youth, active on platforms like Instagram and Telegram, increasingly create hybrid brand names combining Uzbek and English elements. These hybrid ergonyms serve dual purposes: to remain rooted in national culture and to resonate with global aesthetics.

As Crystal (2003) states, "The language of the internet is increasingly English, and young people, regardless of their mother tongue, adapt their identities accordingly to participate in a global discourse." This observation is directly reflected in ergonyms like Choy Land, Go'zallik Line, or Shirin Cake, where Uzbek lexical roots are joined with English terms to create names that are locally meaningful and globally appealing. Phillipson (2001) highlights how the spread of English across non-English-speaking regions is not just linguistic, but symbolic: "English is often perceived as a symbol of modernity, economic success, and cosmopolitan identity." Thus, English serves not only as a functional language but also a branding asset for young entrepreneurs. Pavlenko (2011) notes that linguistic choices in public and digital spaces often reflect deeper issues of identity and affiliation: "Linguistic landscapes are sites of negotiation where competing cultural values and ideologies are expressed."

Brand names like Shirin Cake and Choy Story show a clear intent to anchor products in Uzbek culture, while simultaneously modernizing the presentation through

English. As Yuldasheva (2022) observes: "Hybridity in Uzbek ergonyms is a conscious act of cultural negotiation, combining the familiar with the fashionable." This dual identity appeals both to domestic consumers who recognize their culture and to youth consumers who seek association with modern, global styles.

According to Alimova (2021), "Brand naming among Uzbek youth is driven by the need to be memorable, professional, and globally understood all of which English supports more effectively than Uzbek alone."

The study employs qualitative analysis of over 100 ergonyms used by Uzbek youth on Instagram and Telegram. Selected names such as "Shirin Cake," "Choy Room," "Go'zallik Lab," "UzCraft," and "Style Moda" were examined for linguistic structure, phonetic ergonomics, and cultural symbolism. Additionally, observations from Telegram channels such as @vitacciuz were analyzed for patterns in branding language and visual aesthetics.

Hybrid ergonyms typically combine Uzbek cultural terms with English descriptors. For instance, "Choy Room" reflects local traditions (choy) within a modern aesthetic (room). According to Yuldasheva (2022), "Hybridity in Uzbek ergonyms is a conscious act of cultural negotiation."

Brands such as Vitacci, Versace, Nike, Gucci, Chanel, and Apple are often referenced or imitated in local contexts. Their global recognition is used to create association with quality and fashion. Alimova (2021) notes that hybrid naming strategies are a form of glocalization: aligning local identity with global trends.

Keller (2013) emphasized that successful brand names are phonetically smooth and emotionally resonant. Uzbek-English hybrids like "HappyBox" or "BeautyLab" follow these principles by using Latin script and modern-sounding endings.

Moreover, hybrid names provide a strategic balance: the Uzbek part ensures cultural trust, while the English part connotes international quality. For instance, names like Moda House or TeaLand position the brand as both culturally close and globally competent.

Keller (2013) argues that "A successful brand name must be phonetically smooth, visually clean, and emotionally resonant." This is evident in Uzbek ergonyms, which often follow Latin capitalization norms, are short in syllables, and use plosive consonants or long vowels for clarity.

Crystal (2003) supports this, stating: "Digital-age naming tends to favor names that look and sound light, sleek, and international."

Hybrid ergonyms in Uzbekistan's digital youth culture represent more than stylistic choices. They are strategic tools used for identity formation, market positioning, and cultural expression. As Kapferer (2008) states, "A brand is not only a name, but a narrative." Uzbek youth are shaping that narrative using a blend of local roots and global aspirations.

All things considered, hybrid brand names in the Uzbek digital landscape are not accidental combinations but purposeful linguistic artifacts that convey cultural, economic, and generational identities. These ergonyms act as bridges between Uzbek tradition and global modernity, echoing Pavlenko's (2011) claim that names in digital spaces are "performative declarations of who we are, and who we want to be."

By combining the semantic depth of Uzbek with the cosmetic appeal of English, youth in Uzbekistan are shaping a new linguistic economy of branding one that aligns with global standards while preserving national nuance.

As Kapferer (2008) notes: "A brand is not only a name, but a narrative and every choice in that narrative contributes to how the public sees the identity behind it." Hybrid names like Choy Room, Sweet Moda, or UzCraft are indeed such narratives telling stories of aspiration, localization, and transformation.

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