

Brand Names in Military English: The Link between Two Worlds

Carmen Fiano

University of Naples “Parthenope”

Cristiano Furiassi

University of Turin

Kosztasz Panajotu

University of Public Service Budapest

Outline

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Terminological issues

- “brand names” (Moss 1995, p. 135)
- “trademarks” (Furiassi 2012, p. 97, 2006, p. 199; *Merriam-Webster*)
- “proprietary names” (*OED*)
- “proprietary terms” (*OCEL*)
- “trade names” (*OCEL*)
- “trade terms” (*OED*)
- “word marks” (Ephratt 2003, p. 393)
- “proprietary brands” (*Oxford-Paravia*)

Non-genericized brand names

- “A sign or name that is secured by legal registration or (in some cases) by established use, and serves to distinguish one product from similar brands sold by competitors [...]” (*OCEL*)
- “[...] a symbol or name used by a maker of a product to distinguish the product from others of its kind.” (Landau 2001, p. 405)

Genericized brand names

- “[...] genericness is the use of the trademark not as a mark but as a descriptive word [...].” (Ephratt 2003, p. 404)
- “Genericness takes place when a trademark loses its specific referential features and is used with a more general reference.” (Furiassi 2006, p. 200)

Word formation processes

- Lexico-semantic
 - Eponyms
 - Toponyms
 - Nicknames
 - Personifications
 - Theronyms
- Morpho-syntactic
 - Initialisms
 - Alphabetisms
 - Acronyms
 - Blends

Eponyms

- “[...] words referring to objects or activities which are named after the person who invented and/or diffused them.” (Furiassi 2006, p. 200)

Toponyms

- “A place-name; a name given to a person or thing marking its place of origin.” (*OED*)

Nicknames

- “A (usually familiar or humorous) name which is given to a person, place, etc., as a supposedly appropriate replacement for or addition to the proper name.” (*OED*)

Personifications

- “The attribution of human form, nature, or characteristics to something; the representation of a thing or abstraction as a person [...].” (*OED*)

Theronyms

- “A name – especially a product name – that has been derived from the name of an animal.” (*OCEL*)

Initialisms

- “[...] the result of selecting the initial letter, or occasionally the first two letters, of the orthographic words in a phrase and combining them to form a new sequence.” (López Rúa 2006, p. 677)
 - Alphabetisms: pronounced letter-by-letter
 - Acronyms: pronounced as whole words

Blends

- “[...] joining two or more word-forms through simple concatenation or overlap and then shortening at least one of them.” (López Rúa 2006, p. 677)

Brand names in military English

- Non-genericized brand names
 - Small arms manufacturing (North, Hogg 1977)
 - WW1 and WW2 (Bishop 2014a, 2014b)
- Genericized brand names
 - NATO brevity words (*JBWP*)
 - U.S. military brevity codes (*MSBC*)

Small arms manufacturing

- Eponym: *Colt*
- Nickname: *bazooka*
- Alphabetism: *AK*
- Acronym: *BAR*
- Blend: *Bren*

Eponym: *Colt*

- U.S Pistol Automatic Caliber .45 Model 1911
- Samuel Colt (1905)
- In service until 1990

Nickname: *bazooka*

- Rocket Launcher M1A1 (1942)
- Also known as *stovepipe*

Alphabetism: *AK*

- AK-47 (Avtomat Kalashnikova)
- Mikhail Kalashnikov (1947)
- Also known as *AK* (*Merriam-Webster; OED*)

Acronym: *BAR*

- Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR)
- John Browning (1917)
- In service until 1957

Blend: *Bren*

- Bren Gun L4A2
- Brno (Czech Republic) and Enfield (UK)
-
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Brevity words

- Terms used as a type of voice procedure within the NATO armed forces
 - Fast radio communication (Panajotu 2010, p. 165)
 - Attention-seeking device (Fiano, Grimaldi 2017, p. 143)
 - Informative, descriptive, directive
- Mutual intelligibility among ENL and EFL speakers in the military worldwide
- 17 (plausible) genericized brand names, i.e. 2%, out of 896 NATO brevity words (*JBWP*)

Genericized brand name: ROLEX

- *RolexTM* (wristwatch) - Rolex SA - Geneva (Switzerland)
- “Time change in minutes from a given datum. The term “plus” will indicate later time and the term “minus” will indicate an earlier time.”
(*JBWP*)

Genericized brand name: ZIPPO

- *Zippo*TM (lighter) - Zippo Manufacturing Co. - Bradford (PA)
- “Alerts units that a missile attack is imminent or in progress.” (*JBWP*)
- Productivity

Brevity words

- Eponym: FORD
- Toponym: CHAMPAGNE
- Personification: AJAX
- Theronym: MUSTANG

Eponym: FORD

- Henry Ford (1908)
- “Assume intercept guard/watch on band or guard indicated.” (*JBWP*)

Toponym: CHAMPAGNE

- French (wine) region
- Protected Designation of Origin (PDO)
- “A picture label of three distinct groups with two in front and one behind.” (*JBWP*)

Personification: AJAX

- Greek hero in Homer's *Iliad*
- *Ajax*TM (cleanser) - Colgate-Palmolive Co. - New York (NY)
- “Landing zone/pick up zone is clear of threats.”
(*JBWP*)

Theronym: MUSTANG

- Free-roaming wild horse
- *Mustang*TM - Ford Motor Co. - Dearborn (MI)
- “An ASUW [anti-surface warfare] weapon-carrying helicopter.” (*JBWP*)

Conclusion

- Both non-genericized (small arms) and genericized brand names (brevity words) may be used as military terms through “resemanticization” (Paganoni 2007, p. 187)
 - “recontextualization” (Paganoni 2007, p. 187)
 - “specialization” (Lyons 1977, p. 531; Geeraerts 1997, p. 95)

- Introducing widespread and well-known LGP brand names into military terminology provides them with highly-specialized meanings
 - Well-known, follow the KISS principle, easy to pronounce and understand
 - Fit into the widely-accepted conventions of military terminology

- Not only paramount for intra-language communication among ENL speakers but also for inter-language communication among EFL speakers, e.g. international missions
- Constituting a common core of shared terminology within the broader spectrum of English military terms

- Fostering the spread of ELF terminology among the armed forces worldwide
- Becoming part of “brand culture” (Schroeder, Salzer-Mörling 2006, p. 2) or “trademark culture” (Beebe 2008, p. 42) governing the globalized world