

XXVII CONVEGNO ASS.I.TERM
IL NOME DEL PRODOTTO. MARCHI, TERMINI E PROFESSIONI
6-7 APRILE 2017 - MILANO

**A JOINT LINGUISTIC-MARKETING ANALYSIS OF
BRAND AND PRODUCT NAMES
THE CASE OF UNILEVER**

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LINGUISTIC TOOLS IN MARKETING

In today's global markets, in which international companies must reach geographically and culturally distant groups of consumers, a company's ability to transfer ideas across languages and cultures is integral to its economic goals.



Linguistic tools thus play a key role in the implementation of branding and marketing strategies.

LITERATURE OVERVIEW

ASSESSING BRANDS' POTENTIAL

ZHANG AND SCHMITT (2001)

USUNIER AND SHANER (2002)

COTTICELLI KURRAS ET AL. (2012)

ASSESSING CONSUMERS' RESPONSE

LOWREY ET AL. (2003)

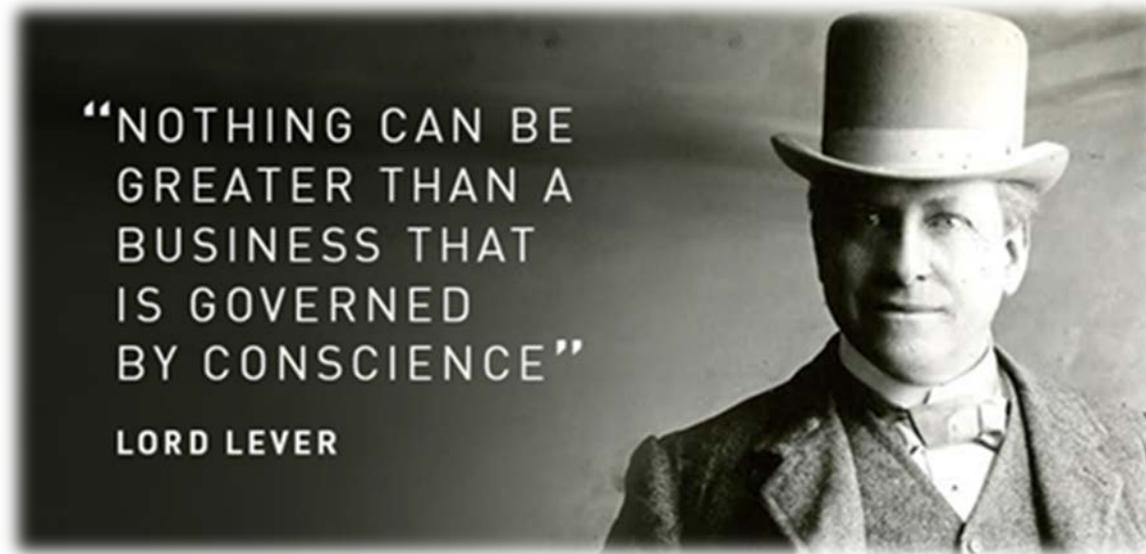
MILLER AND TOMAN (2016)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS



1. Which **linguistic dimensions** are most commonly exploited to reach consumers?
2. Is there a substantial difference between **branding strategies** in the UK and in Italy?
3. Do branding strategies change from product type to **product type**? Conversely, does the same strategy apply to all the products?

AIM AND PLAN



- **BRAND, BRAND IDENTITY AND BRAND IMAGE**
- **UNILEVER: A BRIEF HISTORY AND VALUES**
- **THE COMPANY’S COMMUNICATION TOOLS**
 - **LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS**

BRAND NAME

“

a name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that **identifies one seller's good or service as distinct** from other sellers

”



BRAND NAME

“

A “**mind marker**” and an **identifier**

”

- PLATEN 1997, LANGNER 2003 -

“

A **hybrid** between a proper and common noun

”

- ALTMANOVA 2013 -

BRAND IDENTITY

a set of values and principles which characterize
the company's way of thinking and doing



BRAND IMAGE AND BRAND ASSOCIATIONS

“

[...] **perceptions about a brand** as reflected by the **brand associations** held in consumer memory. Brand associations are the other informational nodes linked to the brand node in memory and contain **the meaning of the brand for consumers**. The favorability, strength, and uniqueness of brand associations are the dimensions distinguishing brand knowledge that play an important role in determining the differential response that makes up brand equity, especially in high involvement settings.

”

- KELLER 2003 -

BRAND IMAGE



NOT STABLE

MUST BE
MAINTAINED
AND
REINFORCED
OVER TIME

UNILEVER: COMPANY PROFILE

Unilever

MULTINATIONAL CONSUMER GOODS COMPANY

LEADER SUPPLIER OF FOOD, HOME AND PERSONAL CARE GOODS

ABOUT 400 BRANDS

OPERATES IN OVER 190 COUNTRIES

UNILEVER: COMPANY PROFILE



Lever Brothers and Margarine Unie

1 January 1930

Over thirty years in business

UNILEVER: COMPANY PROFILE

“
making **sustainable living** commonplace
”

“
We are living in a world where temperatures are rising, water shortages are more frequent, food supplies are increasingly scarce and the gap between rich and poor increasing. Populations are growing fast, making **basic hygiene and sanitation even more of a challenge.**
”

- UNILEVER -

UNILEVER: THE SUSTAINABLE LIVING PLAN



Improving Health and Well-being

By 2020 we will help more than a billion people take action to improve their health and hygiene.

Health & hygiene

Improving nutrition



Reducing Environmental Impact

By 2030 our goal is to halve the environmental footprint of the making and use of our products as we grow our business.

Greenhouse gases

Water

Waste

Sustainable sourcing



Enhancing Livelihoods

By 2020 we will enhance the livelihoods of millions of people as we grow our business.

Fairness in the workplace

Opportunities for women

Inclusive business



UNILEVER: THE LOGO

26 different symbols

redesigned in 2004 to represent better the company and its ideals.



UNILEVER: THE LOGO

SUSTAINABILITY
ENVIRONMENTAL
AWARENESS



Recycle

Part of our commitment to sustainability.

HEALTH



Spoon

A symbol of nutrition, tasting and cooking.

FUTURE



Particles

A reference to science, bubbles and fizz.

UNILEVER: COMMUNICATION TOOLS



“

a new world where **confidence is the real beauty**, where **our basic needs are no longer needs**, and where kids learn to write their own story

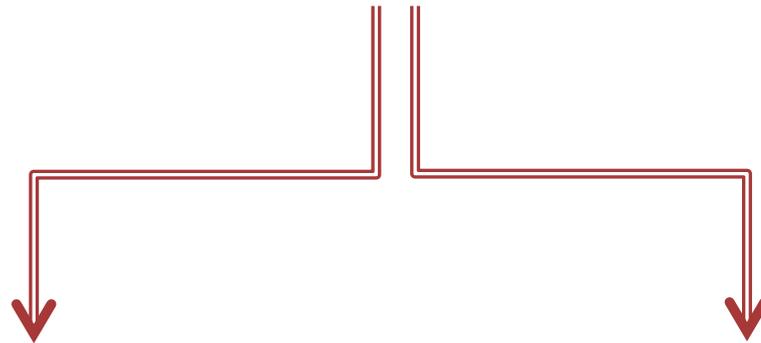
”

UNILEVER: COMMUNICATION TOOLS

“

when you choose Unilever, you help create a
bright future

”



SUSTAINABILITY

INNOVATION

UNILEVER: EXTERNAL INITIATIVES

**G L O B A L
P A R T N E R S H I P S**



Nutrition Centre, Health Institute, Nutrition and Health Academy, Bright Future

CASE STUDY



€51 Billion
worldwide sales in 2012

173,000 employees
work for Unilever

2 BILLION people
use Unilever's products
each day worldwide

400 brands
sold in 190 countries

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS - THE CORPUS

132 Italian Unilever's product names of products available in both the UK and Italy were collected from the company website shop section.



PRODUCT CATEGORIES

PER LA CASA

CIF

COCCOLINO

PER LA PERSONA

AXE

DOVE

PER LA TAVOLA

KNORR

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS - FOCUS

6 LINGUISTIC DIMENSIONS ANALYSED:

Graphemic
Phonetic
Syntactical
Morphological
Lexical
Semantical

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS - LEXICAL

CIF ITALY
EASY CLEAN

COCCOLINO ITALY
CREATIONS

DOVE ITALY
WARM TALC PERFUME

After the 1980s a greater openness to foreign languages has been reported.
English has had a more widespread acceptance compared to other languages possibly for the high socio-economic values attached to it.
(See: *Cotticelli-Kurras 2012*)

KNORR ITA
I MOMENTI **GOURMET** CONDIMENTO PER
NOODLE ALL'INDONESIANA

Words from French and German

UK: **COMFORT - LYNX**
ITALY: **COCCOLINO - AXE**

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS - GRAPHEMIC



Eco-

‘casa’

‘ambiente dove si vive’
‘ecologia ed ecologico’

SOURCE: TRECCANI

€co-

‘ecologia ed ecologico’

+

‘economico’

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS - GRAPHEMIC



“Luminous. Even. Velvety soft.
Triply glorious skin.”

“*Luminosa, uniforme e vellutata.
Una pelle **tre volte** bellissima.*”



Basic Line ‘MEN’? NO!

Emphasize the belonging of a product targeting men the ‘beauty’ category, a one commonly destined to **women**.
(See Amy-Chinn 2001, p. 169)



“Gently moistures your skin **while improving** elasticity and firmness.”

“*Per una **maggiore** compattezza ed elasticità.*”

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS - PHONETIC

COMFORT
BLUE SKIES

COCCOLINO
ARIA DI PRIMAVERA

BLUE SKIES
ELLA **FITZGERALD**



LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS - PHONETIC

COMFORT
BLUE SKIES

BLUE SKIES
ELLA **FITZGERALD**



COCCOLINO
ARIA DI PRIMAVERA

PRIMAVERA
MARINAREI



LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS - MORPHOLOGICAL

UNILEVER

MARGARINE **UNIE** + **LEVER** BROTHERS

Fragments of a constituent + Full constituent
Semi-complete blend without overlapping elements - *Zilg 2012*

KNORR

CARL HEINREICH **KNORR**

Proper name transformed into brand name
Recategorisation - *Altmanova 2013*

AROMAT

AROMATISH (GER) AROMATIC (ENG) AROMATICO (ITA) AROMATICUS (GRE)

Adjective shortening to fit multilingual communicative purposes.
This also allows for advertising and inventory costs' reduction
(See Onkvisit and Shaw 1989)

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS - SYNTACTICAL

ADJECTIVE + NOUN

DOVE ITALY

GENTLE EXFOLIATING, FRESH TOUCH, INVISIBLE DRY, COOL COMFORT

CIF ITALY

EASY CLEAN, ULTRA PROTECTION

SHORT DESCRIPTIONS

CIF ITALY

EASY CLEAN PAVIMENTI ORCHIDEA SELVATICA

DOVE ITALY

GENTLE EXFOLIATING BEAUTY CREAM BAR

KNORR ITALY

I MOMENTI GOURMET VELLUTATA DI FUNGHI CON PORCINI PROFUMATA AL TARTUFO

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS - SEMANTICAL

DOVE UK
ORIGINAL BEAUTY CREAM BAR
DOVE ITALY
BEAUTY CREAM BAR



DOVE UK
GO FRESH **BEAUTY** CREAM **HAND WASH**
DOVE ITALY
GO FRESH - FRESH TOUCH **DETERGENTE** CREMOSO
DI BELLEZZA PROFUMO DI TÈ VERDE CETRIOLO

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS - SEMANTICAL

KNORR UK
STOCK POT

KNORR ITALY
CUORE DI BRODO
emotional sphere



KNORR UK
SOUPS

KNORR ITALY
SEGRETI DELLA NONNA

1. secret ingredients which make a dish special and inimitable
2. nostalgia for childhood or past

Home-made food prepared with natural ingredients by a beloved person, potentially arousing subjective memories which play key roles in the consumer's buying choice.

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS - SEMANTICAL

Knorr UK shows a greater attention towards **food allergies** and **'non-conventional' eating habits** compared to Knorr Italy.

KNORR UK

ORGANIC CHICKEN STOCK POWDER

KNORR ITALY

BRODO GRANULARE POLLO



KNORR UK

GLUTEN FREE PARMESAN RISOTTO

KNORR ITALY

RISOTTO ALLA PARMIGIANA



While the edible content of the package is the same in both countries, the advertising focus is different.

CONCLUSIONS

HEAVY RELIANCE ON THE SEMANTICAL DIMENSION

OPENNESS TO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

PREFERENCE TOWARDS SHORT DESCRIPTIONS

ENGLISH-DOMINANT IDEALS IN CLEANING AND BEAUTY PRODUCTS

(‘PER LA CASA’ AND ‘PER LA PERSONA’)

ITALIAN TRADITIONAL IDEALS IN FOOD (‘PER LA CUCINA’)

RELUCTANCY TO OPEN TO NON-CONVENTONAL EATING HABITS

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THANK YOU!
