

The Development between Brand Name Linguistic Characteristics and Brand Preference

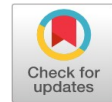
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Abstract: This study aims to determine the effect of certain factors on consumers impression of different foods. These factors include taste factors such as physiological needs, food culture, prior information, and addictive tastes as well as linguistic factors, such as semantic appositeness, paronomasia, and initial plosives. We also accounted for the influence of specific Japanese language linguistic sounds. We used two dishes with two menus per dish to determine participants preferences based on taste and linguistic factors. The results showed that prior information about food and semantic appositeness (sounds that match the image of the dish) have the most pronounced effect on participants preference. Furthermore, our results show that onomatopoeic sounds that are common to the Japanese language (such as fuwa-fuwa and moti-moti) also have an effect, depending on the soft or hard, light or heavy, or bright or dark characteristics of the sound. This research will contribute naming ready-made dishes and Bentos to companies as Japanese consumers cannot help choosing.

Keywords: Japanese language sounds, English language sounds, Brand names, Brand preference, Prior information

Received: 3 October 2019 / Accepted: 19 November 2019 / Published: 29 December 2019



INTRODUCTION

It is generally thought that the deciding factor when purchasing food is taste and preference. However, Fushiki (2008), who studies taste at Kyoto University explained that humans eat with the brain. It is assumed that humans taste has four aspects: physiological needs, food culture, prior information on food, and food instinct. The third aspect - "prior information" - plays a major role in modern times. The method of expressing information about food can change the preference of consumers. If it is true that we eat with our brains, we can infer that by using the appropriate words concerning food, we can easily influence consumer preference.

Through brand research, researchers and practitioners have discovered that naming products involves expressing product concepts, ensuring that names are familiar and easy to remember, and creating a pleasant sound or word impression. Zinkhan and Martin (1987) examined the effect of brand names and demonstrated that consumer attitudes to brand names exist independently of attitudes to the product or brand itself, and that this accounts for 34% of our attitude to brands. In other words, the brand name in itself has a certain effect on the attitude of the consumer. It can therefore be said that the brand name and the sounds that it consists of seem to be connected to the image or meaning.

This study addresses a few questions. One is "are we really influenced by information about our food?" Another is "if expression and information are important, can we do brand name research on food and cuisine names?" Furthermore, we investigate the effect of Japanese language sounds rather than English language sounds.

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This study uses brand name research to study effective naming of food and cuisine for Japanese consumers using the names of dishes on a menu.

LITERATURE REVIEW OF BRAND NAMES AND THEIR EFFECT

Brand name research

Brand names are considered to be the basis of brand image (C. Kohli & LaBahn, 1997) and much research has been conducted on the subject. Brand names are said to affect not only the image and memory of a product, but also consumers purchasing behavior.

A suggestive brand name matches the purpose of a product and creates awareness in consumers (Kanungo, 1968; Oetomo & Budiyanto, 2017). This type of brand name affects the products reputation through linguistic significance and association (Peterson & Ross, 1972). Moreover, brand names are more likely to be recalled and remembered if they match the image of a brand (Amatyakul & Polyorat, 2018; Robertson, 1987), as brand names that explicitly convey the products characteristics are more memorable than meaningless ones (Keller, Heckler, & Houston, 1998). The same applies to the brand names of new products (C. S. Kohli, Harich, & Leuthesser, 2005). It can therefore be said that brand names represent the meaning and representation embodied by the product (Meyers-Levy, 1989). Consumers can generate associations and meaning based on brand names and seek out brand names to recognize the products or services associated with it (Maslikhan, 2019; Tauber, 1981).

Keller (1993) states that from a corporate perspective, a brand identity is made up of a brand name and a brand image or awareness. Similarly, Kapferer (1992) argues that brand names are both objective and subjective, conveying both the intent and characteristics of the brand. It can therefore be said that the core identity of a product is composed of the brand name and the brand image and recognizability.

A brand name indicates what kind of product is and a meaningful name is easily recognized by consumers who are then persuaded to purchase the product, as intended by a company. Meaningful brand names create an image for consumers, enrich associations, make products more memorable, and lead to brand preference and purchases.

The study of brand names has advanced to focus on language sounds and their effects. Brand names have more meaning than general product labels and must give the right impression to accurately describe the brand and the nature of the brand name sound (Gardner & Sidney, 1955).

Brand name and language sound in Europe and Unites States

The association between images and the sound of letters and words have been studied for a long time in Europe and America. This research has demonstrated the impression and marketing effect of the image of each vowel and consonant on the brand name. The impression given by these sounds is called “phonetic symbolism”. In Japanese, this is called sound symbolism or sonic symbolism but is more commonly known as “word feelings.” The images of these sounds are based on the work of Sapir (1929) and his adherent Newman (1933), research that continues to contribute to the field to this day.

Sapir (1929) focused on the size impressions that sounds create. And when experimenting with large and small images of large and small vowels in meaningless words, it was found that “a” creates a large impression and “i” creates a small impression. Next, Newman (1933) demonstrated that sounds create not only large and small image impressions, but also bright or dark impressions. He also noted the emphasis on initials and investigated consonants as well as vowels. The former had the greatest emphasizing effect on initials and the latter resulted in voiced consonants having a darker and larger image than unvoiced consonants.

In contrast, Bentley and Varon (1933) questioned the ease or difficulty of evoking natural emotions in participants with impressions obtained from nonsense words. They investigated the impression created by the sound of “a” and “i”. The results were similar to those of Sapir (1929): that “a” created a larger impression than “i”. Taylor (1963) re-examined Newman (1933) results which stated that “t” and “n” and small ones “g” and “k.” give a large impression, using existing words. There is also a result stating that word memory is activated in connection with a positive response to the sound initially spoken for

emphasis (Craig & Tulving, 1975).

Next, Schloss (1981) investigated the reasons for people's responses to certain words and sounds based on the notion that "k" and "p" sounds are humorous and vulgar. Of the 54 brands studied, 27% of these brands names started with "c", "p", or "k". When the sample was increased to 129 brands, 65% started with "a", "b", "c", "k", "m", "p", "s", or "t". They concluded that these sounds tend to evoke more emotions than what is natural and rational.

A related study investigated which language devices such as alliteration and metaphors make brand names effective. It was found that three qualities semantic appositeness, initial plosives, and paronymy are the most effective in brand naming; most brands (29.8%) used only one of these methods, the next most common use (29.0%) was none of them, and the third most common use (24.0%) was two combined (Lowrey & Shrum, 2007). Plosive sounds occur at the beginning of a word; however, there are two types of plosive: voiced sounds and unvoiced sounds. Of the eight characters "a", "b", "c", "k", "m", "p", "s", and "t" that account for 65% of the 129 brands covered in Schloss (1981), unvoiced plosives dominate four characters "b", "k", "p", and "t" in particular. This suggests that plosives at the beginning of the word have some impact on consumers preference and memory.

Finally, Lowrey and Shrum (2007) investigated the effect of phonetic symbols on brand name preference. Most brands are named using existing words that have meaning associated with the product, but nonsense words that simply combine letters (Kodak, Lexus, etc.) are also accepted by people; therefore, phonetic symbols are thought to have some effect. When only the vowel sounds (whether the tongue position in pronunciation is forward or backward or related to a positive/negative concept) are used to coin different words, the brand name is preferred if the implied characteristics are positive for the product category.

Linguistics and brand names in Japan

Furthermore, there is little research on the relationship between consumers and brand names. In Japanese, basic phonemes are created by a matrix of consonants and vowels. For example, in "kasa" ("umbrella"), the image of the sound is composed of two phonemes "ka" (k-row consonant + a-row vowel) and "sa" (s-row consonant + a-row vowel). There is no sound expressed only by consonants; each phoneme must end in a vowel.

As stated earlier, word feelings/images evoked by the pronunciation of words also exist in Japanese; however, very little research has been done on how the words spoken are perceived by the listener or what kind of image the listener gets due to the sound of the spoken words.

A renowned Japanese scholar, Haruhiko (1988) stated the following about the Japanese language based on his own research: "The k-consonants are dry and hard, the s-row consonants pleasant, sometimes moist, the t-row consonants are strong and masculine, the n-row consonants are sticky, the h-row consonants are light with no resistance, the m-row consonants are round and feminine, the y-row consonants are soft and weak, and w-row consonants are brittle and fragile." Further, Asano and Kindaichi (1978) stated that "in consonants, voiced consonants such as 'g', 'z', 'd', and 'b' represent dull, heavy, and dirty feelings, while unvoiced consonants represent sharp, light, small, and beautiful feelings. (Omitted) Both 'h' and 'p' are opposed to 'b', but 'h' is more literary and has a good feel, whereas 'p' is slang and is less good. (Omitted) In general, the consonants 'k' and 't' give a hard impression, 's' is sticky and smooth, 'h' and 'p' have no resistance, and 'm' feels soft. 'r' represents flow."

Practitioner Iwanaga (2002), based on his practical experience, divides vowels and consonants in terms of Japanese language as follows. First, we look at vowels.

" 'A' is bright and strong, with a large image and gentleness. 'o' has a strong, heavy image and is elegant. 'E' is gentle, static, and slightly sharp, rich in emotion. 'u' is emotional, light and gentler than any vowel. 'i' has a sharp impression, a strong intellectual image, and a certain tone. 'N' is a heavy sound, graceful, intelligent and with a large image."

Next, we look at consonants. Iwanaga further stated that " 'f', 'h', 'l', 'p', 'r', 'w', and 'y' are rather bright, spacious consonants, while 'd', 'g', 'j', 'k', 'm', 'n', 'q', 's', 't', 'v', and 'x' are sharp, strong, and masculine. 'd', 'g', 'j', 'v', and 'z' are the voiced consonants group, which is masculine and heavy."

The images of Japanese vowels and consonants are summarized below.

Vowels

A: brightness, strength, kindness

I : sharpness

U: lightness, kindness

E : kindness, sharpness

O : strength, size, weight

Row/consonants

K-row [k]: dry, hard

S-row [s]: pleasure, moisture

T-row [t]: strength, hardness, size

N-row [n]: stickiness

H-row [f] [h]: lightness, softness

M-row [m]: roundness, softness

Y-row [y]: softness, weakness

R-row [r]: brightness, smoothness

W-row [w]: brittleness, fragility

G-row [g]: weight, dirt, weight, hardness

Z-row [z]: weight, dirt, weight, hardness

D-row [d]: weight, dirt, weight, hardness

B-row [b]: weight, dirt, weight, hardness

P-row [p]: bright spread, friendliness

METHODS AND HYPOTHESES

To test the naming effect, we will use the names of two dishes to verify which of the taste information and language sounds - according to [Fushiki \(2008\)](#) - are effective. The reason for using the names of these specific dishes is that the information concerning the ingredients is in the name, the information can be easily manipulated, and the result is easily reflected.

Taste and language

[Fushiki \(2008\)](#), who studies taste at Kyoto University, classifies taste into four categories:

1a: Taste that satisfies physiological needs

Humans desire certain tastes based on physiological conditions and foods that match these feelings are perceived as delicious.

1b: Taste that matches the food culture

Foods and beverages that match the history and tastes that have evolved along with human and ethnic cultures provide a sense of security. Conversely, tastes and flavors that cannot be understood by ethnic or collective cultures remain unfamiliar.

1c: Taste based on prior information

Even when humans experience a unique taste, extrinsic information such as safety and taste has a strong influence on taste processing in the brain.

1d. Addictive taste

This can also be called a highly palatable food. Certain ingredients have very strong appeal that could cause people to become addicted. It is distinguished from others as a taste that influences your instinct unconditionally.

In this study, we focus on one particular taste type. For modern people, prior information-led taste (1c), is particularly delicious. This depends upon objective information such as external queues and the finest ingredients, which is said to be used to determine safety.

H1: Prior information has the most effective influence on consumer preference.

Next, referring to 1b, food can be a cultural preference. In brand name studies, three linguistic features have been proven to be effective. This also has a cultural component. Therefore, it can be said that consumers may be more likely to recognize linguistic sensations rather than the actual information. The linguistic sensations listed below are tested in H???. As there are very few Japanese studies concerning brand name preference, our hypothesis is based on existing research from Europe and the United States.

- 2a: Semantic appositeness (naming sounds that match the image)
- 2b: Paronomasia (humorous or double-meaning name)
- 2c: Initial plosives (good sense of words and sound symbols)

H2: The linguistic features of 2a, 2b, 2c are more effective in influencing consumer preference than 1b, prior information.

Preliminary survey using *Omuraisu*

Two questionnaire surveys were conducted on 134 participants (73 male and 61 female) around the age of 20 using the names of dishes. The first round had 74 participants (41 male and 33 female) and the second round had 60 (32 male and 28 female). The questionnaires were filled out anonymously. Second round participants were fewer than first round, because applicants who met the deadline were only 60 students. The dish used was *Omuraisu*, a popular dish in Japan. *Omuraisu* is ketchup-fried rice (-*raisu*) wrapped in an omelet (*omu*-), and the more familiar the food culture is to Japanese people (1b). In the first survey, participants were provided with five names and asked to select the name of the dish that they wanted to eat most, using only the menu and dish name without photos. The second round was modified based on the first round.

The names of the dishes in the first survey were “fluffy egg (or ‘fuwa-fuwa’ in Japanese) *Omuraisu*,” “*Omuraisu* for the first 30 diners only,” “Hinai-jidori *Omuraisu*,” “the original *Omuraisu*” and “morning-lay egg *Omuraisu*.”

The participants who chose “fluffy egg *Omuraisu*” accounted for 47% and those who chose “*Omuraisu* for the first 30 diners only” for 36%, together accounting for more than 80% of the participants. Concerning the most common answer - “fluffy” or “fuwa-fuwa” - participants responded that it was easy to imagine what kind of *Omuraisu* it was from the expression “fluffy” that expresses the texture. In the second most common case, there was a prominent response of participants saying that “*Omuraisu* for the first 30 diners only” made them feel special.

It was found that onomatopoeia with strong Japanese language characteristics such as “fuwa-fuwa” (fluffy) were effective. Therefore, in the second rounds menu, the onomatopoeia “toro-toro” (viscous) was added to offer “viscous egg *Omuraisu* for the first 30 diners only.” This is because prior information (1c) and Japanese language characteristics may be more effective.

The menu titles are “Viscous egg (toro-toro in Japanese) *Omuraisu* for the first 30 diners only,” “fluffy egg *Omuraisu*,” “Hinai-jidori *Omuraisu*,” “homemade *Omuraisu*,” and “*Omuraisu* from fresh eggs.”

“Fluffy egg *Omuraisu*” and “viscous (or toro-toro) egg *Omuraisu* for the first 30 diners only” gained popularity at 48% and 27% respectively. In this result, fluffy (“fuwa-fuwa”) is the keyword, similar to the first survey. Similarly, participants reported choosing the expression “for the first 30 diners only” for the special feeling, followed by the answer that they were attracted to the texture “viscous.”

From these results, it can be understood that the expressions that indicate texture and expressions that evoke special feelings are the two types of information that easily attract consumers (Table 1). Table 1 shows that Japanese language characteristics is likely to influence Japanese people.

H3: Japanese language characteristics that evoke the image of texture are most effective in arousing consumer preference.

Table 1: Expression and features of *Omuraisu*

1st round	2nd round	Expression	Element
Fluffy egg <i>Omuraisu</i>	Fluffy egg <i>Omuraisu</i>	Fuwa-fuwa	Japanese language characteristic
<i>Omuraisu</i> for the first 30 diners only	Viscous egg <i>Omuraisu</i> for the first 30 diners only	1st and 2nd round: For the first 30 diners only. 2nd round: Toro-toro	1c information Japanese language characteristic
Hinai-jidori <i>Omuraisu</i>	Hinai-jidori <i>Omuraisu</i>	Hinai-jidori	1c information
Original <i>Omuraisu</i>	Homemade <i>Omuraisu</i>	1st round: original 2nd round: Homemade	2b Paronomasia 1c information Morning-laid egg
<i>Omuraisu</i>	<i>Omuraisu</i> made with freshly-laid eggs	1st round: morning-laid 2nd round: freshly laid	1c information 1c information

Pasta survey first round

Another experiment was performed to test our hypotheses. A questionnaire was conducted using pasta, an Italian dish. It is easy to see that pasta has definitely taken root in Japanese as an ethnic food culture (1b). In this round, we conducted the questionnaire twice using a menu with photos, because we identified the effect of them on participants. The subjects were males and females around the age of 20 years, 74 (41 male and 33 female) in the first and 60 (32 male and 28 female) in the second. They are same subjects as in the last round. Again, the names of the second round dishes were modified based on the results of the first. Both selected the first to third place in order of what they wanted to eat.

In the first survey, “carbonara with plenty of cheese” took first place with 24%, while second place was “mozzarella with tomato sauc” at 15%. Third was “tender (puri-puri in Japanese) shrimp with tomato cream sauce” at 12%. Many respondents liked the cheese and carbonara. Participants expressed interest in “Godzilla Flaming Arabiata” and “Cacho e Pepe” (Table 2). The former uses a metaphor meaning “Godzilla is so hot that he blows fire.” Regarding “Cacho e Pepe,” despite the photos with plenty of cheese, the expression is a concern; whether the order is actually made depended upon whether the subject who likes cheese order it.

Concerning what seemed to be delicious on the menu, “tender (puri-puri in Japanese) shrimp with tomato cream sauce” was mentioned, and many respondents said that they were drawn to the expression “tender” for its texture. Of the respondents who answered with “carbonara with plenty of cheese,” most stated that they liked cheese.

Pasta survey second round

The second round questionnaire was revised based on the results of the first round questionnaire (Table 2). Many people answered that they liked cheese, so we added information to the menu that concerns the cheese.

Of the top rankings, “Carbonara” was 13%, “Hot topic! Cheese and basil flavored Genovese” was 12%, and “Loaded with the worlds best cheese, Cacho e Pepe” was 12%.

In the first round, the top two dishes accounted for 40% of the total; however, in the second round, the top three dishes accounted for 37% of the total. Specifically, for the “Carbonara” dish, the expression “plenty of cheese” was removed.

What had been in third place in the first surveytender (“puri-puri” in Japanese) shrimp with tomato cream sauce at 12%did not even make fifth place after the Japanese language characteristic “puri-puri” was dropped.

Table 2: Comparison of dish names

1st round	2nd round
Carbonara with plenty of cheese	Carbonara
Mozzarella cheese in tomato sauce	Moti-moti mozzarella cheese in tomato sauce
Puri-puri (tender) shrimp with tomato cream sauce	Shrimp with tomato cream cheese
Discerning cheese and basil Genovese	Hot topic! Cheese and basil flavor Genovese
Cacho e Pepe	Loaded with the worlds best cheese, Cacho e Pepe
Godzilla Flame Arabiata	Godzilla Flame Arabiata

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Omuraisu and language

The Japanese language is composed exclusively of vowels and consonants. First, we look at the linguistic features used in *Omuraisu*.

Fuwa-fuwa (“fluffy”) is composed of “fu” from consonant row “h(f)” and vowel row “u”. “Wa” is from consonant row “w” and vowel row “a.” This is a combination of the h-row with its image of lightness and smoothness and the “u”-row with its kindness and gentleness. “Fu” has a light and gentle feeling and is a plosive sound. The w-row is seen as brittle and fragile, while the a-row has the image of brightness and strength. The feeling of “wa” is therefore brittle and bright. As a whole, it reminds one of bright and brittle softness. The standard *Omuraisu* is a stuffed omelet wrapped around rice. The name (“fuwa-fuwa”) expresses the eggy softness that melts in the mouth and it can be said that it is easy for everyone to have a common image.

Considering the term toro-toro (“viscous”), “to” is composed of a consonant row and vowel, as is “ro.” There is overlap where the t-row has a sound which gives the image of strength and hardness, while “o” has a sound which evokes the image of weight and strength. The word feeling of “to” is therefore strength, weight, and hardness. The r-row has lightness/smoothness and “o” has weight/strength. The feeling of “ro” is therefore weight and smoothness. Overall, strength and weight are emphasized. In fact, toro-toro explains where creamy egg tangles both tongue and rice. The smoothness matches sound and taste, but the strength and weight, which is the overall sound impression, deviates from the actual image.

In *Omuraisu*, it turns out that prior information (1c) and paronomasia (2b) are not very effective. “Fu” corresponds to initial plosives (2c) because it is plosive, and fluffy corresponds to semantic appositeness (2a) because it matches the image.

Pasta and information

Many respondents chose carbonara, as it is a very popular taste among young people, indicating prior information (1b). However, its popularity changed drastically without the addition of the information “plenty of cheese” (Tables 3 and 4).

“Discerning Genovese” in the first survey was renamed “Hot topic! Cheese and basil flavor Genovese” in the second survey. In the first survey, there was no one that ranked “Discerning Genovese” first, second, or third. However, in the second survey, “Hot topic! Cheese and basil flavor Genovese” became one of the top three most popular items. “Hot topic!” and “cheese” were joint factors in deciding first place; however, in second place “Hot topic” exceeded “cheese.”

Changing “Cacho e Pepe” in the first survey to “Loaded with the worlds best cheese, Cacho e Pepe” in the second survey made the dish the most popular in first, second, and third place. In “Loaded with the worlds best cheese, Cacho e Pepe,” two characterizations, “worlds best cheese” and “Loaded with cheese” were added. The most frequent answers for first and second place was “because there is plenty of cheese.” However, in third place, participants answered that “the worlds best” was the deciding factor, exceeding that of “cheese.” In the second survey, “Genovese” and “Cacho e Pepe” made great progress as a result of adding the term “cheese” to the menu.

From these results, it can be said that prior information (1c) has a great influence on preference.

Table 3: Expressions and elements of the first pasta survey

1st round	Expression	Element
Carbonara with plenty of cheese	Plenty of cheese	1c information
Mozzarella cheese in tomato sauce	–	–
Puri-puri (tender) shrimp with tomato cream cheese	Puri-puri (tender)	Japanese language characteristic
Discerning cheese and basil Genovese	Discerning	1c information
Cacho e Pepe	–	–
Godzilla Flame Arabiata	Godzilla Flame	2b paronomasia (humorous names, double meaning)

Table 4: Expressions and elements of the second pasta survey

2nd round	Expression	Element
Carbonara	1st round: plenty of cheese 2nd round: –	1c information
Moti-moti (sticky) mozzarella cheese in tomato sauce	1st round: – 2nd round: moti-moti (sticky)	Japanese language characteristic
Shrimp with tomato cream cheese	1st round: puri-puri (tender) 2nd round: –	Japanese language characteristic
Hot topic! Cheese and basil flavor Genovese	1st round: Discerning 2nd round: Hot topic! Flavor	1c information
Loaded with the worlds best cheese, Cacho e Pepe	1st round: – 2nd round: Loaded with the worlds best cheese	1c information
Godzilla Flame Arabiata	Godzilla Flame	2b paronomasia (humorous/double meaning)

In addition, Mozzarella cheese in tomato sauce in the first survey had “sticky” (moti-moti in Japanese) added in the second survey to change the name to “Sticky mozzarella cheese in tomato sauce” (Table 5). As a result, there were no surprises in first and second choice, but it made the third most popular pasta to eat. However, it was second most popular menu item in the first survey, with a preference of 15% overall. Moreover, there is cheese that is popular with Japanese young people. Based on this point, it is thought that “sticky” is not as effective, or that in comparison with “Genovese” and “Cacho e Pepe,” (prior information, 1c) is more effective.

Table 5: Mozzarella cheese tomato sauce results

Number of times	Dish name	1st place	2nd place	3rd place
1st round	Mozzarella cheese in tomato sauce	15%	19%	1%
2nd round	Moti-moti (sticky) mozzarella cheese in tomato sauce	1%	1%	17%

Pasta survey language sound characteristics

In the first round, “Tender (puri-puri) shrimp with tomato cream sauce” was third place. Many respondents said that they were attracted to the expression “tender.” The onomatopoeic words “puri-puri” (tender) and “moti-moti” (sticky) are unique to the Japanese language and were effective in the first round but less so in the second.

The “pu” of puri-puri is a combination of consonant “p” with vowel “u” and that of “ri” is of r-row and vowel “i”. This combines the p-row with its image of brightness spreading and smoothness, and “u” with its lightness and gentleness. The word feeling for “pu” has a sense of brightness spreading and gentleness and is a plosive sound. The r-row gives lightness and smoothness, combined with “i” which has a sharp image. The word feeling of ri is smooth and sharp. Combined, it has a feeling of brightness and smoothness. The smoothness of the shrimp on the tongue and the inside-outside contrast when you bite through into the juicy flesh, is the impression here, and it can be seen that the images of brightness and smoothness overlap.

Considering “moti-moti” (sticky), “mo” has consonant m and vowel “o”, while ti has consonant from the t-row and vowel “i”. The sounds combined evokes the image from where the m-row that is soft and the “o”, which is heavy and strong. The word feeling of “mo” is therefore soft and strong. The t-row expresses strength and hardness, while “i” has a sharp image. The “ti” word feeling is therefore very hard. Overall, “moti” has both a soft and very hard image. The conflicting image of softness and hardness means that a complex feeling is evoked. Japanese people may recall Moti (hammered rice) and get confusing sound image and Moti.

Therefore, it can be said that “puri-puri” (tender) corresponds to semantic oppositeness (2a), because it matches the image. However, “moti-moti” (sticky) does not correspond to 2a because it does not match the image.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Using two dishes - *Omuraisu* and *pasta* - we investigated which expressions are effective in influencing Japanese consumers brand preference from three perspectives: taste, linguistic characteristics, and Japanese language characteristics.

H1 stating that prior information (1c) influences brand preference was found to be valid. It was also found that of the linguistic features presented in H2, 2b - paronomasia or humorous/double meaning had almost no effect, and that a combination of Japanese language characteristics (H3) and 2c - initial plosives - increased the effect. Furthermore, if the sound matches the image of the ingredients, such as the texture of the egg and the shrimp, rather than simply using the Japanese characteristics, it can be said that the preference is further increased. This means that H3 that Japanese language expressions matching the image of texture increases brand preference is proven, but only in conjunction with 2a, semantic oppositeness. Japanese language characteristics also seem to produce stable preferences. Thus, the hypothesis resulted in both positive and negative parts. From these results, it can be said that these influences on brand preference is highly applicable to Japanese brand names.

From hypothesis testing, it can be said that the sound of the brand name, which represents the meaning of the brand and should be appropriate to it, is unconsciously analogized by the empirical rules obtained from the consumers cultural knowledge structure, thus determining suitability.

Brand name research has shown that brand names can be effective if they influence consumer reputation and fit the image of the brand. In this study, brand name research was used for cuisine names, where it was found that names that match images also affect preferences in dishes. Our results further

clarified which factors are effective in brand preference. The findings of this study can be used naming ready-made side dishes and “Bentos”. The number of Japanese women who get a job is increasingly recently. Accordingly “ready-made dishes” and “Bentos” market are growing. Companies can propose the correct quality with names to them when they cannot help choosing one for their family and myself.

This study has certain limitations. In future, further investigations should address the fact that *Omuraisu* is found on menus that consists only of characters without photos; therefore, it may be said that consumer preference may, in part, depend on the image of the subject. In both cases, it is necessary to conduct surveys using only text or menus with photographs, and it is necessary to conduct surveys by increasing the number of subjects.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I am grateful to K. Osakabe, C. Takahashi and N. Fukuda for assistance with the questionnaires. I would like to thank SSERS Conference to give the opportunity to take some advice. This study was funded by the JSPS Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (grant number 16K03937). This work was supported by the Mejiro University Fund for Grant-in-Aid for Science Research (C) (KAKENHI). We would like to thank Editage (www.editage.com) for English language editing.

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