

# An Approach to Unorthodox Spellings in Trademarks

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to explain some English and Turkish trademark spellings within a theoretical approach. Contrary to the generally accepted orthography, we observe some words obtaining new forms by language-external interventions. Deliberately, some trade names are made orthographically notable by having been deviate from the standard spelling. Despite the fact that these words usually retain their meaning and pronunciation, they have remarkably new orthographic forms due to the use of alternative spellings. The need for distinctiveness in a highly commercialized world results in the use of a great number of irregularly spelled words in trademarks. Such economically motivated interventions, which do not often stem from language-internal motivations, bring about deviant spellings by breaking down the rules of standardized orthography. Even if this is an unacceptable anarchy by conventional writing standards, the motivation behind this deviation needs to be explained from a theoretical perspective. Therefore, this study is not an attempt to justify the deviant spellings in trade names but to understand why and how they occur.

**Key Words:** Unorthodox spelling, trademarks, defamiliarization, Russian formalism, language of advertising, August Schleicher

## Introduction

This study aims to take a different approach to the issue of ‘optional/deliberate’ interventions into language which seem to be a cultural problem in general and a language problem in specific. The article, with an inverse reading, intends to point out that language degeneration is a predicament that not only ‘dominated cultures’ are troubled with but also ‘dominating cultures’ are unhappy with. It is observed that this problem is not a recent phenomenon, but has instead been around even in the dominating cultures. A book published in 1966 in the United States undoubtedly indicates how trademarks are spelled in an unorthodox way. This is a highly debated topic in Turkey,<sup>1</sup> which encompasses a variety of

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subcategories that cannot be dealt with in one single article like this. Therefore, we will confine the topic to Sven Jacobson's book *Unorthodox Spellings in American Trademarks*. This book indicates how a vast amount of words are distorted from their standard spellings in order to create trademarks in the United States of America. Even though the framework will be based on Jacobson's study, we will also touch upon similar forms frequently encountered in Turkish, especially in recent years. While the topic is probed through the skeleton of the aforementioned book, some theoretical aspects of unorthodox spellings will also be mentioned.

### **Language change is constant**

August Schleicher (1821-1868), seemingly unhappy with the language change, stated that 'history is the enemy of language'. For Schleicher, time (i.e. history) is the reason for language decay<sup>2</sup>. Schleicher claimed that Sanskrit, an Indo-European language, was perfect just because it had gone through the least amount of change, while those had gone astray from the mainstream Indo-European family were 'corrupt' and 'degenerated' languages (Başkan 2003: 59). As a matter of fact, the tendency in all of the world languages is quite the opposite; that is, they did not stay static but instead changed steadily. Especially starting with W. von Humboldt, numerous linguists consider language to be a dynamic entity that is subject to change (*energia*), rather than something that stays static (*ergon*). In fact, if language were a static entity we would never have historical linguistics and etymology. Consequently, nobody would ever need Ferdinand de Saussure's diachronic and synchronic approaches to language. On the one hand, language systematically corrects errors that are considered ungrammatical or unacceptable; on the other hand it creates new erosions and contradictions. As previous errors become the rules of today, today's rules become the mistakes of the future (Başkan 2003: 17). When we look at the Turkish word *iyi* 'nice, good, fine' we witness a tremendous morpho-phonetic change:

*ed-gü*→*eδgü*→*eyü*→*eyi*→*iyi*→ (*pek*)-*i* (Eker 2005: 40).

From a synchronic standpoint while *iyi* is grammatically correct, all of its previous and later usages are considered to be incorrect. Other than its compound form in the word *peki* (< *pek* 'rather' + *iyi* 'nice'), all other forms such as the ones used in chat rooms<sup>3</sup>, cell phones, and e-mail messages are grammatically unacceptable. In such messages the word turns into a one phoneme word *i* or double *ii* with the drop of intervocalic *y*. Inevitably, the journey that had started with *ed-gü* will end up in *i* that the Turkish Spelling Guide will sooner or later accept as true. At this point a question arises: if every change is natural and innocent, what are the reasons for the change in language? We will try to tackle this question from a trade names perspective.

### **One reason for unorthodox spelling**

Undeniably, language change has several reasons. However, there are two main reasons which are rather effective on the change: One grows out of the inner-dynamics of language itself (phonetic, morphologic, syntactic, and semantic), while the other has roots in the outer world that affects the language from the outside (Üçok 2004: 74-80).

The change motivated by language-external reasons causes substantial alternations on the structure of language. As Aitchison states (1994: 210), a closer look at language change indicates that it is natural, inevitable, and continuous, and that it involves sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic factors which cannot be disentangled from one another. Undoubtedly, one of the reasons for the change comes from human psychology, which is shaped in society. Within the frame of psycho-sociology, several desires might lie behind a change, such as the desire for being perceived as distinctive, putting himself/herself forward among all others, and advertising one quality, etc. Since the main topic of this study is trademarks, we should notice that economical desires are also has great influence on language change. In fact, occasionally language is being forced to change for entirely economical reasons. The book our study is based on indicates how quite a lot of trademarks are distorted and differentiated from their original standard spelling.

With commercial purposes, the major aim of deviant spelling is to draw the attention of customers to the distinctiveness of the product in comparison to other similar ones. David Crystal (1987: 390), under the title of 'The language of advertising' points out the main tactics and tricks of how language is used in advertising. Some of the tactics are based on the meaning and some on the form of the words, but they are both language-related. In most cases it is the form and design of the name that makes the primary impact and causes the costumer to take note of it. In order to get people to identify the product, remember its name and persuade them that it is worth buying, ads rely almost totally on the use of language. Rhythm, rhyme, and other phonetic effects are especially noticeable. Deviant spelling: *Wot a lot I got, Milk has gotta lotta bottle* [Standard: *What a lot I got, Milk has got a lot of bottle*; this gives the sound of something like *wata lata gata bata...*]

Crystal (1987: 204) quotes several wrongfully spelled trade name examples from Sven Jacobson's book, saying that the use of abnormal spelling to make a point is more common than we might think. It is sometimes used as an economical way of expressing a contrast in poetry or identifying a personality in a story. It is also a commonly used device in the world of advertising, where it can make the name of a product or shop stand out and be remembered or provide the basis for a legal trademark.

Unsurprisingly, trade name makers<sup>4</sup> try every possible way to make the names as salient and outstanding as possible. The need stand out in the market may sometimes cause grammatically anomalous brand names. This breaking down of the everyday rules, defying of familiarity, and abolishing of mediocrity may be observed at every level of life. To a certain degree, desire for being perceived as distinctive from competitors can be seen in every field human beings are involved in, including music, literature, business, architecture, sports, science, clothing, etc. The Russian formalist Victor Shklovsky, who developed the concept of ‘defamiliarization,’ thinks that the meaning of art is based on the ability to ‘defamiliarize’ things, to show them in a new, unexpected way. In everyday life, we do not see things and their texture, since our perception has become habitual and automatic (see Nina Kolesnikoff’s article in Markaryk 1996: 528-529). Mundane acts, routine behaviors, familiar forms, and everyday images, etc., are so ordinary that after a while they do not draw much attention. Let us consider the example of someone poetically asking for a glass of water from his/her spouse: *Yandı cânım tende ey rûh-i revânım bir su ver* (Kâmi) ‘my soul is burnt down in my body, oh my walking beauty, please give me some water’ instead of saying *Çok susadım bana su ver* ‘I am so thirsty, give me some water.’ Essentially, the activity that is asked from the spouse is the same in both ceases: *Give me water*. However most people would not ask for a glass of water from his/her spouse in the poetic way that Kâmi does. Therefore, those going against the mainstream style would be more recognizable than their more normal counterparts, and they would probably have greater influence on their target as well. We think that unorthodox spelling in trademarks can be explained through the theory of defamiliarization. When we look at the way the words are played with when creating a brand name, it is similar in many ways to what Victor Shklovsky claimed for art. Terms such as deviation, estrangement, differential relations, and the alienation effect (Bertold Brecht’s *verfremdungs-effekte*) go hand in hand within the notion of defamiliarization. Even if it might not be accurate to classify all of the unorthodox spellings as verbal art, they might have a conspicuous verbal quality, giving one the right to raise the question ‘why not.’ By the same token, one of the most prominent figures of literary theories, Terry Eagleton, asks a crucial question about what is ‘fine’ and literary and what is not: ‘And what about jokes, football chants, and slogans, newspaper headlines, advertisements which are often verbally flamboyant but not generally classified as literature?’ (Eagleton 1996: 4-6). To us, rather than totally rejecting the presence of these verbal occurrences, we should try to understand the underlying motivations that give rise to such language phenomena. We will now point out the major headings in Jacobson’s book.

### **Jacobson's classification of unorthodox spellings**

Jacobson gives us a variety of different types of deviant spellings that also makes up the whole table of contents of the book. The most common ones that he examines are as follows: (i) spellings based on substandard pronunciation, (ii) spellings based on regional pronunciation, (iii) spellings based on nonce or fancy pronunciation, (iv) spelling regularization and simplification, (v) reduced number of graphemes, and (vi) increased number of graphemes. One of the subtitles is about the comparison between unorthodox trademark spellings and various reform<sup>5</sup> proposals made by various people and institutions.

In order to demonstrate how unorthodox American trademarks differ from standard orthography, the author starts his book with a short. At a scout training course in Connecticut, boys had to keep notebooks which were collected and examined by the staff towards the end of the course. One boy had made a list of the equipment issued to his patrol, and among the items in this list he had included '8 kots', instead of '8 cots'. The staff could hardly blame the boy for his mistake because he had only copied the spelling he had seen on the cartons containing the camp cots where it appeared 'KUMFORT KOT' in conspicuous capital letters. That was an irregularly spelled trademark appeared on the box. The author comments that the law<sup>6</sup> protects the producers and consumers but not the poor schoolboy, or anybody else for that matter, who is trying to learn the English orthography (Jacobson 1966: 7-8). Presumably, if August Schleicher had witnessed such an incident, he would have added the claim that 'economy/capitalism is the enemy of language' in addition to his reproof that 'history is the enemy of language.' The examples given below demonstrate how the nouns and noun phrases used in trademarks were grammatically misused in order to make the products seem memorable. Sometimes a name may contain more than one spelling distortion. Since it would increase the number of pages undesirably, we will only point out the change the name shares in common with similar cases. However in most cases we will indicate the standard form of the word in parenthesis so that the reader is able to see the other changes. Now we shall observe the most commonly yet deliberately made mistakes that Jacobson pointed out.

1. In 'careless' speech many phonemes which are retained in normal educated speech undergo deletion, and this tendency is often reflected in trademark spellings (Jacobson 1966: 10-11).

Some examples with phoneme deletion:

LECTRIC SHAVE (electric shave) /ɪ/    C-LECT-N-LOAD (collect and load) /ə/  
JUS-RITE (just right) /t/                    TUF-IDE (tough aid) /h/  
HAN-KLEEN (hand clean) /d/                KILZ-UM (kills them) /ð/  
BIT-O-HONEY (bit of honey) /v/          S'NUF (it is enough) /i, t/

Some spellings may contain instances of haplology, which is a form of deletion in this case deletes one of the two identical graphemes: KWIK-UPLÉ (quick couple), INK-N-TROL (ink control), SIG-NAL-ITE (signal light), SWIM-ASTER (swim master) etc.

2. In the so called r-less territory, i.e. Eastern New England, New York City with its immediate vicinity, and the South, most speakers use the [ə] allophone of /r/ in the final syllable of such words as *never*, *labor*. This tendency and similar ones can be observed in some trademarks. Orthographic spelling of *er* and *or* may become *a* and *o* consequently (Jacobson 1966: 12):

BUTTACUP (butter cup)                      SHOO-DUSTA (shoe duster)  
NEVA-LOSE (never lose)                    WATAPRUF (water proof)  
WONDA-CLOTH (wonder cloth)

With the rapid spread of internet use in Turkey, a new type of spelling of trade names with regional dialects came to attention alongside other deviant spellings. Even though no official name has yet been given to this trend that includes a variety of unusual scenes and images from Turkey, the unofficial popular name of this new trend or genre is *yurdum insanı* 'people of my country.' Even if the Turkish examples do not exactly reflect the same phonetic or orthographic features as their American counterparts, the thing they share is that both are based on the local dialects:

*Böcee İlaçlama* (böceğe ilaçlama) ğ deletion

*Hadi Be Aşamcı* (haydi be aşamcı) y deletion, k deletion, a compensatory lengthening

*Dondurmam Gaymak* (dondurmam kaymak) k>g (use of a different allophone)

3. Although the transition between Middle and Modern English has made a great many sound changes, shortening pronunciation of words, the written language has not changed. Graphemes retained in the written language are dropped in trademarks (Jacobson 1966: 16-21). For example if a mute *e* does not change the main meaning of the word it can be omitted. This can be true for other vowels or consonants as well.

Examples:

TRU-BLU (true blue)	ENGIN KOTE (engine coat)
SHUTLBRAK (shuttle break)	SAFTI-FLIGHT (safety flight)
FYR-FYTER (fire fighter)	DRIV-GYDS (drive guides)
SHYN-BRYT (shine bright)	RINS AID (rinse aid)
TUF-SPUNG (tough sponge)	GIV A PARTY (give a party)
TAPRITE (tape right)	ENDUR ALL (endure all)
TEXT-L-TRED (textile tread)	TUC-AWAY (tuck away)
EX-L-ENT (excellent) [In today's English <i>Christmas</i> becomes X-MAS, <i>extreme</i> becomes X-treme etc.]	

4. Although simplification seems to be the strongest tendency in trademark spellings, there are cases where some phonemes are represented in writing by more graphemes, going against the standard orthography (Jacobson 1966: 22).

AIRE-FLO (air flow)	SYTE-AYDE (sight aid)
CHEMISTE (chemist)	FAYM-US (famous)
TIDEY BOWL (tidy bowl)	KING ZEERO (king Zero)
DUNNGLU (don glue)	HOTT-PATCH (hot patch)

A number of stores in Denizli, Turkey, have added a grammatically unnecessary suffix *-ix*, *-(x)* at the end of their name to make them more distinctive. *Denix* (computer), *Marketix* (supermarket), *Özlemix* (photographer), *Saatx* (*Watch shop*), *künefx* (*Desert shop*). Especially the name *Denix* was purposefully chosen because the owner thought that the previous name, *Teknoloji X*, was not Turkish enough. In this case, the *Den* of *Denizli* and the Turkish pronunciation of *x* were combined to make the new name *Denix*. A cell phone service-provider *TURKCELL* could have been written as *TÜR KSEL* based on the Turkish pronunciation, but instead the *ü* in *türk* became *u*, the *s* in *sel* became *c*, and the *l* became *ll*.

5. In a great number of trademarks phonemes or phoneme sequences are represented in such a way that the number of graphemes used is equal to the standard orthography. In most cases the reason for the variation is the desire for uniqueness: *rain* 'rayn', *day* 'dai', *shoe* 'shoo' (Jacobson 1966: 24), *time* 'tyme/ taym' etc.

Other examples:

TRU-CLEEN (True clean)	KRISTYL-KLEER (Crystal clear)
EEZY-STAK (Easy stake)	HEETGRID (Heat grid)
KANTLEEK (Can't leak)	SEEL-SCREW (Seal screw)
KRISTEL-X (Crystal ex)	KLEEN KWALITY KLOTHS (Clean Quality Clothes)
KAB KOOL (Cab Cool)	KANVAS-KOTE (Canvas Cote)
KLEAN KLAY (Clean Clay)	KOFFEE KAKE (Coffee Cake)
KOLOR KOTE (Color Cote)	KRISPY KAKE KONES (Crispy Cake Cones)
BAR-B-QUE (Barbecue)	SE-MENT-SEAL (Cement Seal)
PRIVASEE (Privacy)	BESTUVALL (Best of All)
DIGZ-ALL (Digs All)	OILZALL (Oils All)
HOZE-LOK (Hose Lock)	SAWZALL (Saws All)
RUFF & TUFF (Rough and Tough)	KWIK-KUPEL (Quick Couple)
TO-WAUK-ON (To Walk On)	FYER-WALL (Fire Wall)
ONLIWON (Only Won)	JUSTWUN (Just One)

We should note that Jacobson's claim that the number of graphemes used in trademarks is equal to the standard orthography does not always reflect all the misspelled trademarks. For example, STAK has less grapheme than *stake*; BO-KAY has more graphemes than *bouquet*; N-DUR-ALL is shorter than *endure all* etc.

### **Examples of unorthodox spelling in Turkish trademarks**

In addition to the few examples we have seen so far, there are a number of trademarks in Turkey<sup>7</sup> that are spelled ungrammatically to distinguish them from the others. Deviant trademark spellings in Turkish, unlike their American counterparts, exhibit two main characteristics. One of them is naturally a commercial purpose that aims to distinguish two or more trademarks from each other by catching the eye of prospective customers. This purpose might be a universal one throughout the world; however, the one that seems to be stemming from imitation, mostly of so-called high/dominant cultures, is not the main characteristics of the American trademarks that are unorthodoxly spelled. European languages are frequently imitated in Turkish. As expected, the American variety of English is the most imitated among all foreign languages, due to the dominance of

the United States around the globe. Nonetheless, sometimes it depends on the type of the product. The name givers sometimes might follow commercial trends in the world, making the name resemble the words/language of the country in which that particular product is the most famous. Therefore some trademarks might sound English, Italian, French, and Japanese, etc.

While coining new brand names, Turkish words are written with letters and graphemes that are not used in those particular words in standard orthography. In other words, in deviant trademark spellings, Turkish phonemes are often not marked by the letters usually used in standard writing. Gürer Gülsevin (2006: 138-140) examines this problem under the subtitle of 'Writing features of foreign languages' naming tendency as a fatal and frightening alienation. He states that in recent years the area in which alienation is most visible is Turkish. Even Turkish or Turkified [mostly words of Arabic and Persian origin that have been used in Turkish for centuries] words or suffixes are being written in a way that they would be perceived as English. The Turkish alphabet reform was implemented in 1928 with law number 1353. Letters that do not exist in the English alphabet, such as *ş* and *ç*, were added to the Turkish version of the Roman alphabet. Additionally, the Turkish alphabet does not use the letter *x*. Consonants such as *i* and *v* can not be marked by *y* and *w* (consequently). Gülsevin points out the legal and imitation aspects of the problem. We think that researchers would work on the inventory of the deviant spellings in Turkish similar to that of Jacobson. However, we will examine some of the Turkish examples and try to understand the patterns in which they were created:

Yemish (Yemiş) <i>ş</i> > <i>sh</i>	Efendy (Efendi) <i>i</i> > <i>y</i>
Kebabchi (Kebabçı) <i>ç</i> > <i>ch</i> , <i>ı</i> > <i>i</i>	Eskidji (Eskici) <i>c</i> > <i>dj</i>
Wishne Bar (Vişne Bar) <i>v</i> > <i>w</i> , <i>ş</i> > <i>sh</i>	BICHOK (Birçok) <i>i</i> > <i>I</i> , <i>ç</i> > <i>ch</i>
DOSHE (Döşe) <i>ö</i> > <i>O</i> , <i>ş</i> > <i>sh</i>	LAILA (Leyla) <i>e</i> > <i>a</i> , <i>y</i> > <i>ı</i>
Shewky (Şevki Kuaför) <i>ş</i> > <i>sh</i> , <i>v</i> > <i>w</i> , <i>i</i> > <i>y</i>	Neshe (Neşe) <i>ş</i> > <i>sh</i>
TACKLE (Takıl) <i>kıl</i> > <i>ckle</i>	Besh Beach (Beş 'five' Beach) <i>ş</i> > <i>sh</i>
Ramsey (Remzi) <i>e</i> > <i>a</i> , <i>z</i> > <i>s</i> , <i>i</i> > <i>ey</i>	ByRam (Bayram) <i>a</i> > <i>ø</i>
Dishy (Dişi) <i>ş</i> > <i>sh</i>	İzmir Lee (İzmirli) <i>i</i> > <i>ee</i>
Perdecci (Perdeci) <i>c</i> > <i>cc</i>	Gecce (Gece) <i>c</i> > <i>cc</i>
Art-Win (Artvin) <i>v</i> > <i>w</i>	Rizelli (Rizeli) <i>ı</i> > <i>ll</i>
Şah inn Paradise (Şahin 'falcon') <i>n</i> > <i>nn</i>	SA-FE (Saffet-Feyzullah, Safe 'safe')
Barduck (Bardak) <i>a</i> > <i>u</i> , <i>k</i> > <i>ck</i>	Taxim (Taksim)

Shark Sofrası (Şark 'east') ş>sh	Tashimasu (Taşma su) ş>sh, ı>i
Japar (Jaki Pardo)	KRC Shop (Karaca)
BZN Gömlek (Bozan Gömlek)	Shamdan (Şamdan) etc.

When some of the misspelled Turkish trademarks are investigated closely, the phonetic aspects of modifications are particularly noteworthy. Representing phonemes with different graphemes may often bring a lexical and semantic dimension to the issue as well. The names represented by different letters may frequently acquire double or triple meanings, both in Turkish and especially in languages imitated:

1. One phoneme is indicated with two letters: ş>sh, ç>ch, i>ey, c>dj, k>ck
2. Phonemes pronounced with two consonants and marked by two letters are indicated with one letter: ks>x
3. Some consonants and vowels are marked by the letters that normally do not indicate those particular phonemes in standard writing: ö>o, a>u, ı>î, e>a, z>s, y>ı, y>j
4. Phonemes that are normally written in the Turkish word is omitted due to the fact that it is omitted in the language imitated: a>ø
5. Some phonemes that are normally marked by one letter are shown by two letters as in the language imitated: i>ee, c>cc, l>ll, n>nn
6. Complete vowel deletion: all of the vowels a>ø, o>ø
7. New words created with some sound modifications evoke especially some foreign words along side the word intended in Turkish. This can, in a way, be called 'verbal art': For instance, the trademark *Art-Win* (Artvin) seems like the combination of the words *art* and *win* in English. However, it evokes one of the city names, Artvin, in Turkey as well. While the foreign costumers -if there are any- will think of the words *art* and *win*, Turks will think of the city of Artvin, and probably that the owners come from that city.

A hotel name alongside the Mediterranean coast of Turkey is *Şah inn*. Because of the high degree of tourism in the region, this name draws the attention of both foreigners and Turks. Because, the word *şah* means 'king' in both Turkish and, with a slight spelling difference, in English. Furthermore, with the word *inn* 'hotel' added it means 'the place for the king(s).' In Turkish on the other hand the word evokes the name of a bird *şahin* 'hawk, falcon.'

A bar name *Barduck* can make us think of the Turkish word *bardak* 'glass' and *duck* in English. Altering the phoneme ş with sh in orthography creates the word *Shark*, a restaurant name, makes us to recall the fish shark and the

'authentic' word *şark* 'east' in Turkish. Similarly *Wishne* may be perceived as *wish* in English and *vişne* 'sour cherry' in Turkish. To me one of the most creative ones of all is a car-wash place name: *Tashimasu*. It gives the impression of a Japanese word, something like *mitsubishi* or *takashi*. Because of the good reputation of any kind of Japanese goods throughout the world and as well as in Turkey, the owner of the place makes 'a smart' use of the Japanese image coining a Japanese-like Turkish trademark. When looked at closely, we see that it is a compound word composed of *taşım* 'carrying' and *su* 'water.' The intended pronunciation might be *tashi masu*, and its potential Japanese meaning is unknown and, here, irrelevant.

Besides the notion of imitation we should particularly focus on the economic concerns that the producers may have. In such a globalized world where anyone can aim to sell his/her products to local costumers as well as to those in furthest most possible countries, image is everything. In certain areas of trade, some particular nations have higher prestige than others. Consequently, trademarks taken from the languages of those nations may sell more easily than the rest. This economic-based naming strategy should be considered as an attempt to hide the origin of the product and make it seem like a product of a more prestigious country. For example, some fashion designers and home collection producers created Italian-looking Turkish words (*Rizelli*<*Rizeli*, *Perdecci*<*perdeci* etc.) and some taken from the language itself such as *Bellona*. No customer would ever know unless he/she is told that *YUMATU* and *Japar* are of Turkish origin and they have nothing to do with Japan. The Turkish electronics maker *YUMATU* and construction goods producer *Japar* may very well seem like Japanese words but in reality they are made out of non-Japanese words. They are abbreviations of personal names. The first one is from the personal names *YUsuf*, *MAhmut* and *TUncer*; and the second one is from name and the family name of the founder *JAKi PARdo*. Even though the word *Japar* does not seem like a Japanese word *per se*, it may give the impression of the word *Japan* in English which evokes that country with a little *r* and *n* resemblance. We cannot claim that Turkish trademarks with deviant spelling do not catch the attention of the costumers, they certainly do. However, this attention may go either way. One desirable reaction might be to make the trademark fashionable and boost business for the owner, but another negative reaction could be elicited from those who have language sensitivity.

## **Conclusion**

This study did not aim to put forward the claim that *deforming the forms* or *abnormalizing the normal* while inventing the trademarks is an act of art. However we should also acknowledge that there is general tendency of

going upstream against the downstream in literature, in sports, in arts, in every possible field human being is involved; and for that reason, the language dimension of economy cannot be an exception. This is the natural consequence of the struggle of trying to be as distinctive as possible from others who are doing the same thing in the same environment. Even if this is unacceptable in a world that desires standardization, it is clear that defying the rules has a lot to do with human psychology, society, economy and other disciplines. In the context of deviant trademark spellings, while the frame of pronunciation must remain, the forms of the words often undergo great orthographic change. As a matter of fact, from the grammatical point of view, this might even be called a clarification of ambiguous spellings in some of the American trademarks; however, in the Turkish case this cannot be as grammatically innocent. We do not observe a huge discrepancy between Turkish pronunciation and orthography in comparison to English.<sup>8</sup> In the English orthography, letters sometimes do not carry the sounds of their own when combined in a word, such as *one* /wʌn/, and, in many cases the consonants *c* and *k* can be pronounced the same. Similarly *knife* can be written as *nayf* in English because the initial *k* is not pronounced in the standard form of the word. Turkish has an orthography that shows very little of these kinds of difficulties. Thus, there is no orthographic reason for writing the word *Artvin* in the form of *Art-win*. This is the reason that most Turkish scholars are uncomfortable with modifications this kind. Instead of getting angry with the situation, the Turkish scholarly should instead seek to better understand the psychology of such attempts.

From this discussion, it is apparent that interdisciplinary studies between the fields of economics and linguistics have a long way to go. The need to learn the main principles for finding trade names forced me to make a contact with the economics department at my university. Further comprehensive studies on the use of language, even literature, in marketing and economy should be conducted by participants from all sides.

Even if it advances in a culturally and grammatically undesired direction and with an uncontrollable speed, we need to scrutinize and evaluate the phenomenon of deviant spelling from an academic perspective. It should also be once more stated that this study has also tried to demonstrate that such problems are not only encountered in so-called culturally dominated cultures but are also observed in dominant cultures as well. Even though the direction of imitation would go from the non-dominant to dominant cultures, and the scale of the problems might differ significantly between the two, the dominant culture is by no means free of such problems, including unorthodox spelling of standard words. I am well aware of the fact that it is

dangerous to make judgments based solely on estimations; however, would it be still possible for us to see unorthodox spellings in English if the language did not have such a big discrepancy between its orthography and pronunciation? Probably the answer to this question would be still be 'Yes.' Therefore, even if cultural linguistics would readily call this deviation, scholars of related fields should still work on the internal and external reasons that have great impact on the structure of language.

Special thanks: I would like to thank my friends Ryan Waldie (University of British Columbia-Canada) and Dr. Jeff Muehlbauer (University of Manitoba-Canada) for finding me Sven Jacobson's book.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> There are several popular and academic studies on the contemporary problems of Turkish and the language debate in Turkey. Alongside these studies, many individuals and societies with language sensitivity carry out a number of activities inside and outside of universities every year. Some of the books written on the issue are rather emotionally motivated and extremely popular, employing sarcasm and irony. Take the following titles, *Dil Kafirleri [Language Infidels]* by Ayşenur Yazıcı, *Bye Bye Türkçe [Bye Bye Turkish]* by Oktay Sinanoğlu, *Türkçe "Off" [Turkish Off]* by Feyza Hepçilingirler etc. Unfortunately many of the books do not have any academic ground. However, there are some studies that take an academic approach to the problem. Even though they treat the issue from different standpoints, the following two books can be good examples for this approach: Menz ve Schroeder (2006), Gülsevin Boz (2006).
- <sup>2</sup> Language change is scrutinized broadly from different aspects in Jean Aitchison's book *Language Change: Progress or Decay?* The title itself hints at the bipolar nature of the change; should we worry or should we be neutral? To Aitchison, in theory, there are three possibilities to be considered. The first is based on Max Müller's statement, which sees the change as a slow decay: 'The history of all the Aryan languages is nothing but a gradual process of decay.' The second statement is a positive one claiming that languages might be evolving to a more efficient state. As one of the defenders of this theory Danish linguist Otto Jespersen thinks that 'in the evolution of languages the discarding of old flexions goes hand in hand with the development of simpler and more regular expedients that are rather less liable than the old ones to produce misunderstanding.' The third view sees the change as neither progress nor decay. Belgian linguist Joseph Vendryès claimed that progress in the absolute sense is impossible. It is simply that different states exist, succeeding each other, each dominated by certain general laws imposed by the equilibrium of the forces with which they are confronted.' (Aitchison 1994: 6-7).
- <sup>3</sup> Even though our main topic is unorthodox spelling in trademarks we need to mention a very commonly intentionally made spelling mistake that is being encountered with the spread of the internet. Throughout the world, especially with the spread of online *chat rooms* in the recent years, the numbers of grammatical mistakes and erroneous spelling have risen uncontrollably. These intentional mistakes that are mainly seen in the form of abbreviations of words go hand in hand with what is called 'the least effort theory' (Eker 2005: 33) that aims to save from time, space and money. English examples: *4eva* 'forever', *thx* 'thanks', *tyl* 'Talk to you later', *brb* 'will be right back', *kthxbye* 'Okay, thanks, goodbye', *lol* 'laugh out loud', *u2* 'you too', *c2c* 'cam[era] to cam[era]' etc.; Turkish examples: *slm* 'selam-hi, hello', *mrbr* 'merhaba-hi, hello', *nbr* 'ne ha-

ber?-what is up?’ Famous Turkish comedian Cem Yılmaz uses his name as a brand name without vowels: *CMYLMZ*. A sub service of *TURKCELL*, *gncturkcll* ‘genç türk cell-young türk cell,’ also uses the same method of creation (de-vowelization). Ironically, the Turkish alphabet reform (1928) adopted the Latin script to better indicate the Turkish vowels because the mostly consonant-based Arabic script was unable to differentiate the Turkish vowels. Nowadays in Turkish, starting with the brand names, though still not grammatically acceptable, apparently there is a new trend of de-vowelization that brings us back to the very reason that the Turks made an alphabet change. Although it is strongly rejected by the mainstream grammarians, most likely this is the fastest spreading form of unorthodox spelling in world languages.

- 4 There are certain ways of determining the trademarks of the goods to be sold in businesses based on production and marketing some of which are the use of personal and family names, holding trademark contests, asking for professional assistance from the centers that are designed for such needs. For more information please see the Aaker (1991-187-190).
- 5 The desire to eliminate irregular spelling in English can be traced back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In 1551, John Hart complained the ‘voices’ of English writing, which cause it to be ‘learned hard and evil to read.’ In the succeeding centuries, several other experimental orthographies were published. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the view that English needed a more consistent orthography had attracted widespread British and American support. A landmark was the publication in 1844 of an augmented Roman alphabet known as ‘Phonotypy’ by Isaac Pitman. Soon after, in 1876, the Spelling Reform Association was founded in the USA, followed by the Simplified Spelling Board (1906), and the Simplified Spelling Society (1908) in Britain (Crystal 1987: 215). These proposals were followed by several others in the course of time. For example, in 1920 the American Simplified Spelling Board proposed some ‘rules for simplified spelling.’ Among these may be mentioned: (A) deletion of (1) the last two letters when a double consonantal occurs before mute *e*, as in *palette*, *etiquette*, (2) one of two identical final consonants, as in *add*, *cell*, *dull*, *egg*, *glass*, (3) final mute *e* in certain cases where it is unnecessary, as in *give*, *have*, *freeze*, *serve*, *stable*, (4) mute *a* in *dead*, *head*, *heavy*, etc, (5) mute *b* in *crumb*, *plumb*, (6) mute *u* before *l*, as in *shoulder*, or before a vocalic, as in *build*, *guard*, (7) ‘*ugh*’ in, for instance, *doughnut*. (B) substitution of (1) *d* or *t* for the ending *-ed* in the case of such verbs as *couple*, *fashion*, *fix*, *kiss*, *press*, but not when the change would suggest a wrong pronunciation, (2) ‘*uf*’ for ‘*ough*’ in words such as *tough*, *rough*, (3) *f* for *ph*, as in *siphon*, *photo*, *phono* (Jacobson 1966: 29).
- 6 Harry Aubrey Toulmin Jr., in his book *Trade-Mark Act of 1946*, gives the basic purposes of trademark legislation which includes entry on his list (d) saying that a mark which so resembles a mark previously registered or used that causes confusion or mistakes or deceives purchasers is unacceptable. Based on this entry and other possible reasons some of which were mentioned above resulted in the use of a great many wrong spelled trademarks. This aims to protect the producers and costumers (p, 7).
- 7 In this study we mostly deal with the Turkish trademarks that have gone through phonetic changes. There are several trademarks not examined here which imitate grammatical features of a foreign language such, as *ilkay’s köfte*, *Sultan’s Dürüm*, *The Marmara*, *Damat’s*, *Kazım’s* etc. For more examples see Gülsevin’s article that makes quotations from Hasan Güleriyüz (Gülsevin 2006: 134-135).
- 8 Those who are familiar with the educational systems of the English speaking countries would be aware of ‘Spelling Bee’ contests. This is a competition where contestants, usually children, are asked to spell English words. The concept is thought to have originated in the United States. Today, National Spelling Bee competitions for English are held in the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and Indonesia, among others. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spelling\\_bee](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spelling_bee) (19 March 2009). Orthography and pronunciation of Turkish words are so close that holding such contests would make no sense.

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# Ticari Adlardaki Kural Dışı Yazımlara Bir Yaklaşım

**Kerim Demirci\***

**Özet:** Bu yazının amacı İngilizcede ve Türkçede ticari adlarda görülen bazı yazım yanlışlarını teorik bir yaklaşımla açıklamaktır. Bazı kelimele-  
rin dilbilgisi açısından genel kabul görmüş yazımlarının aksine dil dışı  
müdahaleler yoluyla yeni yazılış biçimleri kazandığı görülmüştür. Özellikle  
ticari adların yazılışında, genel dilbilgisel 'norm'lardan ve 'form'lardan  
uzaklaşıp dikkat çekici yeni biçimler oluşturulmaktadır. Kendisine mü-  
dahale edilen kelimenin anlamı ve telaffuzu çok değişmese de bu keli-  
mede orijinalindeki yerine alternatif harflerin kullanılmasıyla biçim  
açısından dikkat çekici değişiklikler oluşmaktadır. Ticari adlandırma  
yapanların kelimeleri sapkın imlayla yazmalarının esas amacı da dik-  
katleri ürünlerinin/markalarının üzerine çekmektir. Dil içi dinamikler-  
den kaynaklanmayan bu tarz kastî müdahaleler yazıda standardın bo-  
zulmasına ve imlâ sapkınılığına yol açmaktadır. İmlâda anarşiye yol  
açan ve varlığını benimsemediğimiz bu sapkınılığın sebebini kuramsal  
olarak anlamamız gerekmektedir. Dolayısıyla bu yazı ticari adlarda sık-  
ça rastlanan sapkın imlayı mazur gösterme teşebbüsü değil olayın oluş  
sebeplerini ve yollarını anlamaya çalışma denemesidir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sapkın imlâ, ticari adlar, alışkanlıkları kırma, Rus  
formalizmi, reklam dili, August Schleicher.

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## Подход к неправильному написанию торговых названий

Керим Демирджи\*

**Аннотация:** Целью данной статьи является объяснение с теоретической точки зрения некоторых орфографических ошибок при написании торговых названий на английском и турецком языках. Наблюдается, что в отличие от общепринятой орфографии, некоторые слова путем внешнего вмешательства приобрели новых формы написания. Особенно при написании некоторых торговых марок отклонение от стандартных орфографических норм и форм правописания создало новые более заметные формы. Несмотря на то, что эти слова обычно сохраняют свое значение и произношение, в связи с использованием альтернативных вариантов написания они принимают новые орфографические формы. Основной же целью измененного написания коммерческих наименований является привлечение внимания к продукции или брендам. Внешние по отношению к внутренней динамике литературного языка такого рода вмешательства приводят к ломке стандартов и извращенному правописанию. Необходимо теоретическое понимание причин этого неприемлемого отклонения, ведущего к анархии в правописании. Таким образом, данное исследование является не попыткой оправдания девиантного написания торговых марок, а пытается выяснить причины и способы их возникновения.

**Ключевые Слова:** извращенное правописание, торговые наименования, ломка привычек, русский формализм, язык рекламы, Август Шлейхер.

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