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Superior Brand Name Types in High and Low Context Cultures

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Superior Brand Name Types in High and Low Context Cultures

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This thesis report investigates superior brand name types in Finland and Turkey, which are low and high context cultures respectively.

There are six brand name types in theory. These are descriptive, suggestive, compound, classic, arbitrary and fanciful name types. This thesis research is based on a web-based questionnaire. This questionnaire was sent to 100 people and 25 Finns and 25 Turks rated newly created brand names when the survey was closed. One name was created for each type of name for the same business and there were eight different imaginary companies from different industries.

The survey results were analyzed in excel, using simple methods to determine whether there is a tendency to choose similar name types in each country. According to the results, Finns tend to choose descriptive and suggestive names more than other name types. Finns avoided arbitrary and fanciful names. Turkish respondents however, preferred fanciful and arbitrary names more than other name types. Turks avoided descriptive and suggestive names in general.

These tendencies could help name creators, such as brand managers or entrepreneurs, to decide on a company name. This thesis could also be used as a starting point for further development of naming strategies in international companies where the customers belong to high and low context cultures. Since it is known now which type of names are favored, new names can be created in each popular name type taking linguistic perspectives into account.

This thesis is written in such a way that the readers are presented with a concise overview of the differences between Finnish and Turkish cultures. Moreover, they can see how these differences are reflected in national preferences for types of brand name.

Key words: high-context, low-context, brand names, brand name types, Finland, Turkey

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1 Introduction

There are many companies focusing on expanding overseas even though they don't have a strong position in their local marketplace. It is relatively easy to expand into geographically closer countries due to cultural similarities. However, it might be difficult to enter exotic markets due to local marketplaces' branding strategies. The target market should be studied carefully before a market entry attempt takes place. In cases where a company which is not established yet and the stakeholders know that the company will become an international one, brand elements, or brand identities should be created with an international mind. On the other hand, if there is an existing company expanding its operations to new markets, brand elements might need to be reviewed. The first brand element is the "brand name." In this thesis, the brand name choices of two different countries will be studied.

1.1 The purpose of the thesis

The purpose of this thesis is especially to suggest how to approach brand naming for Finnish companies expanding to Turkey and Turkish companies expanding to Finland. From a broader perspective, this thesis would also give brief background information for expansions from high-context cultures to low-context cultures and vice versa. In addition to the explained purposes, this study could be used as a starting point for further development of brand naming strategies and also product naming strategies by overseas growing companies.

1.2 Research approach

The web-based survey is one of the quantitative methods used in the research phase of this thesis. The author of the thesis resides in Finland and is Turkish. For this reason, face-to-face interviews with Turkish target group would not have been possible. In addition, the reliability and objectivity of quantitative research methods have been other factors taken into consideration when deciding on the research approach.

1.3 Theoretical approach

Two topics are presented in the theoretical background of this thesis. Firstly, theories concerning cultural studies are highlighted. Secondly, theories regarding brand management and brand naming in particular are offered. The cultural studies will give brief background information regarding the two target markets of this study: Finland and Turkey. The brand naming part will cover the most popular naming strategies. The theoretical section of this thesis

should enable the reader to understand potential brand naming strategies in different cultures.

1.4 Framework of the thesis

This thesis has five main sections: introduction, theoretical background, research approach, empirical study and lastly, conclusions and recommendations. The introductory chapter explains what the thesis offer and how it offers to the readers. The theoretical background will combine two different theories. When this part is read, the rest of the thesis should be understood easier. The research approach will demonstrate how the web-based survey was prepared and carried out. Moreover, it will explain how the collected data was processed. The empirical study illustrates the results of the web-based survey comprehensively, which is followed by the conclusions and recommendations.

2 Theoretical background

This part consists of three main sections. Firstly, cultural studies will be presented so that reader could have an idea of the two target markets of the thesis research: Finland and Turkey in cultural context. Second part will give an overview of brand naming. The common sense of giving name to a company will be explained. In addition, linguistic guidelines will be shown in order to demonstrate the complexity of brand naming. Brand name types will be underlined so that the research results are understood better. At last, there is a summary section which summarizes both theories mentioned in the theoretical background part of the thesis.

2.1 Cultural studies

In this thesis two countries are compared in terms of superior brand name types. Therefore, it is a good idea to first of all understand the cultural differences between these two countries. Upcoming sections will help readers to get familiar with the target countries of this thesis.

In most Western languages culture commonly means “civilization” or “refinement of the mind” and, in particular, the results of such refinement, including education, art and literature. This is culture in the narrow sense. Culture as mental software, however, corresponds to a much broader use of the word that is common among sociologists and, especially, anthropologists. (Hofstede 2005, 2-5)

As Harrison and Huntington note, “The term ‘culture’ of course, has had multiple meanings in different disciplines and different contexts.” The elusive nature of the term is perhaps best

reflected in the fact that as early as 1952 a review of the anthropology literature revealed 164 different definitions of the word culture. As Lonner and Malpass point out, these definitions “range from complex and fancy definitions to simple ones such as ‘culture is the programming of the mind’ or ‘culture is the human-made part of the environment.’” The media also uses the word to portray aspects of individual sophistication such as classical music, fine art or exceptional food and wine. (Samovar, Porter &, McDaniel 2009, 23)

Culture is always collective phenomenon, because it is at least partly shared with people who live or lived within the same social environment, which is where it was learned. Culture consists of the unwritten rules of the social game. It is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others. (Hofstede 2005, 2-5)

Culture is learned not innate. It derives from one’s social environment rather than from one’s genes. Culture should be distinguished from human nature on one side and from an individual’s personality on the other, although exactly where the borders lie between nature and culture and between culture and personality, is a matter of discussion among social scientists. (Hofstede 2005, 2-5)

Human nature is what all human beings, from the Russian professor to Australian Aborigine, have in common: it represents the universal level in one’s mental software. It is inherited within one’s genes; again using the computer analogy, it is the “operating system” that determines one’s physical and basic psychological functioning. The human ability to feel fear, anger, love, joy, sadness, shame; the need to associate with others and to play and exercise oneself; and the facility to observe the environment and to talk about it with other humans all belong to this level of mental programming. However, what one does with these feelings, how one expresses fear, joy, observations, and so on, is modified by culture. (Hofstede 2005, 2-5)

The personality of an individual, on the other hand, is her or his unique personal set of mental programs that needn’t be shared with any other human being. It is based on traits that are partly inherited within the individual’s unique set of genes and partly learned. Learned means modified by the influence of collective programming (culture) as well as by unique personal experiences. (Hofstede 2005, 2-5)

Cultural traits have often been attributed to heredity, because philosophers and other scholars in the past didn’t know how to otherwise explain the remarkable stability of differences in culture patterns among human groups. They underestimated the impact of learning from previous generations and of teaching to a future generation what one has learned oneself. The

role of heredity is exaggerated in pseudo theories of race, which have been responsible for, among other things, the holocaust organized by the Nazis during World War II. Ethnic strife is often justified by unfounded arguments of cultural superiority and inferiority. In the United States there have been periodic scientific discussions on whether certain ethnic groups (in particular, blacks) could be genetically less intelligent than others (in particular, whites). The arguments used for genetic differences, by the way, make Asians in the United States on average more intelligent than whites. It is extremely difficult if not impossible, however, to find tests of intelligence that are culture free. Such tests should reflect only innate abilities and be insensitive to differences in the social environment. In the United States a larger share of blacks than of whites has grown up in socially disadvantaged circumstances, which is a cultural influence no test known to us can circumvent. The same logic applies to differences in intelligence between ethnic groups in other countries. (Hofstede 2005, 2-5)

2.1.1 National cultural differences

The invention of nations, political units into which the entire world is divided and to one of which every human being is supposed to belong-as manifested by her or his passport-is a recent phenomenon in human history. Earlier there were states, but not everybody belonged to or identified with one of these. The nation system was only introduced worldwide in the mid-twentieth century. It followed the colonial system that had developed during the preceding three centuries. In this colonial period the technologically advanced countries of Western Europe divided among themselves virtually all territories of the globe that were not held by another strong political power. The borders between the former colonial nations still reflect the colonial legacy. In Africa in particular, most national borders correspond to the logic of the colonial powers rather than to the cultural dividing lines of the local populations. (Hofstede 2005, 18-19)

Nations, therefore, should not be equated with societies, which are historically, organically, developed forms of social organization. Strictly speaking, the concept of a common culture applies to societies, not to nations. Nevertheless, many nations do form historically developed wholes even if they consist of clearly different groups and even if they contain less integrated minorities. Within nations that have existed for some time there are strong forces toward further integration: (usually) one dominant national language, common mass media, a national education system, a national army, a national political system, national representation in sports events with a strong symbolic and emotional appeal, a national market for certain skills, products and services. Today's nations do not attain the degree of internal homogeneity of the isolated, usually nonliterate societies studied by field anthropologists, but they are the source of a considerable amount of common mental programming of their citizens. (Hofstede 2005, 18-19)

On the other hand, there remains a tendency for ethnic, linguistic and religious groups to fight for recognition of their own identity, if not for national independence; this tendency has been increasing rather than decreasing since the 1960s. Examples are the Ulster Roman Catholics; the Belgian Flemish; the Basques in Spain and France; the Kurds in Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey; the ethnic groups of the former Yugoslavia; the Hutu and Tutsi tribes in Rwanda; and the Chechens in Russia. (Hofstede 2005, 18-19)

In research on cultural differences, nationality-the passport one holds-should therefore be used with care. Yet it is often the only feasible criterion for classification. Rightly or wrongly, collective properties are ascribed to the citizens of certain countries: people refer to “typically American,” “typically German,” “typically Japanese” behavior. Using nationality as a criterion is a matter of expediency, because it is immensely easier to obtain data for nations than for organic homogeneous societies. Nations as political bodies supply all kinds of statistics about their populations. Survey data (that is, the answers people give on paper-and-pencil questionnaires related to their culture) are also mostly collected through national networks. Where it is possible to separate results by region, ethnic or linguistic group, this should be done. (Hofstede 2005, 18-19)

A strong reason for collecting data at the level of nations is that one of the purposes of cross-cultural research is to promote cooperation among nations. The nations that exist today populate one single world, and we either survive or perish together. So it makes practical sense to focus on cultural factors separating or uniting nations. (Hofstede 2005, 18-19)

The anthropologist Edward Hall offers us another effective means of examining cultural similarities and differences in both perception and communication. He categorizes cultures as being either high-or low-context, depending on the degree to which meaning comes from the setting rather than from the words being exchanged. The assumption underlying Hall’s classifications is that “one of the functions of culture is to provide a highly selective screen between man and the outside world. In its many forms, culture therefore designates what we pay attention and what we ignore.” (Samovar, E.Porter, McDaniel 2009, 215-217)

For Hall, context was “the information that surrounds an event; it is inextricably bound up with the meaning of the event.” His work revealed that cultures were often characterized by high-or low-context communication, which could be described in the following manner:

A high context (HC) communication or message is one in which most the information is already in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicitly transmitted part of the message. A low context (LC) communication is just the opposite; i.e., the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code. (Samovar, E.Porter, McDaniel 2009, 215-217)

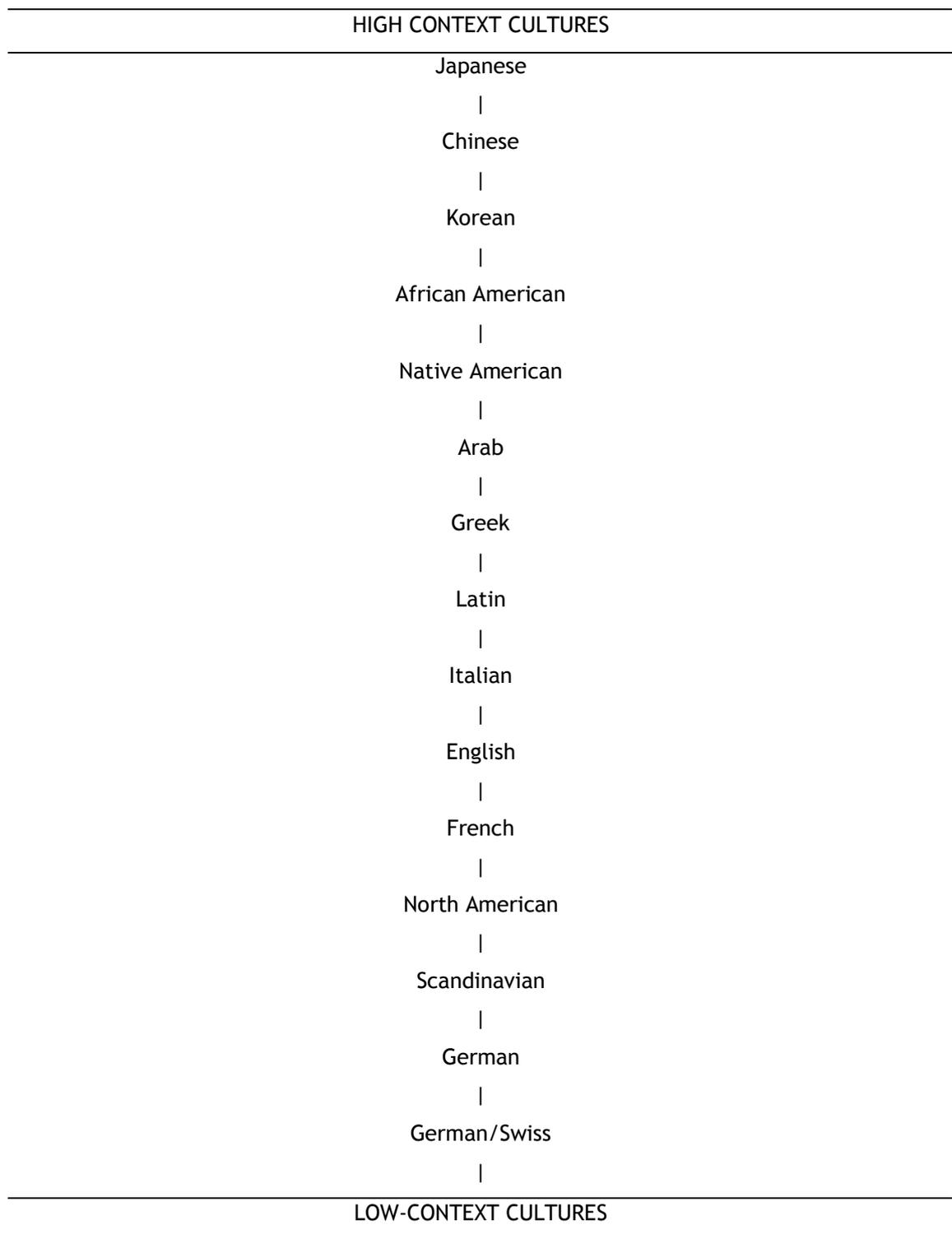


Figure 1: Cultures arranged along the high-context and low-context dimensions
(Samovar, E.Porter, McDaniel 2009, 216)

2.1.2 High context

In high-context cultures (American Indian, Latin American, Japanese, Arab, Chinese, African American and Korean), many of the meaning being exchanged during the encounter do not have to be communicated through words. One reason that meanings often do not have to be stated verbally in high-context cultures is that the people are very homogeneous. They have similar experiences and information networks and well established social protocols. High-context cultures, because of tradition and history, change very little over time. According to Hofstede, high-context cultures are “more often found in traditional cultures”. These are cultures in which consistent messages have produced consistent responses to the social environment. “As a result,” the Halls say, “for most normal transactions in daily life they do not require, nor do they expect, much in-depth background information.” Because meaning is not necessarily contained in words, in high-context cultures, information is provided through inference, gestures, and even silence. (Samovar, E.Porter, McDaniel 2009, 215-217)

People from high-context cultures tend to be aware of their surroundings and can express and interpret without verbally stating them. Andersen points out, “High-context cultures are more reliant on and tuned in to nonverbal communication.” Meaning in high-context cultures is also conveyed “through status (age, sex, education, family background, title and affiliations) and through and individual’s informal friends and associates.” Because of the subtle “messages” used by high-context cultures, members of these groups, according to Gudykunst, often “communicate in an indirect fashion.” They rely more on how something is said, rather than what is said, and are acutely aware of nonverbal cues. (Samovar, E.Porter, McDaniel 2009, 215-217)

2.1.3 Low context

In low-context cultures (German, Swiss, Scandinavian and North American), the population is less homogeneous and therefore tends to compartmentalize interpersonal contacts. This lack of a large pool of common experiences means that “each time they interact with others they need detailed background information.” In low-context cultures, the verbal message contains most of the information and very little is embedded in the context or the participants. This characteristic manifests itself in a host of ways. For example, the Asian mode of communication (high context) is often vague, indirect and implicit, whereas Western communication (low context) tends to be direct and explicit. In addition, as Lynch notes, “Low-context communicators talk more, speak more rapidly and often raise their voices.” Althen offers an excellent summary of Americans’ fascination with language in the following paragraph:

Americans depend more on spoken words than on nonverbal behavior to convey messages. They think it is important to be able to “speak up” and “say what’s on their mind.” They admire a person who has a large vocabulary and who can express him or herself clearly and cleverly. (Samovar, E.Porter, McDaniel 2009, 215-217)

Differences in perceptions of credibility are yet another aspect of communication associated with these two orientations. In high-context cultures, people who rely primarily on verbal messages for information are perceived as less credible. They believe that silence often sends a better message than words and that anyone who needs words does not have the information. As the Indonesian proverb states, "Empty cans clatter the loudest." Ting-Toomey has observed that the communication differences between high-context and low-context cultures tend to be less open, they consider conflict harmful to most communication encounters. For them, Ting-Toomey says, "Conflict should be dealt with discreetly and subtly." (Samovar, E.Porter, McDaniel 2009, 215-217)

2.2 Brand naming theory

There is no doubt that brand naming is an interesting topic for many people. This section will explain brand naming theories. The basics of naming a brand, commonly used brand name types and linguistic aspect of brand naming are few focus points of this section. Since brand name is one of the brand elements, there will be a quick overview of the brand elements as well to clarify where brand naming belongs to in brand management.

2.2.1 Brand elements in brief

Brand elements, sometimes called brand identities, are those trademarkable devices that serve to identify and differentiate the brand. The main ones are brand names, URLs, logos, symbols, characters, spokespeople, slogans, jingles, packages and signage. The customer-based brand equity model suggests that marketers should choose brand elements to enhance brand awareness; facilitate the formation of strong, favorable and unique brand associations; or elicit positive brand judgments and feelings. The test of the brand-building ability of brand elements is what consumers would think or feel about the product if they knew only its brand name, associated logo and other characteristics. A brand element that provides a positive contribution to brand equity conveys or implies certain valued associations or responses. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

In general, there are six criteria for brand elements (with more specific sub choices for each, as shown in Figure 2): Memorability, meaningfulness, likability, transferability, adaptability and protectability. The first three criteria-memorability, meaningfulness, and likability-are the marketer's offensive strategy and build brand equity. The latter three, however, play a defensive role for leveraging and maintaining brand equity in the face of different opportunities and constraints. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Criteria for choosing brand elements

<p>1. Memorable</p> <p>Easily recognized</p> <p>Easily recalled</p>
<p>2. Meaningful</p> <p>Descriptive</p> <p>Persuasive</p>
<p>3. Likable</p> <p>Fun and interesting</p> <p>Rich visual and verbal imagery</p> <p>Aesthetically pleasing</p>
<p>4. Transferable</p> <p>Within and across product categories</p> <p>Across geographic boundaries and cultures</p>
<p>5. Adaptable</p> <p>Flexible</p> <p>Updatable</p>
<p>6. Protectable</p> <p>Legally</p> <p>Competitively</p>

Figure 2: Criteria for choosing brand elements (Keller 2008, 141)

A memorable, meaningful and likable set of brand elements offers many advantages because consumers often do not examine much information in making product decisions. Descriptive and persuasive elements reduce the burden on marketing communications to build awareness and link brand associations exist. Often, the less concrete the possible product benefits are, the more important is the creative potential of the brand name and other brand elements to capture intangible characteristics of a brand. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

What would an ideal brand element be like? Consider brand names-perhaps the most central of all brand elements. Ideally, a brand name would be easily remembered, highly suggestive of both the product class and the particular benefits that served as the basis of its position-

ing, inherently fun or interesting, rich with creative potential, transferable to a wide variety of product and geographic settings, enduring in meaning and relevant over time and strongly protectable both legally and competitively. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Unfortunately, it is difficult to choose a brand name-or any brand element, for that matter-that satisfies all these criteria. The more meaningful the brand name, for example, the more difficult it is to transfer or translate it to other cultures. This is one reason why it's preferable to have multiple brand elements. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

2.2.2 Brand names

The brand name is a fundamentally important choice because it often captures the central theme or key associations of a product in a very compact and economical fashion. Brand names can be an extremely effective shorthand means of communication. Whereas an advertisement lasts half a minute and a sales call could run to hours, customers can notice the brand name and register its meaning or activate it in memory in just a few seconds. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Because it is so closely tied to the product in the minds of consumers, however, the brand name is also the most difficult element for marketers to change. So they systematically research them before making a choice. The days when Henry Ford II could name his new automobile the "Edsel" after the name of a family member seem to be long gone. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Is it difficult to come up with a brand name? Ira Bachrach, a well-known branding consultant, notes that although there are 140 000 words in the English vocabulary, the average American recognizes only 20 000; his consulting company, NameLab, sticks to the 7 000 words that make up the vocabulary of the most TV programs and commercials. Although that may seem to allow a lot of choices, each year tens of thousands of new brands are registered as legal trademarks. In fact, arriving at a satisfactory brand name for a new product can be a painfully difficult and prolonged process. After realizing that most of the desirable brand names are already legally registered, many a frustrated executive has lamented that "all the good ones taken." (Keller 2008, 140-154)

In some ways, this difficulty should not be surprising. Any parent can probably sympathize with how hard it can be to choose a name for a child, as evidenced by the thousands of babies born without names each year because their parents have not decided on-or perhaps not agreed upon-a name yet. It is rare that naming a product can be as easy as it was for Ford when it introduced the Taurus automobile. "Taurus" was the code name given to the car during its design stage because the chief engineer's and product manager's wives were both born

under that astrological sign. As luck would have it, upon closer examination, the name turned out to have a number of desirable characteristics. When it was chosen as the actual name for the car, Ford saved thousands of dollars in additional research and consulting expenses. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

2.2.3 Naming guidelines

Selecting a brand name for a new product is certainly an art and a science. Figure 3 displays the different types of possible brand names according to identity experts Landor Associates. Like any brand element, brand names must be chosen with the six general criteria of memorability, meaningfulness, likability, transferability, adaptability and protectability in mind. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

<p>1.Descriptive Describes the function literally; generally unregistrable Examples: Singapore Airlines, Global Crossing</p> <p>2.Suggestive Suggestive of a benefit or function Examples: marchFIRST, Agilent Technologies</p> <p>3.Compounds Combination of two or more, often unexpected, words Example:redhat</p> <p>4.Classical Based on latin, Greek or Sanskrit Example:Meritor</p> <p>5.Arbitrary Real words with no obvious tie-in to company Example:Apple</p> <p>6.Fanciful Coined words with no obvious meaning Example:Avanade</p>

Figure 3: Landor's brand name taxonomy (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Brand names that are simple and easy to pronounce or spell, familiar and meaningful and different, distinctive and unusual can obviously improve brand awareness. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Simplicity reduces the effort consumers have to make to comprehend and process the brand name. Short names often facilitate recall because they are easy to encode and store in memory—consider Aim toothpaste, Raid pest spray, Bold laundry detergent, Suave shampoo, Off insect repellent, Jif peanut butter, Ban deodorant and Bic pens. Marketers can shorten longer names to make them easier to recall. For example, over the years Chevrolet cars have also become known as “Chevy,” Budweiser beer has become “Bud” and Coca-Cola is also “Coke.” (Keller 2008, 140-154)

To encourage word-of-mouth exposure that helps to build strong memory links, marketers should also make brand names easy to pronounce. Also keep in mind that rather than risk the embarrassment of mispronouncing a difficult name like Hyundai automobiles, Fruzen Gladje ice cream, or Façonnable clothing, consumers may just avoid pronouncing it altogether. Brands with difficult-to-pronounce names have an uphill battle to fight because the firm has to devote so much of the initial marketing effort to teaching consumers how to pronounce the name. Wyborowa Polish vodka (pronounced VEE-ba-ro-va) was supported by a print ad to help consumers pronounce the brand name—a key factor for success in the distilled spirits category, where little self-service exists and consumers usually need to ask for the brand in the store. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Ideally, the brand name should have a clear, understandable and unambiguous pronunciation and meaning. However, the way a brand is pronounced can affect its meaning, so consumers may take away different perceptions if ambiguous pronunciation results in different meanings. One research study showed that certain hypothetical products with brand names that were acceptable in both English and French, such as Vaner, Randal and Massin, were perceived as more “hedonic” (providing pleasure) and were better liked when pronounced in French than in English. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Pronunciation problems may arise from not conforming linguistic rules. Although Honda chose the name “Acura” because it was associated with words connoting precision in several languages, it initially had some trouble with consumer pronunciation of the name (AK-yur-a) in the American market, perhaps in part because the company chose not to use the phonetically simpler English spelling of Accura (with a double c). (Keller 2008, 140-154)

To improve pronounceability and recallability, many marketers seek a desirable cadence and pleasant sound in their brand names. For example, brand names may use alliteration (repetition of consonants, such as in Coleco), assonance (repetition of vowel sounds, such as in Ramada Inn), consonance (repetition of consonants with intervening vowel change, such as in Hamburger Helper), or rhythm (repetition of pattern of syllable stress, such as in Better Business Bureau). Some words employ onomatopoeia—words composed of syllables that when pro-

nounced generate a sound strongly suggestive of the word's meaning, like Sizzler steak house, Cap'n Crunch cereal, Ping gold clubs and Schweppes carbonated beverages. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

The brand name should be familiar and meaningful so it can tap into existing knowledge structures. It can be concrete or abstract in meaning. Because the names of people, objects, birds, animals and inanimate objects already exist in memory, consumers have to do less learning to understand their meanings as brand names. Links form more easily, increasing memorability. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Thus, when a consumer sees an ad for the first time for a car called "Neon," the fact that the consumer already has the word stored in memory should make it easier to encode the product name and thus improve its recallability. In fact, Chrysler chose that name for its new Dodge car because it also connoted "young, youthful and vibrant," the desired image for the product. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

To help create strong brand-category links and aid brand recall, the brand name may also suggest the product or service category, as do JuicyJuice 100 percent fruit juices, Ticketron ticket selling service and Newsweek weekly news magazine. Brand elements that are highly descriptive of the product category or its introduce a soft drink extension for a brand called JuicyJuice! (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Although choosing a simple, easy to pronounce familiar and meaningful brand name can improve recallability, to improve brand recognition, on the other hand, brand names should be different, distinctive and unusual. As mentioned before recognition depends on consumers' ability to discriminate between brands and more complex brand names are more easily distinguished. Distinctive brand names can also make it easier for consumers to learn intrinsic product information. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

A brand name can be distinctive because it is inherently unique or because it is unique in the context of other brands in the category. Distinctive words may be seldom-used or atypical words for the product category like Apple computers, unusual combinations of real words like Toys "R" Us or completely made up words like Xerox or Exxon. Even made-up brand names, however, have to satisfy prevailing linguistic rules and conventions-for example, try pronouncing names without vowels such as Blfft, Xgpr or Msdy! (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Here too there are tradeoffs. Even if a distinctive brand name is advantageous for brand recognition, it also has to be credible and desirable in the product category. A notable exception is Smuckers jelly, which has tried to turn the handicap of its distinctive-but potentially

dislikable-name into a positive through its slogan, “With a Name Like Smuckers, It Has to Be Good!” (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Because the brand name is a compact form of communication, the explicit and implicit meanings consumers extract from it are important. In particular, the brand name can reinforce an important attribute or benefit association that makes up its product positioning. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Besides performance-related considerations, brand names can also communicate more abstract considerations as do names like Joy dishwashing liquid, Caress soap and Obsession perfume. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

A descriptive brand name should make it easier to link the reinforced attribute or benefit. Consumers will find it easier to believe that a laundry detergent “adds fresh scent” to clothes if it has a name like “Blossom” than if it’s called something neutral like “Circle.” However, brand names that reinforce the initial positioning of a brand may make it harder to link new associations to the brand if it later has to be repositioned. For example, if a laundry detergent named Blossom is positioned as “adding fresh scent,” it may be more difficult to later reposition the product, if necessary and add a new brand association that it “fights though stains.” Consumers may find it more difficult to accept or just too easy to forget the new positioning when the brand name continues to remind them of other product considerations. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

With sufficient time and the proper marketing programs, however, this difficulty can sometimes be overcome. Southwest Airlines no longer stands for airline service in Texas and the southwestern United States. When two former Texas Instruments engineers were considering a name for their new line of portable personal computers, they chose “Compaq” because it suggested a smaller computer. Through subsequent introductions of “bigger” personal computers, advertising campaigns and other marketing activity, Compaq has been able to transcend the initial positioning suggested by its name. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Such marketing maneuvers can be a long and expensive process, however. Imagine the difficulty of repositioning brands such as “I Can’t Believe It’s Not Butter!” or “Gee, Your Hair Smells Terrific!” Thus, it is important when choosing a meaningful name to consider the possibility of later repositioning and the necessity of linking other associations. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Meaningful names are not restricted to real words. Consumers can extract meaning, if they so desire, even from made-up or fanciful brand names. For example, one study of computer-

generated brand names containing random combinations of syllables found that “whumies” and “quax” reminded consumers of a breakfast cereal and that “dehax” reminded them of a laundry detergent. Thus, consumers were able to extract at least some product meaning from these essentially arbitrary names when instructed to do so. Nevertheless, consumers are likely to extract meaning from highly abstract names only when they are motivated to do so. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Marketers generally devise made-up brand names systematically, basing words on combinations of morphemes. A morpheme is the smallest linguistic unit having meaning. There are 6 000 morphemes in the English language, including real words like “man” and prefixes, suffixes or roots. For example, Nissan’s Sentra automobile is a combination of two morphemes suggesting “central” and “sentry.” By combining carefully chosen morphemes, marketers can construct brand names that actually have some relatively easily inferred or implicit meaning. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Brand names raise a number of interesting linguistic issues. Even individual letters can contain meaning that may be useful in developing a new brand name. The letter X has become much more common in recent years (ESPN’S X Games, Nissan’s Xterra SUV and the WWF’s short-lived XFL) because X represents “extreme,” “on the edge,” and “youth”-“what’s alternative, what’s next and what’s new.” Research has shown that in some instances, consumers prefer products with brand names bearing some of the letters from their own name (Jonathan may exhibit a greater-than-expected preference for a product named Jonoki). (Keller 2008, 140-154)

The sounds of letters can take on meaning as well. For example, some words begin with phonemic elements called plosives, like the letters b,c,d,g,k,p and t, whereas others use sibilants, which are sounds like s and soft c. Plosives escape from the mouth more quickly than sibilants and are harsher and more direct. Consequently, they are thought to make names more specific and less abstract and to be more easily recognized and recalled. On the other hand, because sibilants have a softer sound, they tend to conjure up romantic, serene images and are often found in the names of products such as perfumes-think of Cie, Chanel and Cerissa. One study found a relationship between certain characteristics of the letters of brand names and product features: As consonant hardness and vowel pitch increased in hypothetical brand names for toilet paper and household cleansers, consumer perception of the harshness of the product also increased. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Brands are not restricted to letters alone. Alphanumeric names may include a mixture of letters and digits (WD-40), a mixture of words and digits (Formula 409) or mixtures of letters or

words and numbers in written form (Saks Fifth Avenue). They can also designate generations or relationships in a product line like BMW's 3, 5 and 7 series. (Keller 2008, 140-154)

Choosing a name depends on the destiny that is assigned to the brand. One must therefore distinguish the type of research related to creating a full-fledged brand name - destined to expand internationally, to cover a large product line, to expand to other categories and to last - from the opposite related to creating a product name with a more limited scope in space and time. Emphasis, process time and financial investments will certainly be different in both cases. (Kapferer 2012, 185-188)

Ninety per cent of the time, manufacturers want the brand name to describe the product which the brand is going to endorse. They like the name to describe what the product does (an aspirin that would be called Headache) or is (a biscuit brand that would be called Biscuito; a direct banking service called Bank Direct). This preference for denotative names shows that companies do not understand what brands are all about and what their purpose really is. Remember: brands do not describe products - brands distinguish products. (Kapferer 2012, 185-188)

Choosing a descriptive name also amounts to missing out on all the potential of global communication. The product's characteristics and qualities will be presented to the target audience thanks to the advertisements, the sales people, direct marketing, articles in specialized periodicals and the comparative studies done by consumer associations. It would thus be a waste to have the brand name merely repeats the same message that all these communication means will convey in a much more efficient and complete way. The name, on the contrary, must serve to add extra meaning, to convey the spirit of the brand. For products do not live forever: their life cycle indeed limited. The meaning of the brand name should not get mixed up with the product characteristics that a brand presents when it is first created. The founders of Apple were well aware of this: within a few weeks the market would know that Apple made microcomputers. It was therefore unnecessary to fall into the trap of names such as Micro-Computers International or Computer Research Systems. In calling themselves Apple, on the contrary, they could straightaway convey the brand's durable uniqueness (and not just the characteristics of the temporary Apple-1): this uniqueness has to do more with the other facets of brand identity than with its physique (ie its culture, its relationship, its personality, etc). (Kapferer 2012, 185-188)

The brand is not the product. The brand name therefore should not describe what the product does but reveal or suggest a difference. (Kapferer 2012, 185-188)

2.3 Summary

There are two countries compared in terms of brand name taste in this thesis. Therefore, it was crucial to clarify which country belongs to high-context and which one belongs to low-context. According to Figure 1 (Ugur 2012, 11), Finland would be considered as a low-context country and Turkey as a high-context country. However, considering England being in the middle of the contextual map, Turkey is closer to England than Finland is. In other words, Finland is closer to being the lowest context country than Turkey being the highest context country.

Brand elements help brands in two ways; first to identify and second to differentiate brands. The main brand elements are brand names, URLs, logos, symbols, characters, spokespeople, slogans, jingles, packages and signage. Brand names like all the other brand elements should have the following qualities: Memorability, meaningfulness, likability, transferability, adaptability, protectability. The first three criteria are the marketers' offensive strategy and build brand equity. The latter three takes place in defensive strategy for leveraging and maintaining brand equity.

There are six main brand name types - descriptive, suggestive, compound, classic, arbitrary and fanciful - worth mentioning one more time since these types will be tested in the upcoming sections of this thesis. Linguistic aspects of brand naming are also very important however, it won't be included in the thesis research since it is not purely a focus area of brand management.

2.4 Theoretical framework

It is worth including a theoretical framework since there are multiple theories involved in the theory part of this thesis. This way interrelation among different theories could be shown. The purpose of the theoretical framework is usually to test the theories, making research findings meaningful and stimulate research. In theoretical approach there were two main theories; cultures and brand naming. Below there is a figure 4 shows the interrelation between the contextual map and the brand name types. After studying two different theories, one can assume that high context and low context target groups would prefer certain name types. In addition, certain name types would be equally important for both target groups. This figure somehow connects two theories.

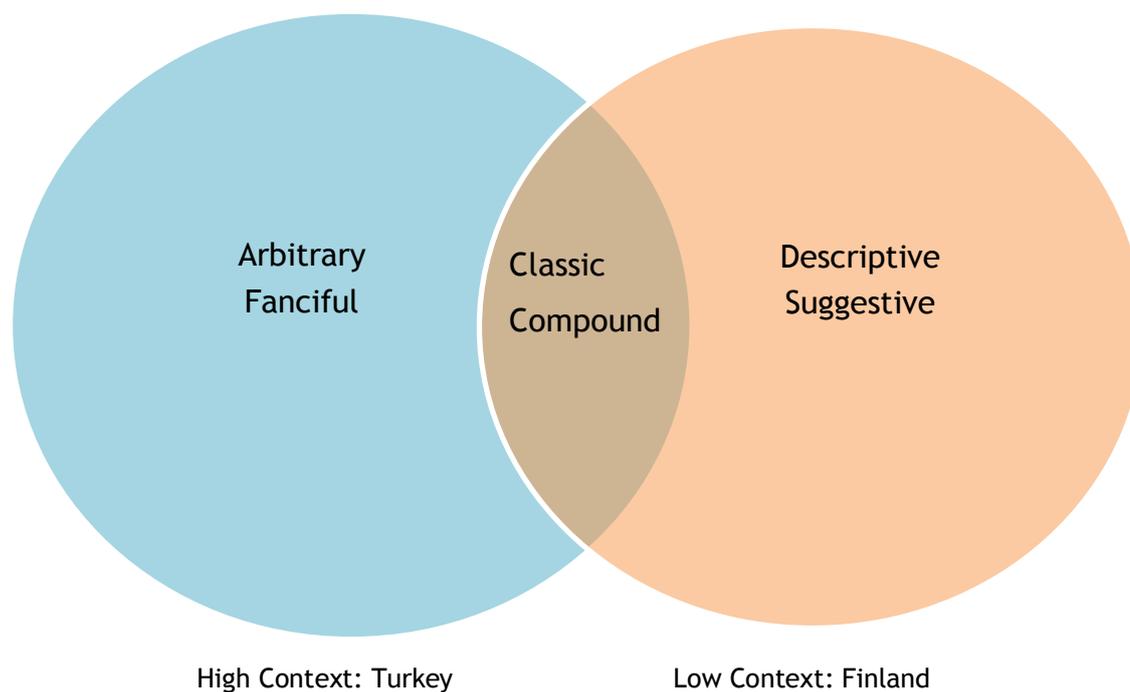


Figure 4: Interrelation between contextual map and brand name types

3 Research approach

When listening to the radio, watching the television or reading a daily newspaper it is difficult to avoid the term ‘research’. The results of ‘research’ are all around us. A debate about the findings of a recent poll of people’s opinions inevitably includes a discussion of ‘research’, normally referring to the way in which the data were collected. Politicians often justify their policy decisions on the basis of ‘research’. Newspapers report the findings of research companies’ surveys. Documentary programmes tell us about ‘research findings’, and advertisers may highlight the ‘results of research’ to encourage you to buy a particular product or brand. However, we believe that what these examples really emphasize is the wide range of meanings given to the term ‘research’ in everyday speech.

(Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill 2009, 4)

Walliman (2005) argues that many of these everyday uses of the term ‘research’ are not research in the true meaning of the word. As part of this, he highlights ways in which the term is used wrongly:

- just collecting facts or information with no clear purpose;
- reassembling and reordering facts or information without interpretation;

- as a term to get your product or idea noticed and respected.

The first of these highlights the fact that, although research often involves the collection of information, it is more than just reading a few books or articles, talking to a few people or asking people questions. While collecting data may be part of the research process, if it is not undertaken in a systematic way, on its own and, in particular, with a clear purpose, it will not be seen as research. The second of these is commonplace in many reports. Data are collected, perhaps from a variety of different sources, and then assembled in a single document with the sources of these data listed. However, there is no interpretation of the data collected. Again, while the assembly of data from a variety of sources may be part of the process of research, without interpretation it is not research. (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill 2009, 4)

Figure 5, illustrates the research process in simple terms.

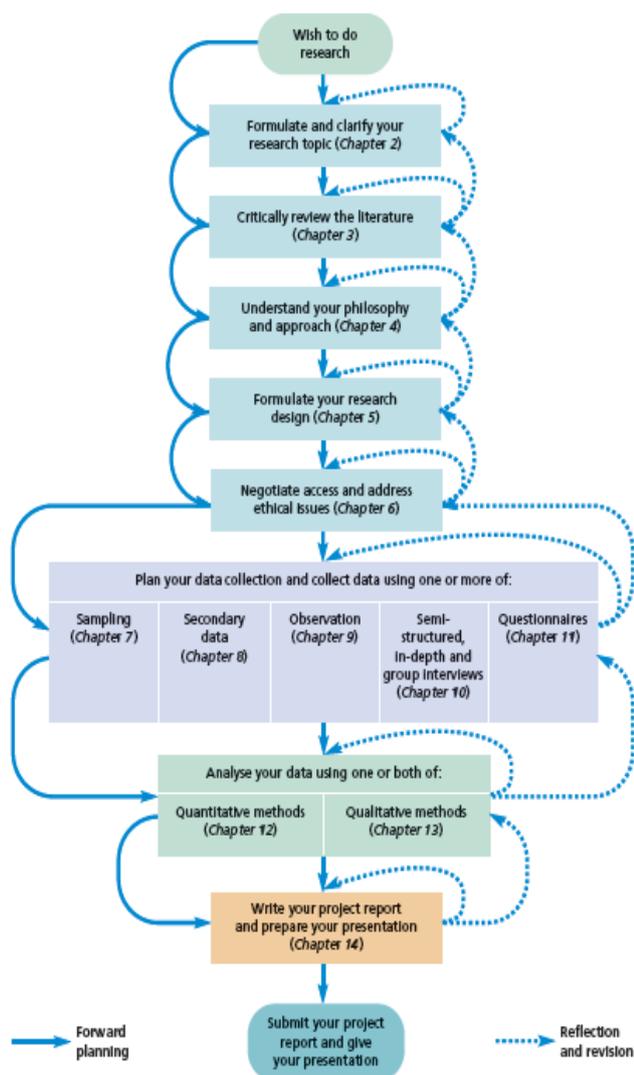


Figure 5: Research Process (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill 2009, 10)

Finally, the term 'research' can be used to get an idea or product noticed by people and to suggest that people should have confidence in it. In such instances, when you ask for details of the research process, these are either unclear or not forthcoming. Based upon this brief discussion we can already see that research has a number of characteristics:

- Data are collected systematically.
- Data are interpreted systematically.
- There is a clear purpose: to find things out.

We can therefore define research as something that people undertake in order to find out things in a systematic way, thereby increasing their knowledge. Two phrases are important in this definition: 'systematic way' and 'to find out things'. 'Systematic' suggests that research is based on logical relationships and not just beliefs (Ghauri and Grønhaug 2005). As part of this, your research will involve an explanation of the methods used to collect the data, will argue why the results obtained are meaningful, and will explain any limitations that are associated with them. 'To find out things' suggests there are multiplicities of possible purposes for your research. These may include describing, explaining, understanding, criticizing and analyzing (Ghauri and Grønhaug 2005). However, it also suggests that you have a clear purpose or set of 'things' that you want to find out, such as the answer to a question or number of questions. (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill 2009, 4)

3.1 Quantitative research

Quantitative data in a raw form, that is, before these data have been processed and analyzed, convey very little meaning to most people. These data, therefore, need to be processed to make them useful, that is, to turn them into information. Quantitative analysis techniques such as graphs, charts and statistics allow us to do this; helping us to explore, present, describe and examine relationships and trends within our data. (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill 2009, 414)

Virtually any business and management research you undertake is likely to involve some numerical data or contain data that could usefully be quantified to help you answer your research question(s) and to meet your objectives. Quantitative data refer to all such data and can be a product of all research strategies. It can range from simple counts such as the frequency of occurrences to more complex data such as test scores, prices or rental costs. To be useful these data need to be analyzed and interpreted. Quantitative analysis techniques assist you in this process. They range from creating simple tables or diagrams that show the fre-

quency of occurrence and using statistics such as indices to enable comparisons, through establishing statistical relationships between variables to complex statistical modeling. (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill 2009, 414)

Until the advent of powerful personal computers, data were analyzed either by hand or by using mainframe computers. The former of these was extremely time consuming and prone to error, the latter expensive. Fortunately, the by-hand or calculator ‘number-crunching’ and ‘charting’ elements of quantitative analysis have been incorporated into relatively inexpensive personal-computer-based analysis software. These range from spreadsheets such as Excel™ to more advanced data management and statistical analysis software packages such as Minitab™, SAS™, SPSS for Windows™ and Statview™. They also include more specialized survey design and analysis packages such as SNAP™ and SphinxSurvey™. Consequently, it is no longer necessary for you to be able to draw presentation-quality diagrams or to calculate statistics by hand as these can be done using a computer. However, if your analyses are to be straightforward and of any value you need to:

- have prepared your data with quantitative analyses in mind;
- be aware of and know when to use different charting and statistical techniques. (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill 2009, 414-415)

Robson (2002:393) summarizes this, arguing that quantitative data analysis is:

. . . a field where it is not at all difficult to carry out an analysis which is simply wrong, or inappropriate for your purposes. And the negative side of readily available analysis software is that it becomes that much easier to generate elegantly presented rubbish. He also emphasizes the need to seek advice regarding statistical analyses, a sentiment that we support strongly. (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill 2009, 414-415)

3.2 Methodology

A web-based survey was prepared for the research part of this thesis. Web-based questionnaire with 12 questions was sent to over 100 people and the survey was open for 3 weeks. At the end of this period, there were 50 people answered the survey (25 Finnish and 25 Turkish) and the upcoming results are based on these answers. There were 26 female and 24 male respondents and the age median of the whole target group has been 26.88. The target group was chosen amongst author’s own network and friends and it was promoted mainly by facebook. The target group was chosen in a way that the age medians of Finnish respondents and Turkish respondents would be somehow similar. In addition, it was sent to approximately equal amount of females and males. The last consideration was that the English level of the

respondents. The survey was only sent to potential respondents that are fluent in English since English names were used in this study.

There were 12 questions prepared. First 4 questions were open ones where the name, the age, gender and country of the target audience were asked. The rest of the questions were asked in order to investigate the brand name taste of the individuals. These 8 mentioned questions were identical except for the answers. These were “matrix” style questions where there was a specific question asked, and the audience was expected to give points (0, for the worst name, 5, for the best name) for each answer (brand name) rather than choosing one answer because this thesis aims to find a tendency rather than a specific conclusion. Instead of using existing brand names, brand names used in the questionnaire were created by the author of this study prior to the sending of the survey. If existing company names were used, there would have been feelings or past experiences of individuals involved when rating the names, which would manipulate the results of this questionnaire. In other words, the target audience would not have been as objective, if they were to pick existing company names. However, there could be a disadvantage of creating new names which is the limited knowledge of the thesis author in terms of brand naming.

Before the name generation, eight industries were chosen and within each industry an imaginary company definition was made. The point of having multiple industries was to of course get more answers to the questionnaire. This way, the accuracy of the results was expected to rise up. Then, knowing the industry and having the basic idea of the business, 6 brand names were created since there are six brand name types.

To sum up, at the end of name generation there were 48 names created to be used in the questionnaire. Questionnaire was published in a free survey web-page. In order to get good amount of answers from the right target group, a Facebook event was created. The desired target group was invited to this event to answer the survey. When the target group was chosen, consideration points were mainly age median and gender. In other words, in order for the results to be comparable, questionnaire was targeted to certain age group so that the age medians in both countries would have been somewhat similar. In addition, within each country, the aim was to reach equal amount of female and male individuals.

3.3 Validity and reliability

The internal validity and reliability of the data you collect and the response rate you achieve depend, to a large extent, on the design of your questions, the structure of your questionnaire, and the rigour of your pilot testing (all discussed in this section). A valid questionnaire will enable accurate data to be collected, and one that is reliable will mean that these data are collected consistently. Foddy (1994:17) discusses validity and reliability in terms of the

questions and answers making sense. In particular, he emphasizes that 'the question must be understood by the respondent in the way intended by the researcher and the answer given by the respondent must be understood by the researcher in the way intended by the respondent'. This means that there are at least four stages that must occur if the question is to be valid and reliable. It also means that the design stage is likely to involve you in substantial rewriting in order to ensure that the respondent decodes the question in the way you intended. We, therefore, recommend that you use a word processor or survey design software such as SurveyMonkey.com™, Snap Surveys™ or Sphinx Development™. (Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis, Adrian Thornhill 2009, 371-374)

Internal validity in relation to questionnaires refers to the ability of your questionnaire to measure what you intend it to measure. This means you are concerned that what you find with your questionnaire actually represents the reality of what you are measuring. This presents you with a problem as, if you actually knew the reality of what you were measuring, there would be no point in designing your questionnaire and using it to collect data! Researchers get round this problem by looking for other relevant evidence that supports the answers found using the questionnaire, relevance being determined by the nature of their research question and their own judgment. (Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis, Adrian Thornhill 2009, 371-374)

Although for a questionnaire to be valid it must be reliable, this is not sufficient on its own. Respondents may consistently interpret a question in your questionnaire in one way, when you mean something else! As a consequence, although the question is reliable, it does not really matter as it has no internal validity and so will not enable your research question to be answered. Reliability is therefore concerned with the robustness of your questionnaire and, in particular, whether or not it will produce consistent findings at different times and under different conditions, such as with different samples or, in the case of an interviewer-administered questionnaire, with different interviewers. (Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis, Adrian Thornhill 2009, 371-374)

Mitchell (1996) outlines three common approaches to assessing reliability, in addition to comparing the data collected with other data from a variety of sources. Although the analysis for each of these is undertaken after data collection, they need to be considered at the questionnaire design stage. They are:

- test re-test;
- internal consistency;
- alternative form.

Test re-test estimates of reliability are obtained by correlating data collected with those from the same questionnaire collected under as near equivalent conditions as possible. The questionnaire therefore needs to be administered twice to respondents. This may create difficulties, as it is often difficult to persuade respondents to answer the same questionnaire twice. In addition, the longer the time interval between the two questionnaires, the lower the likelihood that respondents will answer the same way. We, therefore, recommend that you use this method only as a supplement to other methods. (Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis, Adrian Thornhill 2009, 371-374)

Respondents were asked to rate each name from 0 to 5 and not to give same points more than once in one question. Some respondents failed to understand this and in the same question different type of names were rated with same point. In addition, the aim was to get 100 responses at the end of the survey, however, there were only 50 responses collected. Otherwise in terms of reliability and validity, the results meet the requirements and the research went according to the plan. In the upcoming section, the survey results will be presented. Later on, there will be comments on the results in the conclusions section.

4 Empirical study

In this section, the results of the survey will be presented which refers to the research part of this thesis. First, general results will take place. Second country specific results will be shown. At last,

4.1 General results

Web-based questionnaire with 12 questions was sent to over 100 people and the survey was open for 3 weeks. At the end of this period, there were 50 people answered the survey (25 Finnish and 25 Turkish) and the upcoming results are based on these answers. There were 26 female and 24 male respondents and the age median of the whole target group has been 26.88.

Below, Figure 6 shows the highest scoring and the lowest scoring brand names of the questionnaire. This figure shows the compound type names scored higher than other types in general. In addition, a suggestive name for a book store, "Readers Corner" scored the highest by the answers of all respondents. In contrast, "Onion Works" which is an arbitrary name for a video games company collected the least points.

High Scoring Brand Names	Low Scoring Brand Names
Readers Corner -Suggestive- 193	Onion Works-Arbitrary - 63
Nicedice - Compound - 172	Flatparsley - Compound - 73
Euroflyer - Compound -169	Cheeky - Arbitrary - 84
Cashmore - Compound - 167	Camomile -Arbitrary- 95
Penaltybox- Compound - 162	Charteak- Fanciful -98
Charcoal SteakHouse- Descriptive -155	CuttingEdge chef knives- Descriptive- 100
Mediterranean Food Store - Descriptive -147	Casual Tailor- Suggestive - 100
Smartcasual- Compound -147	Electronic Sport Video Games - Descriptive - 101

Figure 6: High & low scoring brand names - All respondents (Ugur 2012, 26)

Figure 7, demonstrates the superior brand name types, in other words, showing which brand name types scored the most and which of them scored the least. As shown below, compound type names took the first place by 1134 points, suggestive names took the second place by 1128 point, classic names took the third place by 1081 points, descriptive names took the fourth place by 1014 points and fanciful names took the fifth place by 885 points. Arbitrary names took the last place 863 points.

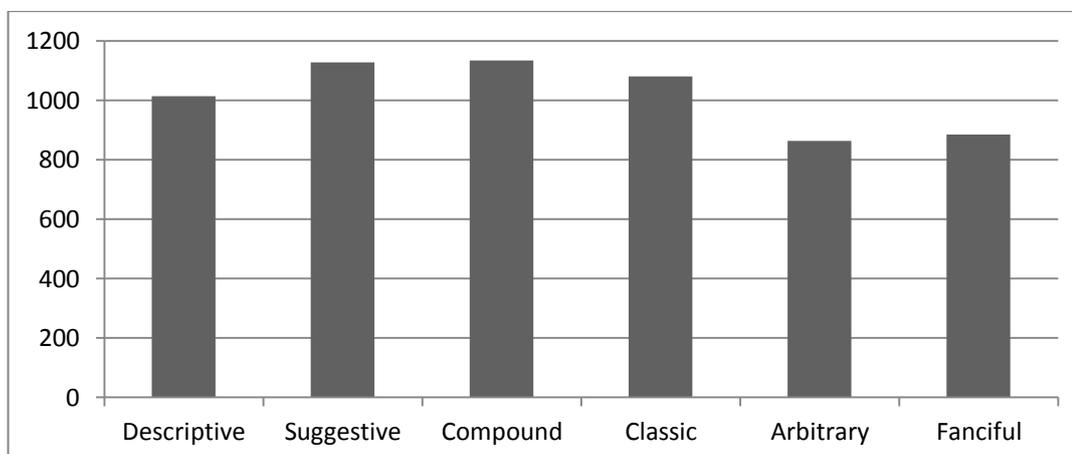


Figure 7: Superior brand name types - All respondents

It is also important to show some gender based outcome in the general results. Figure 8 shows the high and low scorer brand name types in respect to gender. It is good to remember that there were 26 female and 24 male respondents. However, this wouldn't affect the general trend dramatically. It can be seen that arbitrary and fanciful names are perceived different by different genders. In contrast, especially descriptive and classic names scored almost the same by different genders.

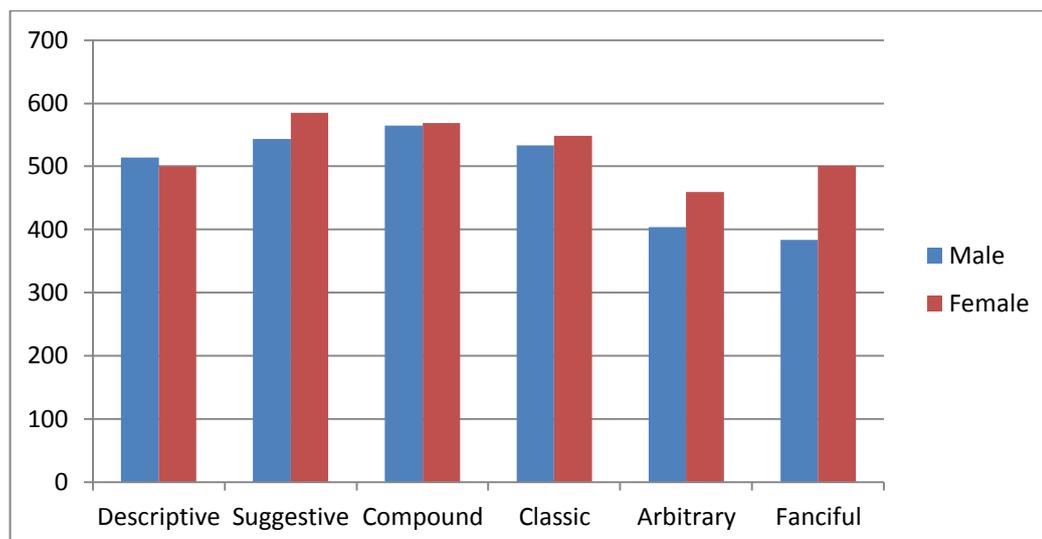


Figure 8: Gender based superior brand name types - All respondents

4.2 Results of Finnish respondents (Low Context)

This section will focus on the presentation of the results based on the answers of the Finnish respondents. There were 25 Finnish respondents (14 Female, 11 Male) answered the questionnaire and the age median of the respondents were 26.84. Figure 8 shows the high scoring and low scoring names according to Finnish respondents' answers. "Readers Corner" scored the highest likely to general results by 103 points. "Flat Parsley" which was the second lowest scorer in general results, became the lowest scorer in Finland. The compound names were high scorers in Finland in general, as well as suggestive and descriptive names. Low scorer names were mostly fanciful and arbitrary types.

Highest Scoring Brand Names in Finland	Lowest Scoring Brand Names in Finland
Readers Corner - Suggestive - 103	Flatparsley - Compound - 23
Charcoal Steakhouse - Descriptive - 89	Beaders - Fanciful - 27
Penaltybox - Compound - 89	Cheeky - Arbitrary - 31
Euroflyer - Compound - 89	Camomile - Arbitrary - 34
Nicedice - Compound - 88	Sentertainment - Fanciful - 37
Mediterranean Food Store - Descriptive - 83	Charteak-Fanciful - 45
Smart Investment - Suggestive - 83	Tailord - Fanciful - 47
Sartoria - Classic - 75	Cuttingedge Chef Knives - Descriptive - 51

Figure 9: High & low scoring brand names - Finland

Figure 10, demonstrates the superior brand name types, in other words, showing which brand name types scored the most and which of them scored the least. As shown below, suggestive type names took the first place by 595 points, classic names took the second place by 561 points, descriptive names took the third place by 555 points, compound names took the fourth place by 540 points and fanciful names took the fifth place by 380 points. Arbitrary names took the last place by 367 points.

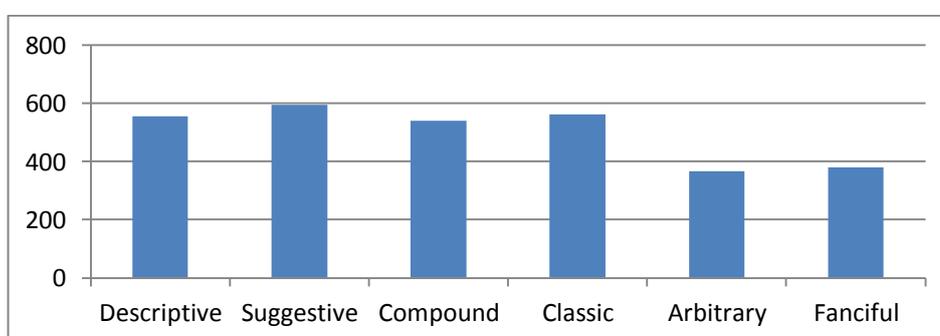


Figure 10: Superior brand name types - Finland

Figure 11 shows gender based results on superior brand name types in Finland. It is good to remember that there were 14 female and 11 male respondents. However, this wouldn't affect the general trend dramatically. It can be readily seen that the results fluctuate to a certain degree between female and male responses.

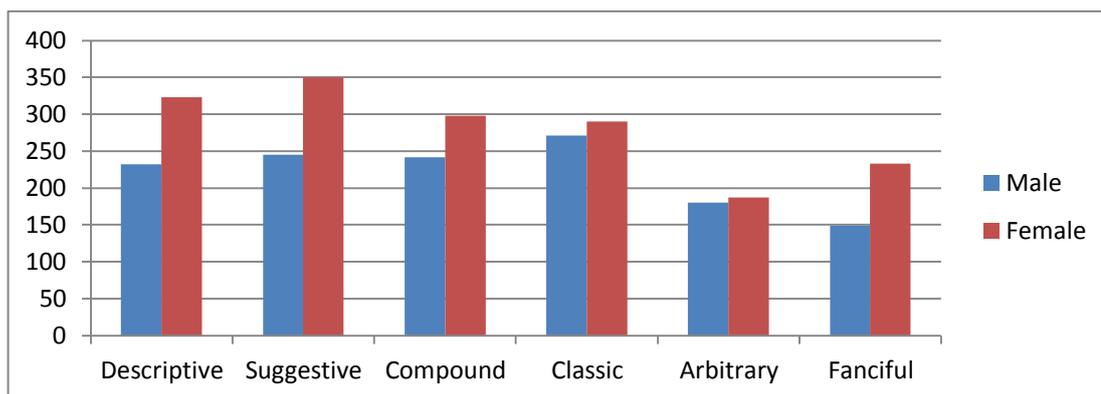


Figure 11: Gender based superior brand name types - Finland

4.3 Results of Turkish respondents (High Context)

This section will focus on the presentation of the results based on the answers of the Turkish respondents.

There were 25 Turkish respondents (12 Female, 13 Male) answered the questionnaire and the age median of the respondents were 26.92. Figure 12 shows the high scoring and low scoring names according to Turkish respondents' answers. "Cashmore" and "Sourcherry" scored the highest. "Onion Works" which was the lowest scorer in general results, became also the lowest scorer in Turkey. There is only one descriptive name and no suggestive names in the highest scoring brand names in Turkey. However, compound, fanciful and arbitrary names have scored high. There were three descriptive names in the lowest scoring brand names in Turkey.

Highest Scoring Brand Names	Lowest Scoring Brand Names
Cashmore - Compound - 91	Onion Works - Arbitrary - 35
Sourcherry - Arbitrary - 91	Romain James Clothing - Descriptive - 43
Readers Corner - Descriptive - 90	Young People's Bank - Descriptive - 45
Tailord - Fanciful - 84	Acutus - Classic - 46
Eurofyer - Compound - 80	Electronic Sport Video Games - Descriptive - 46
Torreo - Classic - 78	Flatparsley - Compound - 50
Sentertainment - Fanciful - 75	Cheeky - Arbitrary - 53
Persimmon - Arbitrary - 70	Charteak - Fanciful - 53

Figure 12: High & low scoring brand names - Turkey

Figure 13, demonstrates the superior brand name types, in other words, showing which brand name types scored the most and which of them scored the least. As shown below, compound type names took the first place by 594 points, suggestive names took the second place by 533 points, classic names took the third place by 520 points, fanciful names took the fourth place by 505 points and arbitrary names took the fifth place by 496 points. Descriptive names took the last place by 459 points.

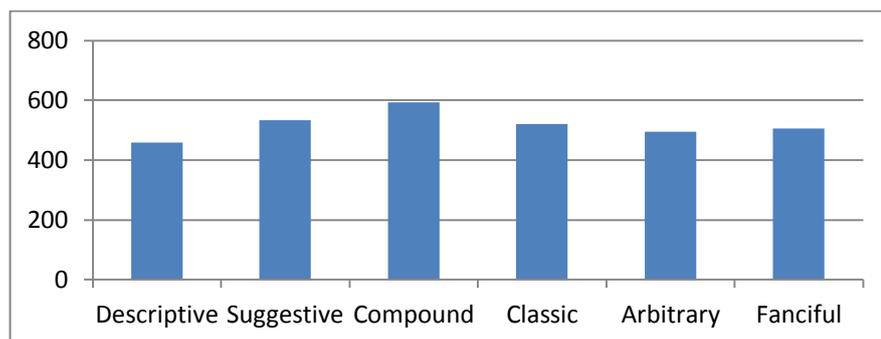


Figure 13: Superior brand name types - Turkey

Figure 14 shows gender based results on superior brand name types in Turkey. It is good to remember that there were 12 female and 13 male respondents. However, this wouldn't affect the general trend dramatically. It can be readily seen that the results fluctuate to a certain degree between female and male responses.

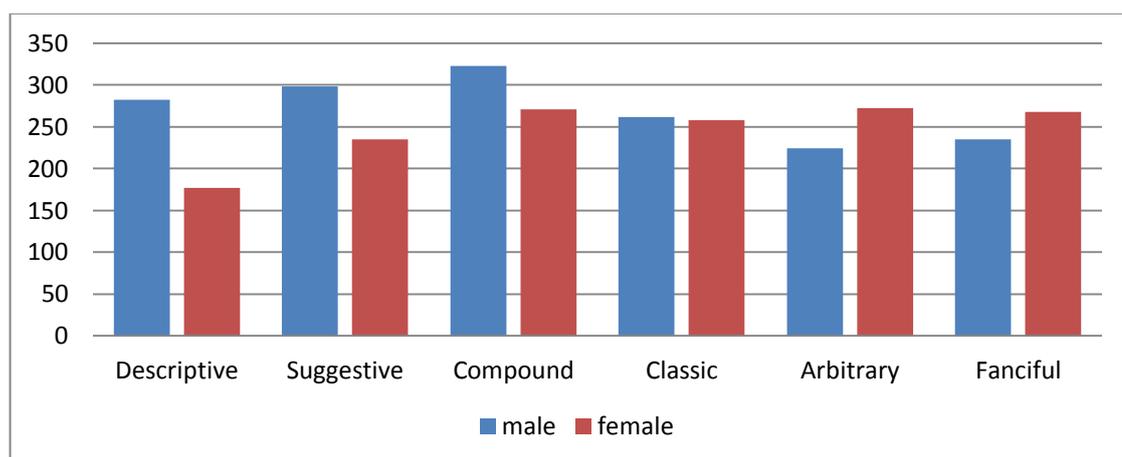


Figure 14: Gender based superior brand name types - Turkey

In the next section, conclusion and recommendations take place. This will cover results with comments, especially comparison between two target countries and also theoretical linkage.

5 Conclusions and recommendations

In the empirical studies part research results were presented. In this section, there will be comments on those results and conclusions will be drawn according to the results. In other words, the outcome of the thesis research will be evaluated and put in a simple form so that the readers can update their knowledge and further studies could be initiated according to the conclusions and recommendations.

According to the general results and Figure 7 (Ugur 2012, 30) compound and suggestive names were favored by all respondents. Due to this fact, it is good idea to give a compound or suggestive name to a company which will operate in Finland and in Turkey. However, this certainly doesn't mean that any compound or suggestive name will work. Naming guidelines mentioned in the theory part of this should be followed. For example, "flatparsley" which is a compound name, scored the second lowest in all respondents' answers. The reason could be that the name failed to meet the naming guideline requirements or the name simply wasn't liked by the target audience. First of all, the naming guidelines should be followed and second of all the name should be tested with the suitable target group before deciding on a brand name.

Gender based results were also collected by the thesis survey and presented in the empirical study part of this thesis. Figure 8 (Ugur 2012, 31), presented the superior brand name types based on gender. There are differences between females' and males' brand name taste. For example, fanciful and arbitrary names also suggestive names collected higher points in total from female respondents. This shows females are attracted to rather complex names. Descriptive type was the only name type which collected more points from male respondents. This shows that males prefer rather simple names. Compound and classic names received almost equal attention from females and males. Simply, the reason could be that all created compound names were actually somewhat really good and classic names are always safe choice. It is better if the further analysis of the gender based results is evaluated by professionals since the thesis author is not an expert in this field and secondly there is no theory base included in the thesis regarding this topic.

In Finland, as shown in Figure 9 (Ugur 2012, 32), there are two descriptive (Charcoal Steakhouse and Mediterranean Food Store) and two suggestive (Readers Corner and Smart Investment) names in the top scoring names list. On the other hand, in the low scoring names list, there are four fanciful (Beaders, Sentertainment, Mediumrare and Tailord) and two arbitrary (Cheeky and Camomile) names. When cultural theory of this thesis is read carefully and understood this results are not surprising. In cultural context Finland as a Scandinavian country considered as a "low-context" country. In low context cultures, the communication is less

fancy and straight forward. There are no “hidden messages” in low-context communication. Therefore one would expect Finns would prefer descriptive and suggestive names more than arbitrary and fanciful names. Actually, from brand managers’ perspective, at first this might look like an advantage. In a way brand managers don’t need to think of fancy names in countries like Finland. However, if the whole point of naming is to create distinctiveness, it is harder to be distinctive with descriptive or suggestive names. In this case, there is actually a disadvantage for the brand name creators since it is harder to be differentiating with a descriptive name. Mr. Kapferer explains this issue by saying “brands do not describe products - brands distinguish products.” (Kapferer 2012, 185-188)

In Turkey, as can be seen in Figure 12 (Ugur 2012, 33), the highest scoring two names are compound (cashmore) and Arbitrary (Sourcherry). On the other hand, there are three descriptive names (Romain James Clothing, Young Peoples Bank and Electronic Sport Video Games) taking their place in the lowest scoring names list. In cultural context, Turkey as a Mediterranean country is a high-context country like Greece and Italy. In this high-context communication, there are “hidden messages” and people are expected to interpret and understand these messages. Thus, one would expect descriptive and suggestive names wouldn’t be fancy or complex enough for Turks. Sophisticated names were appreciated and descriptive names were ignored in the questionnaire, supporting this theory. In this case, brand managers or name creators need to do comprehensive market research before naming a product or a company.

In broader perspective, since Finland represents low context and Turkey represents high context in this study, these conclusions and recommendations could be a good benchmark for two other low and high context country. For example, if this study was conducted for Sweden and Greece, the results could have been somewhat similar. However, it is always worth to do a similar but market specific study rather than relying on these country specific results.

To sum up, the aim of this thesis was to support entrepreneurs or existing companies with their brand name decisions. If the target market is Finland, descriptive and suggestive names are clearly the safest choices. Classic and compound names would require some testing with the target group and the high scoring names could be used in order to be distinctive in Finnish market. Based on the results of this thesis, fanciful and arbitrary names are not recommended for the Finnish market. If the target market is Turkey, it is a good idea to avoid descriptive and suggestive names in the first place unless there is a comprehensive research behind it. Arbitrary and Fanciful names were favored as well as compound and classic names however, in a high context and highly sophisticated market, there is always need for testing the name with the correct target group. If the target market is Finland and Turkey, then descriptive, suggestive, arbitrary and fanciful names could be avoided. Classic and compound names look like the safest choice, if there must be one name in both markets. Second option however,

could be using two different names in these countries according to previously mentioned guidelines. This means being international but local at the same time. Of course, this is a good idea if there are only two target markets. It wouldn't be possible to have for instance ten names because the company operates in ten different countries.

The upcoming section will summarize the thesis and it will be the last section of this thesis.

6 Summary

Brand naming is certainly a science and brand name is the most important brand element. Culture plays a big role on the perception of human being since it is learned and narrows down ones perspective. Therefore, different cultures react differently to the brand elements. In this study there has been two countries taken as an example and brand name taste is investigated in these cultures, Finland represented low context and Turkey represented high context. Finns and Turks with similar background and age group were asked to rate previously created brand names from 0 to 5. Then the results were analyzed to see if there is a pattern on brand name taste in both countries. The results were conclusive and clear except for the amount of respondents was limited to 50.

In Finland, it is a good idea to name a brand with a descriptive or suggestive name and avoiding arbitrary and fanciful names. This is because Finns prefer simple and easy names. In Turkey, it is better to name a brand with a rather sophisticated name type such as arbitrary or fanciful since descriptive names are too simple for Turkish taste.

All in all, this thesis could be used by entrepreneurs to have an idea in terms of naming their companies in one of these countries. This thesis can also be a start point for further studies. For example in the next stage, knowing Finns favor descriptive and suggestive names, new names can be created and tested, taking linguistic point of view into account as well.

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