| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Semantic and Syntactic Anomalies of Arabic-transliterated Compound Shop Names in Saudi Arabia

Reima Al-Jarf

Full Professor of English and Translation Studies, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Corresponding Author: Reima Al-Jarf, **E-mail**: reima.al.jarf@gmail.com

| ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the denotative meaning of compound shop names in Saudi Arabia, and identify the types of semantic and syntactic anomalies in the Arabic transliterations of English compound shop names. A corpus of compound shop names was collected from 12 major cities in a Saudi Mall Directory. After eliminating international shop names, pure Arabic shop names, single-word and duplicate shop names, a sample of 168 compound shop names consisting of locally-coined English shop names and mixed shop names was subjected to further analysis. In addition, a sample of students majoring in languages and translation took a compound shop name test where they had to judge the semantic and syntactic accuracy and acceptance of compound shop names. Results showed that 69% of the Arabic transliterations of the compound shop nouns in the sample have syntactic and/or semantic anomalies. 22% have syntactic anomalies as opposed 14% semantic anomalies and 23% have both semantic and syntactic anomalies combined. Some compound shop names are meaningless because the two elements of the compound are incongruous (*Operation Falafel* فلافل اوبريشن; *Rude Shake* شيك رود). Others have faulty word order (*Mama Batata* بطاطا ماما ; قوركان شيف) ; faulty use of the definite article (المنيو **دونتس**)**;** use of constituents in the compound with the same meaning from two foreign languages (*THE BEAU WOW);* the English plural /-s/ is added to the Arabic word ملهم in *Max Molhams* ملهمز ماكس; splitting words into syllables or two parts اكس و ريز (*Accessories);* كلاي ماكس (*Climax);* combining two words and spelling them as one lexeme (شرمبشاك). Responses to the judgment test of the semantic and syntactic anomalies in shop names showed that the students could identify more semantic than syntactic anomalies (90% vs 80% respectively). They had difficulty understanding ماما بطاطا –شرمبشاك - أوبريشن فلافل- قوركان شيف -ماكس ملهمز that have both semantic and syntactic anomalies. They found them unacceptable and difficult to comprehend. The study gives some recommendations for translating rather than transliterating English compound shop names to overcome the semantic and syntactic anomalies.

| KEYWORDS

Semantic anomalies, syntactic anomalies, word order errors, definite article errors, compound shop names, transliterated shop names, shop naming practices, accuracy judgment test, semantic and syntactic test, compound shop name test.

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

1. Introduction

A brand name identifies a specific company, product or service and differentiates the goods or services of a manufacturer or seller from similar brands within a particular category. They often designate the name of the manufacturer itself, but they can also be used in reference to individual products. Brand names are often accompanied by a logo and are typically registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to protect their equity (Panic, 2003; Al-Jarf, 2022).

There are many types of brand names: Descriptive brand names (*Toys R US, General Motors, Hotels.com, Bank of America;* lexical brand names *(Dunkin' Donuts, Krazy Glue, Sizzler Steakhouse, Krispy Kreme)*; acronymic brand names (*IBM, BP, UPS, BMW, MTV, GEICO, H & M*); invented brand names (*Google, Exxon, Kodak, Xerox, Verizon, Adidas;* founder brand names *(Kellogg's, Ford, Ralph*

Lauren, Calvin Klein); geographical brand names (*American Airlines, California Pizza Kitchen, Kentucky Fried Chicken)*; evocative brand names (*Amazon, Nike, Virgin, Apple, Greyhound)*.

When choosing a brand name[1], the following characteristics should be considered: The brand names selected should be distinctive, authentic, memorable, enduring, defensible, flexible and extendable, legally safe, short and easy to remember, unique with positive meaning, match the company business or product, cross check the meaning before going global, how it is pronounced by native and non-natives speakers such as Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese or French native speakers, what the brand name means in these languages, and does it sound foreign? Panic (2003) added that brand names should avoid using personal, geographic, descriptive, deceptive, trivial and banal names. Proper names used in brand naming are generally seen as an unwelcome tendency, since exploiting a personal, geographic, or institutional name might constitute a breach of regulations governing the protection of trademarks. A widely accepted and genericized brand name is the best evidence that linguists have been successful in following the morphological, phonological, and semantic principles of brand naming, governed by language economy and language creativity.

On the other hand, brand names are marketing devices that constitute a social, legal, psychological and linguistic phenomenon. As a result, they have been the subject of some interdisciplinary research studies, especially the linguistic features of a brand name and their impact on consumers' behaviour. The meaning of a brand name is one of the most important aspects that all business owners have to consider as it can affect the customers' perception of the brand names, products or services under those names (Boonpaisarnsatit, 2009). The semantic component is the most important linguistic aspect in brand communication. A review of the literature has shown some studies that focused on the semantic aspects of brand names. For example, in Singapore, Gin and Cacciafoco (2020) conducted a semantic analysis of 50 brand names selling six types of goods and services. They analysed brand names according to their semantic structure i.e., the word class of the brand name, and semantic appositeness, i.e., whether the brand name communicates important information about the brand and its products. The researcher found that the vast majority of brand names in Singapore are nouns that depended on existing words in creating the brand names. In addition, food and beverage brands employed words from Mandarin Chinese and Malay in Singapore in naming their brands. Many Singaporean brands also display semantic appositeness in their names. Such appositives give essential information such as the brand's target audience, the type of products sold, markets, or any other favourable trait associated with the brand.

In Thailand, Snodin, Higgins and Yoovathaworn (2017) investigated the names given to local community products and described the use of English in naming the products. The researchers selected names of Thai local products under the program One Tambon One Product. They used onomastics in analysing the language characteristics and semantic appropriateness of the products. The sample consisted of 1,304 names of food, drinks, clothing and accessories, handicrafts and ornaments, and inedible herbs. Thai product names in English show language creativity and reflect the Thai identity within English usage in the local environment. One problematic area in the English Thai product names is the lack of semantic appropriateness of some English names, as the names are sometimes not appropriate for the product type. The researchers concluded that Thai entrepreneurs need support in naming their products to achieve international intelligibility if their products are to be marketed to international customers.

In Kenya, Kinegeni and Atieno (2019) performed a pragmatic analysis of names given to businesses in Chogoria town to establish the denotative meanings of business names and to explain how encyclopedic knowledge can be used to access the meanings of these business names. It was realized that all business names have denotative meanings that are the literal meaning which is not affected by the context of the word.

In addition, customer response to products with "meaningful" new brand names was examined by Klink (2001) who proposed and empirically tested two methods for creating meaningful new brand names. Results indicated that products with brand names using sound symbolism (relationship between the sound of a word and its meaning) to convey product-related information, were favoured by consumers and positioned more strongly in their minds. The researcher concluded that associating sound symbolism imbeds with semantic imbeds in brand names enhances both product liking and positioning.

In another study, Arora, Kalro and Sharma (2022) explored sound-symbolic perceptions of products with blended brand names, formed with at least one semantic and one non-semantic component. They assessed the effect of vowels and consonants and their combinations on product perceptions individually. They classified products according to categories and attributes of their abstractness. They tested consumers' perceptions of products with blended brand names having high-/low-frequency sounds. For blended brand names, vowel sounds conveyed brand meaning better than combinations of vowel and consonant sounds – and these conveyed brands meaning better than consonant sounds. Differences in consumer perceptions of products with blended

---

[1] https://www.oliveandcompany.com/blog/characteristics-of-strong-brand-names/

brand names occurred when the attributes' abstractness level matched the product categorization level, and when the concrete attributes matched subordinate categorization level. The researchers concluded that brand managers/strategists can communicate product positioning (attribute-based) through blended brand names created specifically for product categories and product types.

The literature review shows lack of studies in Saudi Arabia and in Arab countries that focus on the semantic, syntactic and pragmatic aspects of brand names of clothing, shoes, accessories, beauty products, children's toys, restaurants, and cafes. Therefore, this study will fill a gap in this area by exploring the semantic and syntactic aspects of the previously mentioned brand names in Saudi Arabia. It aims to explore the denotative meaning of the Arabic transliterations of compound shop names; identify the semantic and syntactic anomalies in compound shop names; the sources of semantic and syntactic anomalies; whether there is semantic and structural ambiguity in compound shop names; how the meaning of words contained in compound shop names are related to each other.

This study is part of a series of studies by the author on shop naming practices in Saudi Arabia. The first study is about promotional, sociocultural and globalization factors that contribute to the dominance of foreign shop names over Arabic names in Saudi Arabia (Al-Jarf, 2022c). The second is about decoding problems that deviant Arabic transliterations of foreign shop names pose for shoppers in Saudi Arabia (Al-Jarf (2022a). It is also part of a series on English and Arabic transliterations of personal of personal names of social media that cover the English transliteration of Arabic personal names with the definite article /al/ (Al-Jarf, 2022e); variant transliterations of the same Arabic personal names (Al-Jarf, 2022f); and gemination errors in Arabic-English transliteration of personal names (Al-Jarf, 2022d) and preference of foreign words over Arabic equivalents (Al-Jarf, 2016a; Al-Jarf, 2011a). Thus, a full picture of naming practices and their effect on the receivers' behaviours in Saudi Arabia will be formed.

Moreover, results of this study are useful to professionals who work in linguistics, marketing, and communications fields because the linguistic features of brand names have a strong influence on consumer behaviour. They will help shop owners create more meaningful shop names. The advantages of meaningful names can be reflected in increased efficiency and a reduced level of effort in information transfer.

2. Compound Nouns in English and Arabic

According to Al-Jarf (2004), Al-Jarf (1994a), Al-Jarf (1994b), and Al-Jarf (1990), a compound refers to a group of words usually two or more words joined together into one unit that functions as a single part of speech. Most Arabic compounds consist of lexical items separated by a blank such as: ابو بكر، مكة المكرمة ، الحمى الشوكية. Very few compounds are agglutinated (spelled together) التركيب such a لئلا ، بينما ، لكنما ، انما ، معديكرب ، طولكرم ، بختنصر ، بعلبك ، حضرموت. These are often referred to as mixed compounds المزجي. No compounds in Arabic are hyphenated. Examples of Arabic compound shop names are: جدة نايس مول - الصيرفي ميجا مول- فاشن -مول- بينك بلو فاشن بارك - الرياض ساوث مول- البحر الأحمر الرياض مول - بست عبايا - بلو ايج; آني وداني – موون تون- اوبريشن فلافل – دكتور نيوتريشن- تفاحة كيدز – ثوب كيدز - الرياض هب and others.

Similarly, compound nouns are very common in English. They consist of two or more words. They are formed in a variety of ways: two nouns, a verb followed by a noun, a noun followed by a verb, a verb, and a preposition, an adjective and a noun and others. The two lexical items in a compound may be separated by a blank, agglutinated (spelled together) or hyphenated. Examples of English compound shop names are *Beauty Secrets; Bath and Body Works; Burger King; Victoria's Secret; MOTHER CARE; Dunkin Donuts; Bath and Body Works; the Body Shop; Pull & Bear; LC Waikiki; Gloria Jean; Domino's Pizza; New Yorker*.

English and Arabic do not have the same word orders in compounds. They have opposite word order. For example, *high school* consists of an adjective + a noun, whereas the Arabic equivalent مدرسة ثانوية consists of a noun + an adjective. The English *Riyadh Park is* منتزه الرياض in Arabic which is a noun + an appositive, i.e., it has a reverse word order. The same applies to *Red Sea Mall* and the transliterated name الصيرفي ميجا مول. The Arabic equivalents should be مول البحر الأحمر (a noun + an appositive noun + an adjective) and ميجا مول الصيرفي (an adjective + a noun + an appositive) (Al Jarf, 2011b).

3. Data Collection and Analysis
3.1 Sample of Compound Shop Names
A corpus of 500 shop names was collected from a Saudi Mall Directory. The corpus included all malls in 12 major cities in Saudi Arabia: Riyadh, Jeddah, Makkah, Madinah, Taif, Tabuk, Khobar Dammam, Dhahran, Al-Hassa , Jubail, and Abha. It included shops for clothing, shoes, accessories, beauty products, children's toys, in addition to restaurants, cafes and amusement areas. Shop names were classified into 4 categories: (i) International franchised foreign shop names; (ii) local shops with foreign names; (iii) (shop names with a mixture of an Arabic and foreign name; (iv) shops with pure Arabic names. All International shop names, those with a pure Arabic name, duplicate shop names and those consisting of a single word were excluded from the sample. The final sample consists of compound shop names consisting of two or more words with local English/foreign names and a mixture of

Arabic and foreign names which were subjected to further analysis. Thus, the final sample consisted of 168 Arabic transliterations of compound shop names.

Each name in the sample was classified as to whether it has a semantic anomaly, syntactic anomaly, or both anomalies combined. Syntactic anomalies are cases in which the word order in the compound does not match the Arabic word order, i.e., it is a transfer of the English word order. They also include cases where the definite article is missing, has a faulty derivation, an English suffix is attached to an Arabic noun or a numeral in words is spelled out (Al-Jarf, 1994a).

Semantic anomalies are cases in which the compound shop name is meaningless, the two lexical constituents are incongruous, has a faulty word order, those in which the constitutes are from 2 foreign languages with the same meaning, the Arabic definite article is misused, sound symbolism is used, does not convey product-related information, an English structure is adopted in Arabic words, words are split into syllables or two lexical parts, two words are combined together and spelled as one lexeme, and acronyms and/or numerals are connected with lexemes in the Arabic transliteration and have decoding problems (Al-Jarf, 1994b; Al-Jarf, 1990),

3.2 Sample of Shoppers
A sample of 60 students from the departments of Arabic, languages, linguistics, literature, and translation who are native speakers of Arabic but have some knowledge of English participated in the study. The subjects were given a judgement test that consisted of a sample of Arabic transliterations of compound shop names without including the shop name in the foreign alphabet such as English, French, Italian or Turkish. The judgment test consisted of 40 Arabic transliterations compound shop names some of which are anomalous, others are not. The judgement test included the following:

ماكس ملهمز - قوركان شيف- أوبريشن فلافل – شرمبشاك – سوسوفليه - ماما بطاطا -زيرو فايف زيرو تليكوم -بيوتي سيكرتس - ناتشورال بيوتي – الصيرفي ميجا مول – برتزل ميكر - بلوايج – بيرجر كنج - بينك بلو فاشن - بيير كاردان - تشيكي تشيز - فيلي ستيكس- مذركير - بسبوسة بوكس - نسكافيه دولس قوستو - كورسيني كافيه - بيبي فل - فافا فووم - سينما ساين بوليس - كلاي ماكس - المنيو **دونتس** - نودلز ميكس سيبرنج - تفاحة كيدز - تو تكس TEX 2 - ثوب كيدز - جارليشوز لاونج jarlicious loung- الجوري كوفي - سباوت كافيه -سفن بوكس مكرونة & رز - سيشوان كريسبي -قوركان شيف - كرك غلام - لولو سلبريت - ماما بطاطا - أونكس روز.

The items were presented to the students in their Arabic transliterated form without the English equivalents. The students were asked to read each shop name out loud and tell whether it is semantically and syntactically acceptable and accurate or not. Their responses were recorded and then scored for correctness. Frequencies and examples of the compound shop names that the subjects judged as semantically/syntactically anomalous are reported. Results of the decoding test are reported qualitatively.

3.3 Reliability
Inter-rater reliability was assessed by having two professors of linguistics and translation score the anomalies in a sample of compound shop names. They also scored a sample of students' responses to the judgment test. Comparisons of the author's analyses and those of the two professors were compared. There was a 95% and 96% agreement between them. Discrepancies were solved by discussion. The internal consistency of the judgment test yielded a reliability of .73 using the Kuder-Richardson's formula.

4. Results
4.1 Semantic and Syntactic Anomalies in Shop Names in Saudi Arabia
Of a total of 168 compound shop names in the sample, 69% of the transliterations have syntactic and/or semantic anomalies. Results presented in Table 1 show that compound shop names in the sample have more syntactic than semantic anomalies (22% vs 14% respectively) and 23% have both semantic and syntactic anomalies combined.

Table 1: Percentages of Semantic and Syntactic Anomalies in Shop Names

Types of Anomalies	%	Examples
Syntactic only	22%	أوبريشن فلافل -باربكيوتونايت يقدم المشويات ومقبلاتها - تاندوري ريس - تفاحة كيدز - ثوب كيدز - جارليشوز لاونجjarlicious lounge - الجوري كوفيJORI COFFEE - جولد مور مول Gold Moor - جي كو- دونتس J.Co Donuts and Coffee - جينجر سنابس - دينمايت شرمب - دينمايت شيكن - ذا زون الرياض THE ZONE - زي مارت أكسسوريز Z Mart Accessories - سباوت كافيه Spot Café - سفن بوكس مكرونة & رز- سيشوان كريسبي Sichuan Scrispy - كرك غلامKarak gholam - ماما بطاطا Mama Batata - ماما روتي كافيه Mamma Rotti Cafe - مايسترو بيتزا - نايس جدة مول - نودلز ميكس دينمايت - نودلز ميكس سيبرنج
Semantic only	14%	Ice - أيس شوز Onyx rose - إكس تيب للملابس الرياضية - أونكس روز - THE BEAU WOW eleven by Road - روود شيك Dip n Fly - ديب ان فلايDip n Pie - بيبي فل لملابس المواليد - ديب ان باShoes - سيرجنت ميجور - شريمب شاك - So Souffle - سوسوفليه Raising Canes - ريزينج كينزShake - ماج ماستري Cook Way - كوك واي Fine Test - فاين تست Vava Voomفووم عطورات بارفيوم - فافا - موون توون وهي Seven Degree Café - مقهى V درجاتMITTS & Trays - مطعم متس آند تريز accessories قاعة عائلية للترفيه - اكس و ريز
Semantic + syntactic	23%	جولد مور مول Gold Moor- سينما ساين بوليس Sign Police Cinema - كلاي ماكس Clay Max - مستر قيمز- المنيو **دونتس** - مهرجان صيف كول فى جدة - نايس جدة مول - نودلز ميكس دينمايت - نودلز ميكس سيبرنج – ارز - ميكس سيبرنج - أوبريشن فلافل - باربكيوتونايت - بنك فاشن - بوتيك كاروهات - تاندوري ريس - تفاحة كيدز – تو تكس 2 TEX - ثوب كيدز - جارليشوز لاونجjarlicious lounge - الجوري كوفيJORI COFFEE - جي كو دونتس J.Co Donuts and Coffee - جينجر سنابس - دينمايت شرمب - دينمايت شيكن - ذا زون الرياضTHE ZONE - الرياض بارك - زي مارت أكسسوريز Z Mart Accessories - زيرو فايف زيرو تليكوم (متجر الكترونيات050 TELECOM) - سباوت كافيه Spot Café - سفن بوكس مكرونة & رز - سيشوان كريسبي Sichuan Scrispy - قوركان شيف - كرك غلامKarak gholam - لولو سلبريت Lulu Celebrate - ماكس ملهمزMax Molhams - ماما بطاطا Mama Batata - ماما روتي كافيه - Mamma Rotti Cafe - مايسترو بيتزا
Total Anomalies	59%	
Total Shop Names	168	

4.1.1 Semantic Anomalies

Analysis of the denotative meanings of the Arabic transliterations of compound shop names in the sample showed that some shop names are meaningless and/or incomprehensible for the following reasons:

1) In some compound shop names, the constituents of the compounds are incongruous as in *Operation Falafel* فلافل اوبريشن; آيسكريم روود شيك *Rude Shake* ;ريزينج كينز *Raising Canes* ;بوتيك كاروهات ;*Crsipy cream* ;بيبي فل *Babyfel* ;بنك فاشن *Fashion Bank* ; ثوب كيدز; تفاحة كيدز; جولد مور مول *Gold Moor* ;ديب ان باي *Dip n Pie* ;سينما ساين بوليس *Sign Police Cinema* ;كرسبي كريم *Dip n Fly* ديب ان فلاي.

2) Some compound shop names have a faulty word order as in *Mama Batata* ماما بطاطا ; قوركان شيف ;نودلز ميكس دينمايت ;نودلز ارز ميكس سيبرنج ;ميكس سيبرنج. The word order here is the same as the English compound.

3) In some compound shop names, two foreign languages are mixed (from 2 langauges): *So Souffle* سوسوفليه ; مهرجان صيف كول فى جدة ; .

4) The Arabic definite article is misused المنيو **دونتس**.

5) The meaning of the two constituent in the compound have the same meaning although they are from two different foreign languages as in *THE BEAU WOW* (French + English), عطورات بارفيوم (English + Arabic).

6) Few compound shop names use sound symbolism, however the relationship between the sound of a word and its meaning, does not convey product-related information as in *Vava Voom* فووم فافا, which is culturally inappropriate, and موون توون which is a family entertainment hall.

7) Adopting an English structure (inflectional endings) as in *Max Molham* ماكس ملهمز. Here the English plural /-s/ is added to the Arabic word ملهم (inspired). This hybrid form of the Arabic word is difficult to decipher, recognized and understand. In addition, combining an English word with and Arabic word makes the compound meaningless.

8) Splitting words into syllables or two parts as in اكس و ريز and كلاي ماكس which the shopper will read as two separate lexemes, not as parts of the single word Accessories or *Climax*. This will result in word identification and comprehension failures.

9) Combining two words together and spelling them as one lexeme as in باربكيوتونايت. ذا تشيلدرنز بليس، شرمبشاك Such shop names are difficult to decode and understand.

10) Decoding problems of acronyms and/or numerals as in *J.Co Donuts and Coffee* جي كو دونتس and Xtep اكس تيب الرياضية) and TEX 2 توتكس (للأزياء النسائية الراقية) as they are spelled the way they are pronounced in Arabic and one cannot tell (للملابس which part is the acronym/numeral and which part is the lexeme.

11) Some compound shop names show pleonasm, i.e., the use of more words than necessary to convey the meaning either as a fault of style or for emphasis as جدة ماسترز صالة للعب تنس الطاولة ;المشاط لانجري للملابس الداخلية; لاكجري للإكسسوارات انرست هوم للأثاث ;باربكيوتونايت يقدم المشويات ومقبلاتها ;بيبي فل لملابس المواليد ;بمبوني وبكلافجي للحلويات ;والمجوهرات.

4.1.2 Syntactic Anomalies

Analysis of the structure and word order in the Arabic transliterations of compound shop names revealed the following:

A. The most frequent errors are in the use of the English word order in the compound shop name which does not match that of the Arabic word order. Although the Arabic word order in compounds is the reverse of the English word order, the following Arabic transliterations have the same English word order: ماما بطاطا *Mama Batata* ; كرك غلام *karak gholam*; بونو كافيه ;بوت كافيه ;الباشا كافيه ;ألكو كافيه ;اسكواير كافيه;فينوس كافيه ;الجوهرة مول جدة ;الصيرفي ميجا مول ;أوبريشن فلافل; *Empire Cinema* ; ديزل متجر *Diesel Store* ;قطن هوم *Cotton home* ;المنيو دونتس; المشاط لانجري ; كاريبو كافيه *Caribou Café* ; أوبريشن سينما *Operation Falafel*, سادا برياني *Sada Beryani* ;جافا شوكلت *Java Chocolate* ; قوركان شيف *Gurkan Chef* ; إمباير سينما فلافل. This means that the English word order in the compounds was retained in the Arabic transliteration although it does not sound grammatical and meaningful.

B. In some cases, the Arabic definite article is missing or misused as in: بنك فاشن instead of (الأزياء) بنك الفاشن- بوتيك كاروهات مهرجان صيف كول -منيو الدونتس instead of المنيو **دونتس** الشيف قوركان instead of قوركان شيف- بوتيك الكاروهات instead of في جدة.

C. Use of a faulty derivative in the SL as in *Lulu Celebrate* لولو سلبريت where a verb is used instead of the noun (*Lulu Celebration*).

D. Attaching the English plural -s suffix to an Arabic word as in *Max Molhams* ماكس ملهمز, where *Molhams* means "inspired".

E. Spelling out numerals in the transliteration as in *050 TELECOM* زيرو فايف زيرو تليكوم instead of تليكوم 050.

4.2 Students' Judgments of the Semantic and Syntactic Anomalies in Shop Names

Analysis of the students' responses to the judgment test of the semantic and syntactic anomalies in the Arabic transliteration of compound shop names showed that the students could identify more semantic than syntactic anomalies (90% vs 80% respectively). They had difficulty understanding زيرو فايف زيرو - ماما بطاطا - سوسوفليه – شرمبشاك - أوبريشن فلافل- قوركان شيف -ماكس ملهمز تليكوم. The students found compound shop names that have both semantic and syntactic anomalies unacceptable and difficult to comprehend. No significant differences were found among the students in judging the accuracy and acceptance of the compound shop names, nor in identifying the semantic and syntactic anomalies in terms of the students' major.

5. Discussion

Findings of the current study showed that 59% of the Arabic transliteration of the compound shop names in the sample have either semantic or syntactic anomalies and about halve the anomalies are both semantic and syntactic combined. Semantic and syntactic anomalies found in the Arabic transliterations of compound nouns are probably due to the fact that shop names are transliterated by foreign workers who are neither native speakers of Arabic nor English, i.e., have low proficiency level in English and Arabic. As a result, they resort to word for word transliteration of the English compound shop name, substituting each with its Arabic transliteration. In other words, they transliterate imitatively, rather than discriminately without taking into consideration the differences in word order and attachment of the definite article between English and Arabic (Al-Jarf, 2022; Al-Jarf, 2007; Al-Jarf, 2000).

Secondly, the word order errors made in transliterating compound shop names to Arabic are similar to those committed in translating compound technical terms to Arabic by Google Translate. Google Translate follows the same word order in the English compounds which results in anomalous Arabic compounds with an anomalous structure. Al-Jarf (2021a) and Al-Jarf (2016b) found that in 60% of the compounds in the sample, Google Translate gave Arabic equivalents with a reversed word order, i.e. a left-to-right rather than the Arabic right-to-left word order as in *Burmese dissident* البورمية المنشقين, *Arctic archaeology* القطب الشمالي ، *plastic money* البلاستيك المال, *security system* النظام امن. In such المعجمية نقل *lexical transference* ; *Martian air* المريخ الجوي, *plastic money* البلاستيك المال, *security system* النظام امن. In such علم الآثار, examples, Google Translate follows a linear left-to-right direction (sequence) in translating an English compound which is contrary to the natural Arabic word order.

Thirdly, the lack of congruity between the constituent parts of compound shop names in the current study is similar to the incongruity found in some long hotel names in Makkah and Madina such as *AlKhozama Manazel AlAin; Best Western Plus AlMassa Awan Hotel; Beach Land* and *Arjaan Aladle.* In those hotel names, the whole structure does not make sense to the Arabic native

speaker, probably because of the faulty agreement in definiteness/indefiniteness and lack of collocability between words (Al-Jarf, 2021b).

Moreover, the anomalies found in the transliteration of compound names in this study are similar to those found in English chemical compounds and their Arabic equivalents in which 12% of the chemical compound names consist of a borrowed word + an original Arabic word, which in many cases functions as an identifier (*gas, salt, alcohol, solution, water, solution*) as in: *Epsom salt* ملح ابسوم; *sodium acetate* خلات الصوديوم; *Rochelle salt* ملح روشيل (Al-Jarf, 2022g). The semantic and syntactic problems in the current study can be attributed to lack of background knowledge about the differences between English and Arabic word orders and lack of transliteration and lack of linguistic competence.

Regarding the plural formation anomalies in the current study, these are similar to nonsense plural forms rendered by EFL and translation students (Al-Jarf, 2022b; Al-Jarf, 2020).

Furthermore, findings of this study are partially consistent with findings of prior studies in the literature such as Gin and Cacciafoco (2020); Snodin, Higgins and Yoovathaworn (2017); and Kinegeni and Atieno (2019). Gin and Cacciafoco (2020) found that many Singaporean brands display semantic appositeness in their brand names – expressing essential information such as the type of products sold, the brand's target audience and markets, or favourable traits the brand wished to be associated with. One problem found in Thai brand names is lack of semantic appropriateness of some English names, as the names are sometimes irrelevant to the product type (Snodin, Higgins & Yoovathaworn's, 2017). In Kenya, Kinegeni and Atieno (2019) indicated that all business names have denotative meanings that are literal meanings which are not affected by the context of the word.

Unlike findings of Klink's (2001) which indicated that brand names with sound symbolism were favoured by consumers, and positioned more strongly in their minds, the sound symbolism found in the current study did not help student shoppers in the sample understand the meaning of compound shop names as in *Vava Voom* فافا فووم, and موون توون. The students found such examples meaningless as they are unrelated to the type of shop/product they represent. Supplementing sound symbolism imbeds with semantic imbeds in the shop names, in this study, did not enhance product name comprehensibility.

In another study, Arora, Kalro and Sharma (2022) found that in blended brand names, vowel sounds conveyed brand meaning better than combinations of consonant and vowel. They also conveyed brand meaning better than consonant sounds alone. Differences in consumers' perceptions of products with blended brand names occurred when the level of attribute abstractness matched the categorization level of the product, as in the match between concrete attributes and subordinate-level categorization.

6. Recommendations

The analysis of the Arabic transliteration of compound shop names and students' accuracy and acceptability judgments revealed semantic and syntactic anomalies. To reduce those anomalies in the Arabic transliterations of compound shop names, this study recommends translating foreign and/or mixed shop names rather than transliterating them to Arabic. Arabic translation equivalents will target Arabic-speaking shoppers and English equivalents will target English speaking shoppers. Translating compound shop names will eliminate the variations of, errors made and lack of comprehensibility of some Arabic transliterations. The Chambers of Commers and the Ministry of Commerce should play a key role in domesticating compound shop names and mandating that at least locally-coined foreign shop names be translated. In cases where the shop names cannot be translated, they can be transliterated correctly with a correct word order and correct definite article attachment.

The Chambers of Commers and the Ministry of Commerce can collaborate in creating an online database of shop names and their translations and transliterations to be consulted by shop owners who obtain a permit for establishing their new business.

Furthermore, Saudi entrepreneurs can be provided with support from Chambers of Commers and the Ministry of Commerce of colleges of languages and translation in naming their shops and products to achieve local and international intelligibility if their products/brands are to reach a larger number of local shoppers and be marketed to international customers.

Finally, students majoring in translation at colleges of languages and translation may collect samples of linguistic landscapes including shop names in the environments, practice the translation and transliteration of compound shop names from English to Arabic in the translation courses that they take in the translation program in order to raise their awareness of the semantic, syntactic and transliteration anomalies in compound shop names (Al-Jarf, 2021c).

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6255-1305

Publisher's Note: All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, editors and reviewers.

References

[1]   Al-Jarf, R. (2022a). Deviant Arabic transliterations of foreign shop names in Saudi Arabia and decoding problems among shoppers. *International Journal of Asian and African Studies (IJAAS), 1*(1), 17-30. Google Scholar

[2]   Al-Jarf, R. (2022b). Difficulties in learning English plural formation by EFL college students. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation (IJLLT), 5*(6), 111-121. Doi:10.32996/ijllt.2022.5.6.13. ERIC ED620200. Google Scholar.

[3]   Al-Jarf, R. (2022c). Dominance of foreign shop names over Arabic names in Saudi Arabia: Promotional, sociocultural and globalization issues. *International Journal of Middle Eastern Research (IJMER), 1*(1), 23-33. Google Scholar

[4]   Al-Jarf, R. (2022d). Gemination errors in Arabic-English transliteration of personal names on Facebook. *International Journal of Linguistics Studies (IJLS), 2*(2),163-170. DOI: 10.32996/ijls.2022.2.2.18. Google Scholar

[5]   Al-Jarf, R. (2022e). English transliteration of Arabic personal names with the definite article /al/ on Facebook. *British Journal of Applied Linguistics (BJAL), 2*(2), 23-37. DOI: 10.31926/but.pcs.2022.64.15.2.2. Google Scholar

[6]   Al-Jarf, R. (2022f). Variant transliterations of the same Arabic personal names on Facebook. *International Journal of English Language Studies (IJELS), 4*(4), 79-90. DOI: 10.32996/ijels.2022.4.4.11. Google Scholar

[7]   Al-Jarf, R. (2022g). *Issues in translating English and Arabic common names of chemical compounds by student-translators in Saudi Arabia*. In Kate Isaeva (Ed.). Special Knowledge Mediation: Ontological & Metaphorical Modelling. Springer. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-030-95104-7. Google Scholar

[8]   Al-Jarf, R. (2021a). An investigation of Google's English-Arabic translation of technical terms. *Eurasian Arabic Studies, 14,* 16-37. Google Scholar

[9]   Al-Jarf, R. (2021b). Linguistic-cultural characteristics of hotel names in Saudi Arabia: The case of Makkah, Madinah and Riyadh hotels. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation (IJLLT), 4*(8), 160-170. DOI: 10.32996/ijllt.2021.4.8.23. Google Scholar

[10]   Al-Jarf, R. (2021c). Teaching English with linguistic landscapes to Saudi students studying abroad. *Asian Journal of Language, literature and Culture Studies (AJL2CS), 4*(3), 1-12. ERIC ED619894. Google Scholar

[11]   Al-Jarf, R. (2020). Issues in translating English and Arabic plurals. *The Journal of Linguistic and Intercultural Education - JoLIE, 13*(1), 7-28. https://doi.org/10.29302/jolie.2020.13.1

[12]   Al-Jarf, R. (2016a). Arab Preference for foreign words over Arabic equivalents. *ALATOO Academic Studies, 1,* 158-162. ERIC ED613055. https://www.elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=26335222. Google Scholar

[13]   Al-Jarf, R. (2016b*). Issues in translating English technical terms to Arabic by Google translate.* 3rd Third International Conference on Information and Communication Technologies for Education and Training (TICET 2016), pp. 17-31. Khartoum, Sudan. Google Scholar

[14]   Al-Jarf, R. (2011a). *Dominance of foreign words over Arabic equivalents in educated Arab speech*. International Conference on Translation and Asian Studies. The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong. April 28-29. **ERIC** ED614058. Google Scholar

[15]   Al Jarf, R. (2011b). Teaching English word-formation processes to translation students. *Komunikacija i kultura online: Godina II, broj 2*, 160-174. Google Scholar

[16]   Al-Jarf, R. (2007). SVO word order errors in English-Arabic translation. *META, 52*(2), 299–308. https://doi.org/10.7202/016072ar. Google Scholar

[17]   Al-Jarf, R. (2004). *English and Arabic compounds for translation students*. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Reima-Al-Jarf/publication/280931586. Google Scholar

[18]   Al-Jarf, R. (2000). Grammatical agreement errors in L1/L2 translation. *International Review of Applied Linguistics, 38*, 1-15. https://doi.org/10.1515/iral.2000.38.1.1. Google Scholar

[19]   Al-Jarf, R. (1994a). *Contrastive semantics for translation students*. DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.1.1143.4725 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281003252. Google Scholar

[20]   Al-Jarf, R. (1994b). *English and Arabic Inflectional Systems for Translation Students.* https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281003416. Google Scholar

[21]   Al-Jarf, R. (1990). *A contrastive analysis of English and Arabic morphology for translation students.* https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Reima-Al-Jarf/publication/312193999. Google Scholar

[22]   Arora, S., Kalro, A. & Sharma, D. (2022). Positioning products through names: effect of sound symbolism on perception of products with blended brand names. *Journal of Product & Brand Management.* https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-12-2021-3794

[23]   Boonpaisarnsatit, N. (2009). *Semantic analysis of Thai product brand names: Meaning and perception*. VDM Verlag.

[24]   Gin, S. & Cacciafoco, F. (2020). The semantics of Singapore brand names: A case study of 50 brands. *Annals of the University of Craiova: Series Philology, Linguistics*. Editura Universitaria Craiova

[25]   Kinegeni, L. K. & Christine A. (2019). Denotative meanings of names given to businesses in chogoria town: a pragmatic analysis. *International Journal of Economics, Business and Management Research, 3*(7), 1-26.

[26]   Klink, R. (2001) Creating meaningful new brand names: A Study of semantics and sound symbolism. Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 9:2, 27-34, DOI: 10.1080/10696679.2001.11501889

[27]   Panic, Olga (2003). Brand names: A linguistic phenomenon. *SKY Journal of Linguistics 16*, 247-251.

[28]   Snodin, N., Higgins, J., & Yoovathaworn, S. (2017). How Thai businesses utilize English in their product names. *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences*, *38*(2), 123-128.