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Original Research

Autonomastics and vehicle semantics: Toward a provisional typology of autonyms in Egyptian Arabic

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Autonyms, a blend of auto- (car) and -nyms (names), constitute a subclass of ergonyms (object names) and a subdomain of onomastics I am prone to term 'autonomastics', a subdivision which is still understudied rather unstudied. No past research has investigated autonyms as novel tradenames dealers and purchasers assign to cars in automotive transactions. The onomastic facets of autonyms have received no attention from specialist linguists across or within world languages. This article aims to conduct a seminal lexical-semiotic analysis of 'autonyms' (car names). A lexicosemiotic analysis of autonyms in Egyptian Arabic is conducted by analysing their lexical and semiotic aspects with particular focus on onomastic and sign-based classifications. The article undertakes a typological analysis of a convenience sample of a dataset extracted from three e-platforms (Dubizzle, Youm7, and Masrawy) and validated through an inter-rater reliability questionnaire. The analysis draws mainly on a comprehensive but non-exhaustive state-of-the-art typology of denominata and denominating practices. Results show that car trademarks are transacted on the local Egyptian market under culture-specific tradenames which establish iconic, indexical, and symbolic relations between the representamens and their objects. The tradenames cover a myriad of autonyms denoting animals (zoonyms), insects (entomonyms), reptiles (herpetonyms), fish (ichthyonyms), birds (ornithonyms), and objects (ergonyms). It shows the role of Egyptian Arabic vernacular in communicating collective cognition of naming practices in the Egyptian automotive community. The article recommends replicating the devised typology with crosslinguistic and cross-cultural datasets to inform future research into onomastics in general and autonomastics in particular and probably inspire automobile industries to redesign their cars accordingly.

KEYWORDS: *vernacular onomastics, vehicle semantics, semiotics, lexical categorisation, zoonyms, ergonyms, Egyptian Arabic*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Shakespeare's question *What's in a name?* is an interrogative statement made in *Romeo and Juliet* to indicate that names of things are synthetic, nonsensical, and irrelevant. Probably, the intended reply to the question he raised might be: *Nothing in a name*. Conversely, a great deal can be conveyed in a name and in a *nomenclature*, a Latin word meaning *assigning of names*, which, at its simplest surface structure and meaning, is a process of assigning a name to make its denotatum or designatum a distinct(ive) entity. The nomenclatures or names we assign to

things might vary but are appellative (Ursini & Long, 2024) – namely, they describe the thing named at hand in one way or another. *Romeo*, a designatum of the hero who dies for his love for Juliet, is descriptive and representative of a male lover of a female beloved: *'He was quite a Romeo when he was young'* (MWD, 2025), and typically so for *Casanova* and *Don Juan*.

Names, members of the *-nym* family, designate things in our (un)real worlds, including places and persons. Place-names are termed *toponyms* (Cacciafoco & Cavallaro, 2023); person-names are called *anthroponyms* (Ndlovu, 2023); and thing-names are labelled as *eponyms* (Freeman, 2002). Autonyms, a blend of *auto-* and *-nyms* and a subclass of ergonyms defined as vernacular tradenames for cars among dealers and buyers, are under-researched, rather non-exaggeratingly unresearched. In onomastics, vast research has investigated the linguistic properties and typological guises of toponyms, anthroponyms, and personal eponyms (Ndlovu, 2023). By comparison, no research has studied the tradenames dealers and purchasers assign to cars in automotive transactions. In addition to their official trademarks, cars are commonly given everyday tradenames by traders and sellers (often concise or precise autonyms), the onomastic aspects of which have received little to no scholarly attention, either cross-linguistically or within individual languages. Autonyms in Vernacular Arabic (VA) in general and Egyptian Arabic (EA) in particular figure mostly as iconic signs in that their signifiers resemble their signifieds, i.e., sound images resemble their meanings. Autonyms are often dedicated to physical objects and animals common and specific to the Egyptian cultural contexts. Examples of autonyms include mainly animal names and object names – zoonyms and ergonyms, respectively (Völkel, 2023). Autonyms comprising both zoonyms and ergonyms constitute a riveting but rather un(der)studied subdomain of onomastics I tend to coin as 'autonomastics'.

The present study poses two overarching questions about autonomastics, the scientific study of autonyms: (1) Which animal and object categories are specifically selected and stereotypically individuated? (2) How do autonyms serve to embody referential relations between words and worlds? The first is an enquiry about lexical categorisations of animals and objects Egyptian car dealers and traders identify with specific car trademarks and models. The second is a functional one into how autonyms signify word-world liaison. The main aim of the study is to answer the enquiries from a theoretical and functional culture-specific perspective. I quest to achieve this aim by analysing a convenience sample of EA autonyms. The concentration on autonyms relies on two main reasons. First, previous onomastic studies focused upon toponyms and eponyms across cultures and languages, without even one single study into autonyms therein. Second, the renaming of cars in the Egyptian car markets may inform automotive industries about reshaping automotive trademarks in terms of their culture-specific tradenames.

This article is structured as follows. Section 2 presents theoretical and literature reviews of both toponymy and eponymy. Section 3 introduces the methodical pathway for the analysis. Section 4 includes the analysis and results. Section 5 discusses the results reached from the analysis. Section 6 draws a compendious conclusion therefrom.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Several theoretical tensions mark contemporary onomastics. Algeo (2000) posits the tension between descriptive and theoretical paradigms whereby onomastic approaches are challenged by socio-pragmatic and semiotic frames. Bourdieu (1991) consider names as referentially discursive and ideologically laden, unlike the traditional structuralist views (Kripke, 1980). Cameron (2003) logs a heated debate over the question whether names reflect universally cognitive schemas or culturally bound ones.

Naming is a universal phenomenon across languages and cultures – a nomenclative phenomenon in which people give designative and denotative names to specific types of entities (e.g., persons, places, and objects) to refer and point to certain things (Hockett, 1963). Names, nevertheless, vary cross-culturally and cross-linguistically in form and function. Therefore, names are not arbitrarily but strategically made and used. Their meanings and functions are context-sensitive and bound social markers (Rymes, 2001; Völkel, 2023) constructed social contexts (Aceto, 2002) and embedded in cultural settings. Names reflect social customs and manifest sociocultural heritage (Kostanski & Puzey, 2016). Van Langendonck and Van de Velde (2016, p. 17) define names as *'definite nouns with unique denotation that display an inherent basic level sense'*.

Völkel (2023) has developed a riveting and unprecedented typology of names across cultures and languages. Although her focus has mainly been on *anthroponyms* (personal names), she has also pieced and brought together a unified typology of semantic classes of names: *theonyms* (divine names), *zoonyms* (animal names), *phytonyms* (plant names), *toponyms* (place names), *ergonyms* (object names), *praxonyms* (event names), and *phenonyms* (phenomenal names). Noteworthily, these semantic classes are basic and generic in nature, but they can truly have ramifications and subclassifications in a hierarchical hyperonymous-hyponymous, superordinate-subordinate, and generic-specific relations, as in toponyms → urbanonyms → hodonyms → dromonyms (Vaculík, 2013; Ursini & Long, 2024). Also consider the focus of my study, eponyms → ergonyms → autonyms → zoonyms, as a typical case in point.

The *-nym* families classed above name entities of utmost importance for and great impact on people's dealings. As Völkel (2023) describes it, they include natural phenomenon not controlled by humans (e.g., storms), objects created by humans (e.g., boats), events caused by humans (e.g., wars), animals used or bred by humans (e.g., crocodiles). The named entities show human-centric relevance as a common characteristic across cultures; however, specific classes or sub-classes of the named entities show cultural specificities and concerns of a certain society. Toponyms and anthroponyms are the major classes that have received ample attention from onomasticians and onomastics-

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oriented theorists and practitioners, who concentrated on toponomastics (Abdikhalikovna, 2020; Gin & Cacciafoco, 2021; Cacciafoco & Cavallaro, 2023) and anthroponomastics (Fornalczyk, 2011; Felecan & Felecan, 2014; Juraeva, 2021).

Völkel's (2023) typology has significant cultural linguistic and sociolinguistic implications. It is in line with the area of cultural linguistics which investigates how language encodes cultural metaphors and categories (Sharifian, 2017). Cultural inflection overwhelms naming practices which act as identity markers and collective cognition carriers. Nomenclating practices play a ritual role in enhancing social bonds and serve an ontological purpose of cultural belonging. The typology also achieves a sociolinguistic purpose through a conceptual model for examining names as performative social acts and inclusion mechanisms for social group identity and dynamics. To conclude, the typology is a significant contribution to naming. Integrating linguistic classifications with cultural and sociolinguistic enquiries, it provides a replicable pathway for analysing names as both linguistic signs and cultural symbols. It weds onomastics to vehicle semantics in two aspects. One is metaphorical naming whereby names bear metaphorical structures that shape discourse. The other is identity construction whereby metaphorical and symbolic names serve to articulate social and cultural identities (Cameron, 2003).

Among the underexplored subcategories of names are *autonyms* which can safely be claimed to constitute an un(der)studied area. Previous studies examined a subtype of autonyms called *zoonyms* from different perspectives: from a comparative perspective (Maklakova & Magfurova, 2020) and a modern linguistic perspective (Kucherenko, 2024), among others. None of the previous studies has addressed *zoonyms* (animal names) and *entomonyms* (insect names) in reference to *autonyms* (car names). No former scholarly endeavour has thus far examined in depth or in passing the iconic and symbolic signification of autonyms as tradenames, as additional names or renames of already named trademarks (car brand-names). These tradenames carry semiotic properties and functions which, together with the two questions posed in the Introduction, remain unaddressed. Nothing is known about Egyptian autonyms and their lexical aspects (first question) and referential functions (second question). This study sets out to address these two intriguing questions.

3. MATERIAL AND METHODS

3.1. Material

The data gathered for the present analytical study are collected from three Egyptian e-portals: Dubizzle, Youm7, and Masrawy. The first portal is an electronic platform for selling and buying anything in Egypt, particularly cars. The second portal is a privately owned and daily Egyptian newspaper which is published in Arabic in electronic and paper forms, and which has been selected twice by Forbes Middle East as being the most effective website in the Middle East. The third portal is owned by the Egyptian Media Group that belongs to the United Media Services Group. The latter is claimed to be the first and biggest news portal in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) which produces all kinds of news, reports, and interviews. The portal is an Egyptian Arabic news website operating under the ONA institution for press and media that owns YallaKora and Elconsolto websites and Gemini media company. The editor-in-chief of the Masrawy newspaper is an Egyptian TV journalist named *Majdī Al-Jallād*.

Empirical investigation into sociolinguistic phenomena necessitates cultural immersion and direct engagement by the researcher, whether adopting an etic (outsider) or emic (insider) perspective, particularly when examining specific social groups, such as car dealers in the Egyptian market. However, due to my current secondment to Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University (PSAU) in Saudi Arabia, institutional regulations preclude me from taking academic leave or traveling to Egypt for fieldwork. Consequently, it becomes necessary to derive the dataset for this study from credible and authoritative newspaper sources, as previously outlined. That said, this study endeavours to maintain data authenticity by providing the URLs relevant (t)hereto. The data extracted from the above-mentioned e-portals, Dubizle, Youm7, and Masrawy, comprise specific car brands and models. Table 1 presents a convenience sample of autonyms.

To ensure the authenticity and reliability of the dataset collected, three principal validation techniques were employed. The first is a methodological adaptation of *parallel-forms reliability*, referred to here as *parallel-names reliability*. This approach entails cross verifying the names and models of vehicles across multiple digital platforms widely accessed by the Egyptian users, including OLX Egypt (formerly Dubizzle), Youm7, and Masrawy. This method serves to measure the consistency of tradenames and model identifiers across various consumer and media portals (Cohen et al., 2018).

The second technique draws upon the *clang phenomenon* (Muehleisen, 1997), which captures native speakers' intuitions regarding linguistic associations—in this case, car tradenames in EA. This concept parallels *inter-rater reliability*, wherein multiple evaluators independently assess and reach consensus on certain judgments (McHugh, 2012). By eliciting native perceptions of brand and model nomenclatures, the approach ensures culturally and linguistically grounded validation of the dataset. Native speakers of a language are said by Hurford et al. (2007) to be the primary source of information about this language.

The third method involves the development and piloting of a structured questionnaire via Google Forms, which included detailed completion instructions and submission guidelines. The instrument comprised 18 commonly recognised car tradenames in Egypt and was distributed to a sample of bilingual individuals (Egyptian Arabic L1, English L2), ensuring linguistic comprehension and interpretive accuracy. Responses were solicited using a minimal Likert scale (✓ = Agree, ✕ = Disagree, ? = Don't Know) for each tradename. In cases of disagreement, an open-ended item – *In case you disagree on a given tradename, write below the correct one* – was included to elicit alternative responses.

Table 1
A convenience sample of autonyms gathered as dataset for the study

TRADEMARK	MODEL	YEAR	ORIGIN	TRADENAME		
Mercedes	E200	1975	Germany	خنزيرة	khanzīrah	'sow'
	SE300	1987	Germany	زلموكة	zalamukkah	'cloaca'
	C180	2000	Germany	بودرة	būdrah	'powder'
	SEL300	1991	Germany	نعش	naʿsh	'coffin'
	S320	1998	Germany	شبح	shabaḥ	'ghost'
	S280	1984	Germany	تمساحة	timsāḥah	'crocodile'
	E240	1998	Germany	عيون	ʿuyūn	'eyes'
Volkswagen	Beetle	1981	Germany	خنفسة	khunfisah	'beetle'
BMW	3 Series	1990	Germany	دبانة	dibbānah	'fly'
Fiat	1100	1937	Italy	قردة	qirdah	'she-monkey'
Toyota	Corolla	1990	Japan	سحلية	sihliyyah	'lizard'
	Corolla	1993	Japan	مسطرة	masṭarah	'ruler'
	Corolla	1997	Japan	عيون	ʿuyūn	'eyes'
	Corolla	2000	Japan	جمل	gamal	'camel'
Mitsubishi	Lancer	1990	Japan	عيون صفية	ʿuyūn Ṣafiyyah	'Safiyyah's eyes'
	Lancer	1994	Japan	كريستالة	kristālah	'crystal'
	Lancer	2000	Japan	مكوة	makwah	'iron'
	Lancer	2004	Japan	بومة	būmah	'owl'
	Lancer	2006	Japan	قرش	qirsh	'shark'
Daihatsu	Mira	1990	Japan	غزالة	ghazālah	'gazelle'
Honda	Civic	1988	Japan	بطة	baṭṭah	'duck'

This measure enabled the identification of two previously unlisted car models: Toyota Corolla 1990 and Daihatsu Mira 1990.

To reinforce the reliability and authenticity of the data collected, each questionnaire item was supplemented with a representative image of the respective vehicle model, facilitating visual recognition and reducing the potential for misidentification (Dillman et al., 2014). The closed- and open-ended piloted questionnaire has supported the inter-rater validation process as a mechanism for ensuring reliability of the research, especially when human judgment is involved in rating the data. This process assesses the degree of agreement between two or more independent raters who evaluate the same phenomenon using a common set of criteria (Lombard et al., 2002).

3.2. Methods

The study draws mainly on Völkel's (2023) typology of named entities (mainly people and things), being the most comprehensive, albeit non-exhaustive, nomenclatural classification

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of both (in)concrete and (in)animate objects and entities. Völkel's (2023) dynamic typology, which is drawn from the linguistic types and cultural contexts of naming practices and meanings, presents a systematic theoretical framework and a multifaceted approach to the acts of naming across languages and cultures. Drawing on cross-linguistic and cross-cultural instances from different world regions, Völkel (2023) conflates scholarly views from the onomastic, sociolinguistic, and cultural linguistic domains, hence accentuating names as culturally located and situated semiotic systems. Völkel's (2023) typology is rigorously replicable for several reasons. First, it stresses cultural embeddedness and how names function as cultural artefacts and referential labels. Second, it shows how naming serves to construct collective identity and social meaning. Last, it demonstrates cross-cultural convergence as well as divergence in naming practices and helps to trace how linguistic expressions encode socially related senses. Figure 1 sketches Völkel's (2023) non-exhaustive typology.

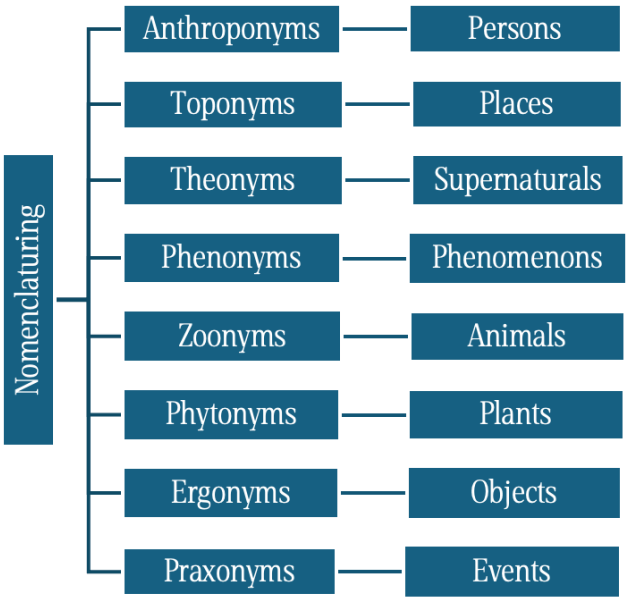

Figure 1. Völkel's (2023) typology of named entities (concisely adapted)

The first remark to be considered is that the typology above, however comprehensive, is most probably not meant to be and cannot be said to be exhaustive. Though inclusive, it falls short of another *-nym* family member, such as *eponyms* (namesakes after persons or places, e.g., 'Fahrenheit' named after Daniel Gabriel Fahrenheit), a masterclass generic to anthroponyms and toponyms. Remarkably, the hierarchical typology figured above may fall into further subdivisions within an inclusion relation. Consider the class of toponyms that ramifies into *urbanonyms* split into *hodonyms* (street names) and *dromonyms* (square names), as Ursini and Long (2024, p. 66) categorise it. Of note is also the instance of zoonyms that can subdivide into *herpetonyms* (reptile names) and *entomonyms* (insect names). The typology sketched in Figure 1 is tested against the collected sample of tradenames tabulated in Table 1 to explore which category thereof and therein is viable and feasible to which autonym and which category is inviable and irreplicable.

The replication of the typology with a dataset gathered from Egyptian Arabic can lead to the development of new subcategories of autonyms uncovered therein. A cut-off point to be taken into account is the fact that only autonyms occupying a reliability rate above 50% are analysed and discussed. The above-50% practice simply aligns with the 'simple majority' rule (50%+1) in data analysis, a central rule in decision-making and voting scenarios for several reasons. Firstly, it sets a clear and objective decision threshold for binary decision-making processes (Yes/No) and unambiguously helps determine the majority view (Sorkin et al., 1998). Secondly, it reflects a democratic principle which uses the minimum requirement for legitimacy (May, 1954). Thirdly, it prevents binary-choice deadlocks and ensures avoidance of ties and conclusive results in small sample analyses and controversial issues. In sum, the above-50% rule offers a natural break point to define majority in comparison with minority and hence is fundamental in data-driven contexts of binary choices, agreements, or classifications. Accordingly, it accurately models real-world operations and presents clear and interpretable findings. In terms of this simple majority rule, the tradenames excluded from the present study include *Budrah* 'powder' for Mercedes C180 2000, *Naʿsh* 'coffin' for Mercedes SEL300 1999, *Dibbānah* 'fly' for BMW S-Series 1990, *Sihliyyah* 'lizard' for Toyota Corolla 1990, *Ghazālah* 'gazelle' for Daihatsu Mira 1990, and *Battah* 'duck' for Honda Civic 1988.

In addition to a simplified Likert scale, a primarily qualitative approach is used to analyse the data collected. Given the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the naming conventions, a thematic analysis is conducted to identify cultural symbols and metaphors embedded in the tradenames. This technique facilitates a deeper understanding of the social meanings and cultural narratives behind these informal naming practices. Content analysis is also employed to code word types, such as animal names and personal names. Narrative analysis plays a partial role in understanding the cultural stories behind certain names. To complement the qualitative analysis, a quantification is also given in tabular forms to assess the validity of car tradenames. This mixed-methods approach provides a more comprehensive insight into the socio-cultural factors that shape how Egyptians denominate different car models.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Autonym (1): *Khanzīrah* 'Sow'

Mercedes-Benz, a luxury vehicles company, launched Mercedes W115 in 1968 which reached the Egyptian car market and has since then been known by the autonym *Khanzīrah* 'Sow', a tradename commoner in transaction than the original trademark. The lexical item *Khanzīrah* is a feminine zoonym carrying the feminine suffixal marker (ة '-ess'), presumably because the named entity itself, *ʿaraybiyyah* or *sayyārah* 'car', carries the feminine marker (ة); hence *Khanzīrah* 'Sow' rather than *Khanzīr* 'Boar' is the tradename. The justification for such a tradename *Khanzīrah* derives from an iconic resemblance between the signifier and the signified. The named entity and the autonym combine to form an icon whereby the headlamps and the front of the vehicle resemble pig's face and nose, a snout with an overly long upturned tip. In addition to the formal resemblance between both entities, the Egyptian nomenclators also find a functional equivalence in between, a car identical to a sow not only in form but in function as well due to its durability, solidity, and off-roading power as much as the sow is tough and sturdy with durable skin or hide. The nomenclature *Khanzīrah* seems to designate a man-made product inspired by a natural God-given animal. Peircean triadic analysis of semiosis or signification is pertinent hereto (Bateman, 2018). A triadic semiotic signification holds between representamen which is the car *per se*, the object which is the animal and the interpretant which constitutes the mental concepts or meanings understood from the representamen-object resemblance (Table 2, Figure 2).

Table 2
Tabular realia about the tradename Khanzīrah 'Sow'

TRADEMARK	MODEL	TRADENAME	TRANSLITERATION	TRANSLATION	NUMBER OF RESPONSES		
					✓	✗	?
Mercedes	1975	خنزيرة	khanzirah	'sow'	12	3	3

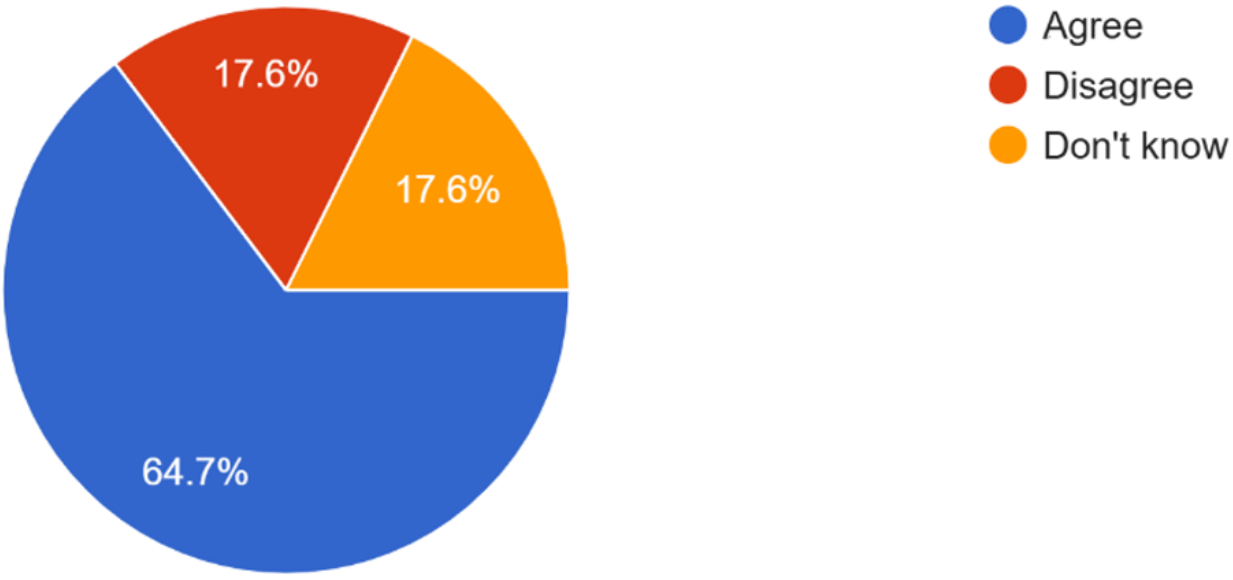

Figure 2. Participants' statistical responses to the tradename *Khanzīrah* 'Sow' (Mercedes E200 1975, 18 responses)

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4.2. Autonym (2): *Zalamukkah* 'Cloaca'

Afterward, Mercedes-Benz launched a following model, E200, manufactured in 1985 and known on the Egyptian car market as *Zalamukkah*, orthophemistically a 'cloaca', dysphemistically an 'ass' and euphemistically a 'butt'. Semiotically, the autonym *Zalamukkah* builds an iconic liaison between the representamen 'car' and the object 'hen' whereby the rear and the trunk of the car are likened to the derriere and cloaca of the chicken.

Other than the hunched-and-lifted-up derrieres of both the tenor (the car's derriere) and the vehicle (the hen's derriere), the ground, what they both have in common, figures in hen's derriere as a bone of contention among family members at the dining table. In the same vein, Mercedes *Zalamukkah* also seems to have been a point of attraction and contention among Egyptian sellers and buyers. The ergonym *Zalamukkah* holds a part-whole relation in reference to a holonym (the whole car) by means of a meronym (the hen-bum piece) (Table 3, Figure 3).

Table 3
Tabular realia about the tradename Zalamukkah 'Cloaca'

TRADEMARK	MODEL	TRADENAME	TRANSLITERATION	TRANSLATION	NUMBER OF RESPONSES		
					✓	✗	?
Mercedes	1987	زلوكة	Zalamukkah	'cloaca'	14	1	3

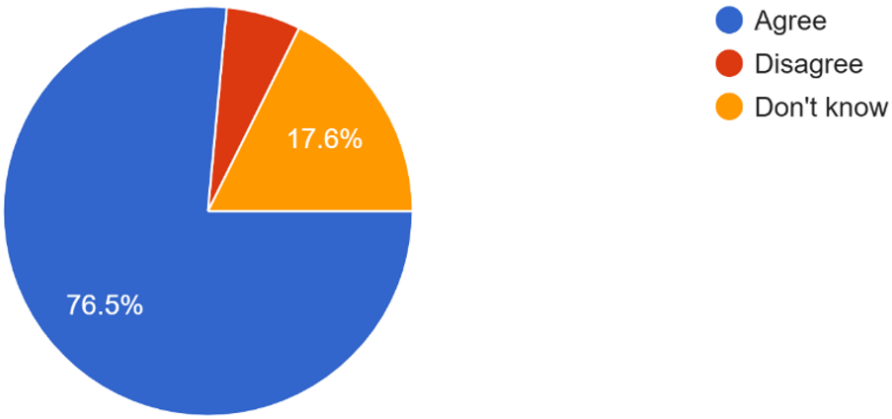

Figure 3. Participants' statistical responses to the tradename *Zalamukkah* 'Cloaca' (Mercedes E200 1987, 18 responses)

4.3. Autonym (3): *Shabaḥ* 'Ghost'

Mercedes-Benz launched the S-Class (W140) that gained much currency as a luxury car amongst the Egyptian elite and the upper-classers and earned the tradename *Shabaḥ* 'ghost' via an indexical connection between a tenor-representamen (W140) and a vehicle-object (ghost).

The representamen forms a sign with an indexical potential for association with the object via the interpretant, the mental representations and conceptual meanings understood from what the sign denotes, i.e., grounds which associate the tenor and the vehicle, including extraordinary speed, paranormal performance, and supernatural power. The tradename *Shabaḥ* is an autonym restructured from a theonym to attribute ghostly and spectral qualities to the vehicle model, such as invisibility, speed, transcendence, paranormality, and supernaturality. These associations signal metaphysical shifts in both the interior and exterior design of the model compared to its predecessors (Table 4, Figure 4).

Table 4
Tabular realia about the tradename Shabaḥ 'Ghost'

TRADEMARK	MODEL	TRADENAME	TRANSLITERATION	TRANSLATION	NUMBER OF RESPONSES		
					✓	✗	?
Mercedes	1998	شبح	Shabaḥ	'ghost'	16	0	2

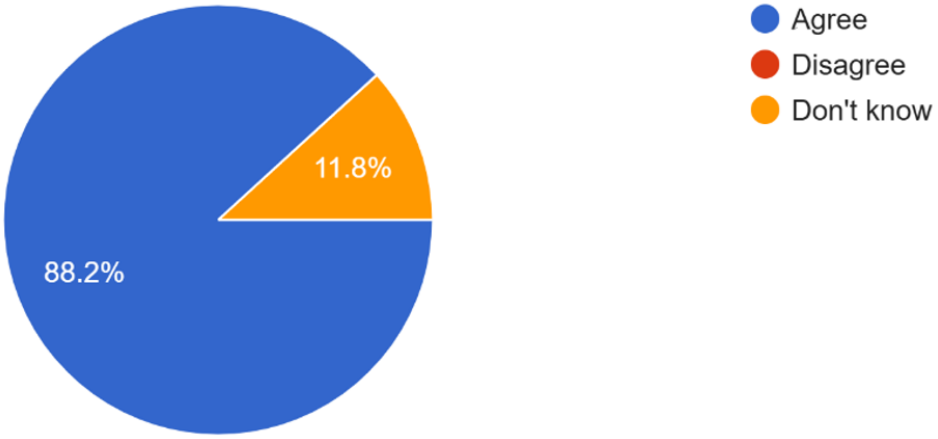

Figure 4. Participants' statistical responses to the tradename *Shabaḥ 'Ghost'* (Mercedes S320 1998, 18 responses)

4.4. Autonym (4): *Timsāḥah* 'Cow Crocodile'

Mercedes-Benz also launched another elite-owned S280 (W126) car model known as *Timsāḥah* 'Cow crocodile' which was exceptionally favoured by the Egyptian presidency (and hence its alternative name *al-Riaāsiyyah* 'the Presidential'). Among Egyptian car traders, it is renowned more as *al-Timsāḥah* 'Cow crocodile' than *al-Riaāsiyyah* 'the Presidential'. This model was the favourite of TV personalities and celebrities and became the most famous of all the car models as a result of its starring role within a famous Egyptian series called *al-Rāyah al-Bayḍā'* 'The White Flag' starred by *Thanāa Jamīl*, artistically *Faddah al-Maʿaddāwī*, whose refrain 'Walā Ḥammuuuuu it-timsāḥah yalā' ('Boy Ḥammu, the Cow crocodile, boy') is still remembered and often repeated in reference to S280 (W126). The connection between the car and the crocodile is indexical, with resemblance not in forms but in functions, such as sturdiness, durability, power, and stamina. The autonym *Timsāḥah* features a herpetonym (a reptile name) representative of the great power and longevity of the crocodilian family. The car W126 (1979-1991) and the cow-croc have in common a long, large muscular body armoured with stiff skeleton/chassis and powerhouse torque and performance (Table 5, Figure 5).

Table 5
Tabular realia about the tradename Timsāḥah 'Cow crocodile'

TRADEMARK	MODEL	TRADENAME	TRANSLITERATION	TRANSLATION	NUMBER OF RESPONSES		
					✓	✗	?
Mercedes	1987	تمساحة	Timsāhah	'cow crocodile'	15	1	2

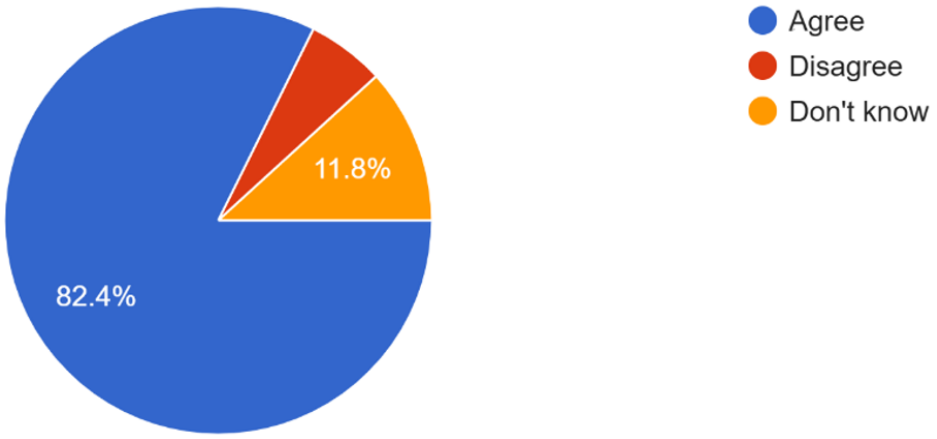

Figure 5. Participants' statistical responses to the tradename *Timsāḥah 'Cow crocodile'* (Mercedes S280 1984, 18 responses)

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4.5. Autonym (5): *ʿUyūn* 'Eyes'

Another important model launched by Mercedes-Benz was E Series (W210) which was known on the Egyptian car market as *ʿUyūn* 'Eyes' because of the iconic resemblance between the headlamps of this model and the circle-shaped eyes of human and animate/animal beings. The autonym *ʿUyūn* figures as a meronymous ergonym given to any (non)human and (in)animate object circular in shape just like an eye (Table 6, Figure 6).

Table 6
Tabular realia about the tradename ʿUyūn 'Eyes'

TRADEMARK	MODEL	TRADENAME	TRANSLITERATION	TRANSLATION	NUMBER OF RESPONSES		
					✓	✗	?
Mercedes	1998	عيون	ʿUyūn	'eyes'	15	1	2

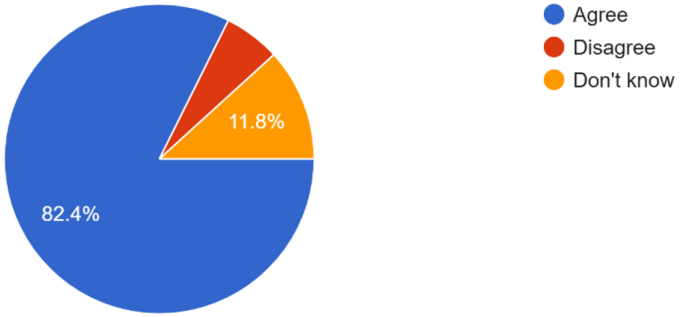

Figure 6. Participants' statistical responses to the tradename *ʿUyūn* 'Eyes' (Mercedes E240 1998, 18 responses)

4.6. Autonym (6): *Khunfisah* 'Beetle'

Volkswagen, a competitive German car manufacturer, launched a unique beetle-shaped car called 'Volkswagen Beetle', German for 'der Käfer' and Arabic for 'Khunfisah'.

The fact that Egyptians name it *Khunfisah* by way of translation and iconicity comes as no surprise. The source name 'der Käfer' translates into the target name 'Beetle' that translates to the Arabic tradename 'Khunfisah', conforming to its iconic beetle-shaped design. The autonym *Khunfisah* strictly features as an entomonym, an insect name mimicking the exterior design of the car and reflecting its distinct personality as an automotive icon ingrained in the Egyptian market.

Likeness is set between Beetle the insect and Beetle the car (Table 7, Figure 7).

Table 7
Tabular realia about the tradename Khunfisah 'Beetle'

TRADEMARK	MODEL	TRADENAME	TRANSLITERATION	TRANSLATION	NUMBER OF RESPONSES		
					✓	✗	?
Volkswagen	1981	خنفسة	Khunfisah	'beetle'	18	0	0

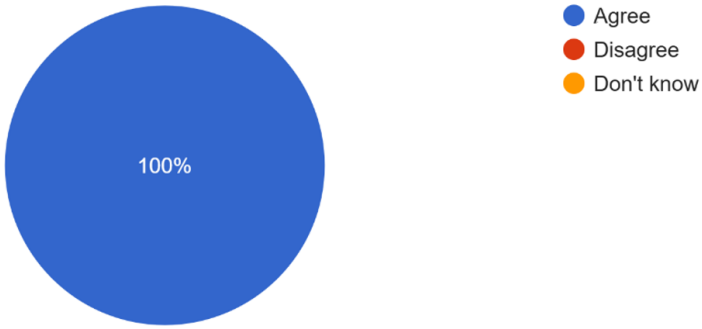

Figure 7. Participants' statistical responses to the tradename *Khunfisah* 'Beetle' (Volkswagen Beetle 1981, 18 responses)

4.7. Autonym (7): *Qirdah* 'She-monkey'

The Italian automobile manufacturer, Fiat (*Fabbrica Italiana Automobili Torino*) Automobiles, launched a small car model in 1937 whose tradename on the Egyptian market was *Qirdah* (slang *irdah*) 'she-monkey', a zoonym denoting an iconic-indexical relation between the vehicle and the animal. Iconically, the vehicle bears some resemblance to the animal in terms of facial expressions and headlamps. The she-monkey has wide-open round eyes just like the rounded headlights and headlamps of the vehicle (Table 8, Figure 8)

Table 8
Tabular realia about the tradename Qirdah 'She-monkey'

TRADEMARK	MODEL	TRADENAME	TRANSLITERATION	TRANSLATION	NUMBER OF RESPONSES		
					✓	✗	?
Fiat	1937	قردة	Qirdah	'she-monkey'	12	2	4

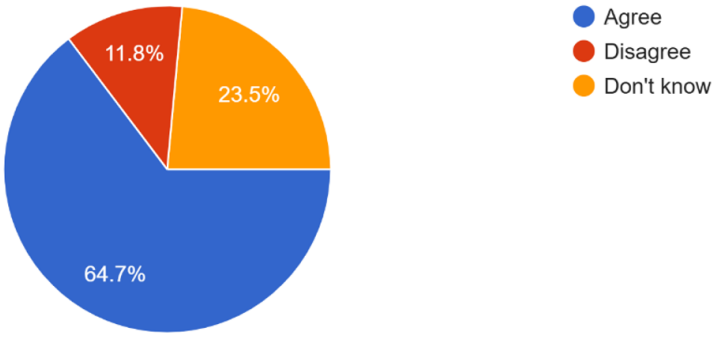

Figure 8. Participants' statistical responses to the tradename *Qirdah 'She-monkey'* (Fiat 1100 1937, 18 responses)

Indexically, Fiat 1100 shares physical characteristic features with the female monkey, like small size, lightweight, nimbleness, and flexibility in traffic jams and congestions. For these reasons, it played a central starring role in an Egyptian series named *Ghadan Tatafattaḥ al-Zuhūr* 'Tomorrow the flowers will blossom' starred by Maḥmūd Yāsīn who chanted a song in praise of *Zūbah*, a red Fiat 1100. The lyrics of the song elaborate on the reasons why Fiat 1100 is colloquially referred to as *irdah*. The lyrics read in Arabic and translate in English as follows (author's translation):

O Zūbah, you're cute, O Zūbah, you're sweet.
Those who have seen you said, 'You're clever'.
As small as a jackstone yet can travel the world.
Like a fast and slick Hungarian express.
Don't look just at its appearance.
It carries me out of traffic jams on scorching days.
It knows what is right and where to go.
In congested areas I drive it.
Like the wind cutting through the road.
No bus would ever catch it.
See how Zūbah is speeding?
Inside it we eat and drink tea.
Isn't it then better than the tram?

حلوة يا زوبة طعمة يا زوبة
اللى شافوكى قالوا أروبة
قد البلية تلف الدنيا
اكسبريس مجرى ولهلوبة
متبصوش بس لمنظرها
شايلانى فى الزحمة ونارها
عارفة الصح وعارفة مسارها
ابقى فى وسط الزحمة سايقها
زى الريح بتفوت فى طريقها
ولا اوتوبيس يقدر يلحقها
شايفين زوبة بتجرى ازاى
ناكل فيها ونشرب شاى
طب مش احسن من الترومای؟

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4.8. Autonym (8): *Masṭarah* 'Ruler'

Toyota Motor Corporation, an automotive manufacturer not less important or dominant in Egypt than Mercedes-Benz, launched a Corolla model that gained a great repute as an economical and durable car. Toyota Corolla, an automotive best-seller in Egypt and potentially elsewhere whose production spans 1992-2000, has been given the tradename *Masṭarah* 'ruler', an ergonym indexically representative of a car steerable straight ahead just like a straightedge ruler without being affected by external forces. Toyota *Masṭarah*, alternatively *al-Malikah* 'the Queen', derives smoothly and straightly on the road and never swerves or deviates from its state of equilibrium. The ergonym *Masṭarah* 'ruler' is symbolic of steering steadiness and straightness without deviations, thanks to its aerodynamic shape which prevents drags from airwaves moving past (Table 9, Figure 9).

Table 9
Tabular realia about the tradename Masṭarah 'Ruler'

TRADEMARK	MODEL	TRADENAME	TRANSLITERATION	TRANSLATION	NUMBER OF RESPONSES		
					✓	✗	?
Toyota	1993	مسطرة	Mastarah	'ruler'	14	1	3

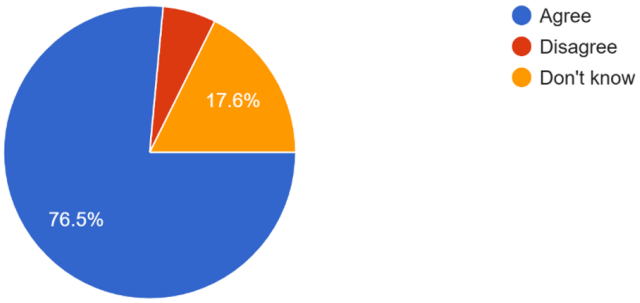

Figure 9. Participants' statistical responses to the tradename *Masṭarah 'Ruler'* (Toyota Corolla 1993, 18 responses)

4.9. Autonym (9): *ʿUyūn* 'Eyes'

Another iconically signified tradename which is identical to and indicative of that of Mercedes *ʿUyūn* 'eyes' is the part-for-whole, meronym-for-holonym, ergonym *ʿUyūn* 'eyes' in reference to a short-lived Toyota Corolla model, which was launched between 1998 and 2000. For the second time, the tradename *ʿUyūn* 'eyes' is assigned to a different car model, Corolla 1998, simply because the car's headlamps and headlights are like o-shaped eyes – a shape mirroring its meaning (Table 10, Figure 10).

Table 10
Tabular realia about the tradename ʿUyūn 'Eyes'

TRADEMARK	MODEL	TRADENAME	TRANSLITERATION	TRANSLATION	NUMBER OF RESPONSES		
					✓	✗	?
Toyota	1997	عيون	ʿUyūn	'eyes'	15	0	3

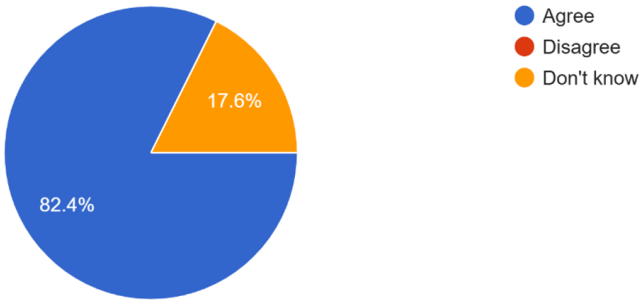

Figure 10. Participants' statistical responses to the tradename *ʿUyūn 'Eyes'* (Toyota Corolla 1997, 18 responses)

4.10. Autonym (10): *Gamal* 'Camel'

Toyota then launched another reliable and durable car model, spanning 2000-2007, which has been assigned the tradename *Gamal* 'Camel', a zoonym signalling an iconic resemblance between the camellike Toyota Corolla and the real camel and denoting a symbolical-indexical reference to its physical characteristics in comparison with those of the vehicle itself. Imparted to the vehicle are the physical features of the camel as a cultural symbol of endurance, durability, adaptability, and persistence. Just as the camel is revered as being the ship of the desert, just so is the camellike car a testament to authenticity and steadfastness in tough road conditions. Surprisingly, the car, *sayyārah/ᶜarabiyyah* which reflects a feminine gender in Arabic grammar, is not referred to as *nāqah* 'she-camel' but as *gamal* 'camel' which is an unmarked term. The Egyptians have ascribed a neutral and uncommitted tradename which is more inclusive and more frequent. The masculine tradename is the unmarked form in Arabic and is therefore chosen to avoid gender distinction.

As Baker (2018) describes it, when the gender of the referent is not known, the masculine rather than feminine is used to include a bigender reference and exclude none (Table 11, Figure 11).

Table 11
Tabular realia about the tradename Gamal 'Camel'

TRADEMARK	MODEL	TRADENAME	TRANSLITERATION	TRANSLATION	NUMBER OF RESPONSES		
					✓	✗	?
Toyota	2000	جمل	gamal	'camel'	12	1	5

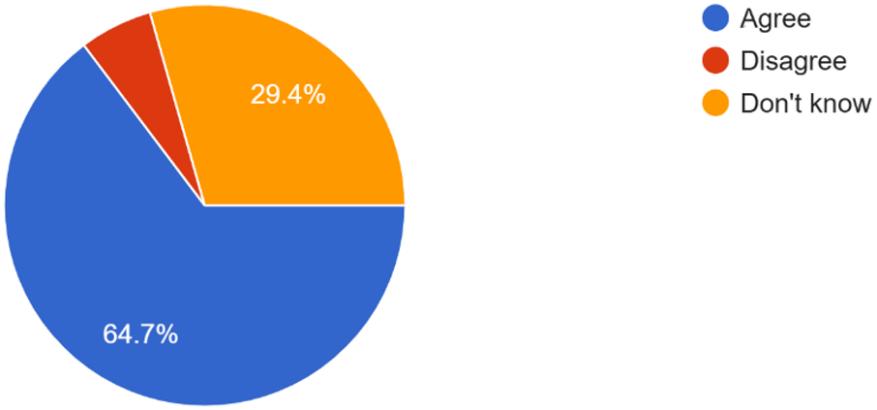

Figure 11. Participants' statistical responses to the tradename *Gamal 'camel'* (Toyota Corolla 2000, 18 responses)

4.11. Autonym (11): *ᶜUyūn Ṣafiyyah* 'Ṣaffiyah's Eyes'

Mitsubishi Motors, an automobile manufacturer not indeed less important than Toyota, launched a car model which gained an iconic tradename, *ᶜUyūn Ṣafiyyah*, an autonym composed of an 'appellative' meronymous ergonym *ᶜUyūn* 'eyes' and a 'commemorative' holonymous anthroponym *Ṣafiyyah* (Ursini & Long, 2024, p. 67). The compound tradename *ᶜUyūn Ṣafiyyah* 'Ṣaffiyah's Eyes' is commemoratively reminiscent of an Egyptian actress, a series and movie star, called *Ṣafiyyah Al-ᶜUmarī* whose eyes are iconically representative of the headlamps of Mitsubishi Lancer (spanning 1989-1994).

This vehicle's headlights/headlamps are considered by the Egyptians to be indicative of the shape of Ṣafiyyah Al-ᶜUmarī's painted almond-like eyes, serving as symbol of flawless and unscathed beauty of the tenor and the vehicle alike (Table 12, Figure 12).

Table 12
Tabular realia about the tradename ᶜUyūn Ṣafiyyah 'Ṣaffiyah's Eyes'

TRADEMARK	MODEL	TRADENAME	TRANSLITERATION	TRANSLATION	NUMBER OF RESPONSES		
					✓	✗	?
Mitsubishi	1990	عيون صفية	ᶜUyūn Ṣafiyyah	'Ṣaffiyah's Eyes'	12	1	5

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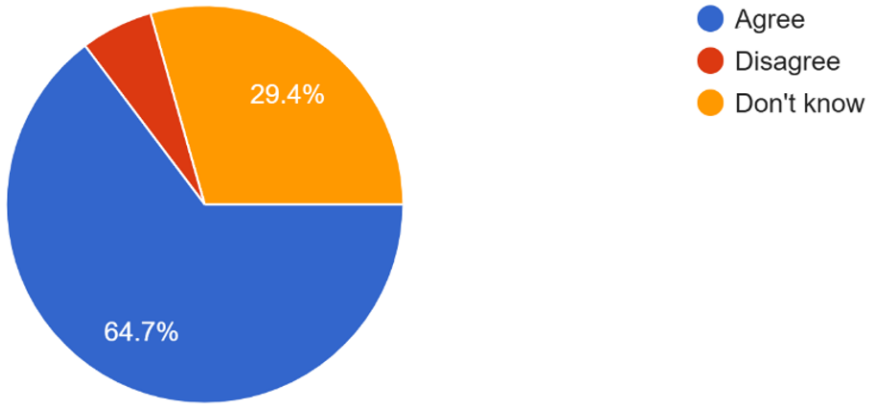

Figure 12. Participants' statistical responses to the tradename *ʿUyūn Safiyyah* 'Saffiyah's eyes' (Mitsubishi Lancer 1990, 18 responses)

4.12. Autonym (12): *Kristālah* 'Crystal'

Mitsubishi then launched another Lancer model between 1995 and 2003 which pervaded the Egyptian market under the tradename *Kristālah* 'crystal', a crystal or a special piece of crystal, symbolic of purity, perfection, and preciousness – a model well-known for its durability, stability, and cheap-rate maintainability and cheap-price spare parts. In addition to indexical and symbolic connections in between, iconic signification can be claimed to have its own share in this ergonymous tradename (Table 13, Figure 13). Rear lights and lamps as well as taillights of Lancer *Kristālah* do resemble a conelike crystal and has most probably been inspired by its shape, which might explain why the Egyptians call this model in particular a *Kristālah*, a crystalline vehicle by shape and by make.

Table 13
Tabular realia about the tradename Kristālah 'Crystal'

TRADEMARK	MODEL	TRADENAME	TRANSLITERATION	TRANSLATION	NUMBER OF RESPONSES		
					✓	✗	?
Mitsubishi	1994	كريستالة	Kristālah	'crystal'	15	0	3

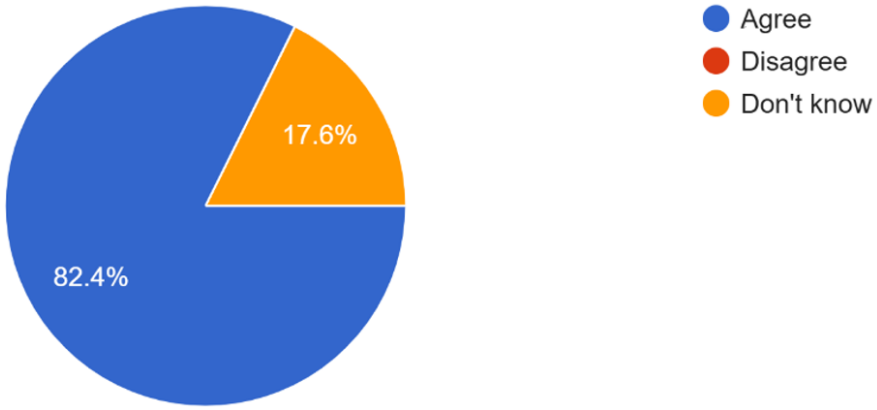

Figure 13. Participants' statistical responses to the tradename *Kristālah* 'Crystal' (Mitsubishi Lancer 1994, 18 responses)

4.13. Autonym (13): *Makwah* 'Iron'

Later on, Mitsubishi launched another Lancer model as a sequel to the previously successful model. The new model gained some currency among Egyptians who assigned it the tradename *Makwah* 'iron' owing to the iconic resemblance between the ironlike rear lamps and taillights of Lancer 2000-2003 and the flat metal-based household device that is heated to iron and smooth clothes, simply the iron (Table 14, Figure 14).

Table 14
Tabular realia about the tradename Makwah 'Iron'

TRADEMARK	MODEL	TRADENAME	TRANSLITERATION	TRANSLATION	NUMBER OF RESPONSES		
					✓	✗	?
Mitsubishi	2000	مكوة	Makwah	'iron'	12	3	3

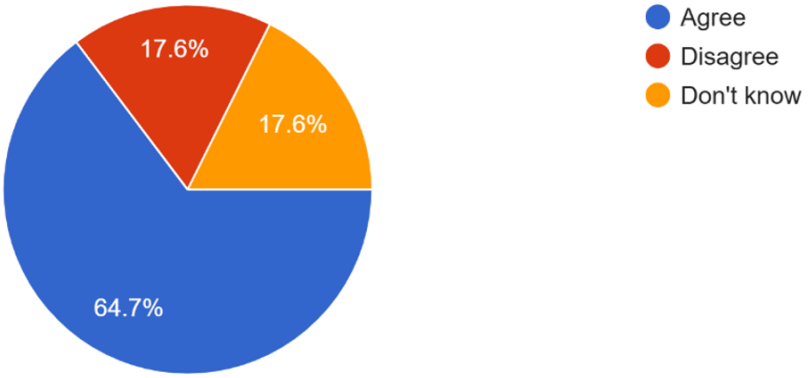

Figure 14. Participants' statistical responses to the tradename *Makwah 'Iron'* (Mitsubishi Lancer 2000, 18 responses)

4.14. Autonym (14): *Būmah* 'Owl'

Mitsubishi then launched a competitive Lancer car model which reached the Egyptian market and gained the greatest currency compared with its predecessors and contemporaries. Its production spanned nine years from 2004 to 2012 and gained great success. It has been given the tradename *Būmah* 'owl' presumably because the bonnet or hood of the car looks exactly like an owl's bill. What is functional is the fact that though Lancer *Makwah* and Lancer *Būmah* both share the same rear lamplights and taillights, Egyptians deemed it necessary to assign a new tradename to the more successful and long-lived model of Lancer *Būmah* than *Makwah,* hence is the novel tradename *Būmah*, an ornithonym in place of its predecessor ergonym *Makwah* (Table 15, Figure 15).

Table 15
Tabular realia about the tradename Būmah 'Owl'

TRADEMARK	MODEL	TRADENAME	TRANSLITERATION	TRANSLATION	NUMBER OF RESPONSES		
					✓	✗	?
Mitsubishi	2004	بومة	Būmah	'owl'	17	0	1

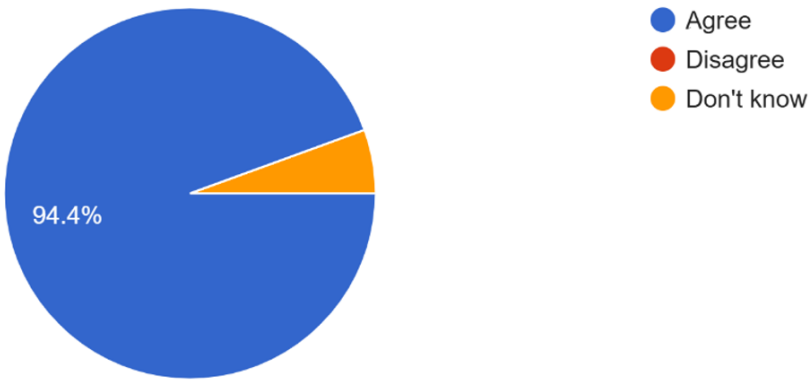

Figure 15. Participants' statistical responses to the tradename *Būmah 'Owl'* (Mitsubishi Lancer 2004, 18 responses)

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4.15. Autonym (15): *Qirsh* 'Shark'

Mitsubishi launched another very competitive model complementary to and contemporaneous with the owllike Lancer – a very successful model spanning 2006-19 and designated by the Egyptians as Lancer *Qirsh* (colloquially *Irsh* 'shark') because the entire front of the car, especially the hood, resembles the face of the shark. Iconic resemblance is the main reason for the given *ichthyonym* (fish name) – a sharklike car front from the bonnet down to the grill down to the defender down to the bumper, exactly like the shark face from the eyes to the snout down to the mouth (upper and lower jaws) (Table 16, Figure 16).

Table 16
Tabular realia about the tradename Qirsh 'Shark'

TRADEMARK	MODEL	TRADENAME	TRANSLITERATION	TRANSLATION	NUMBER OF RESPONSES		
					✓	✗	?
Mitsubishi	2006	قرش	Qirsh	'shark'	15	2	1

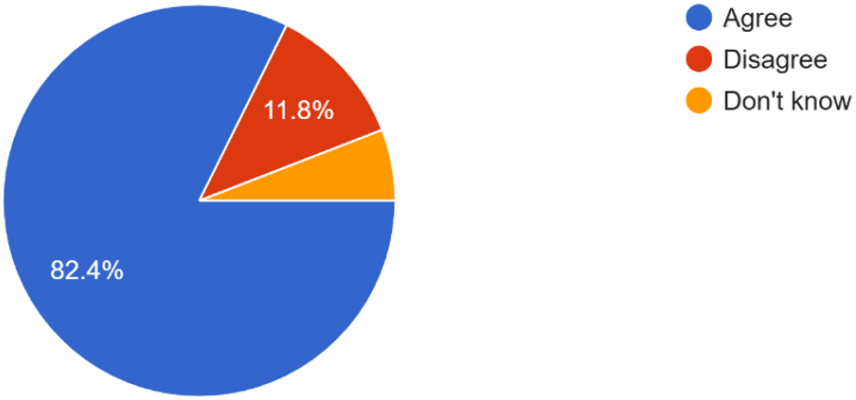

Figure 16. Participants' statistical responses to the tradename *Qirsh 'Shark'* (Mitsubishi Lancer 2006, 18 responses)

5. DISCUSSION

The study aimed to analyse a convenience sample of car tradenames, i.e., autonyms, collected from three e-portals and validated via an inter-rater reliability questionnaire by 18 participants who share the same intuitions about these tradenames and the same cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The specific objective has been to quest for valid replies to two empirical research questions (RQs). RQ I is an inquiry into the categories of animals (zoonyms) and objects (ergonyms) elected and singled out for interreference between the words and the referents. According to the inter-rater reliability questionnaire results, only the 18 participants out of 58 population invited have voluntarily completed the questionnaire. Their responses to the open-ended question revealed three additional tradenames I was not previously aware of. Figure 17 displays a bar graph summarising the participants' answers to the open-ended question.

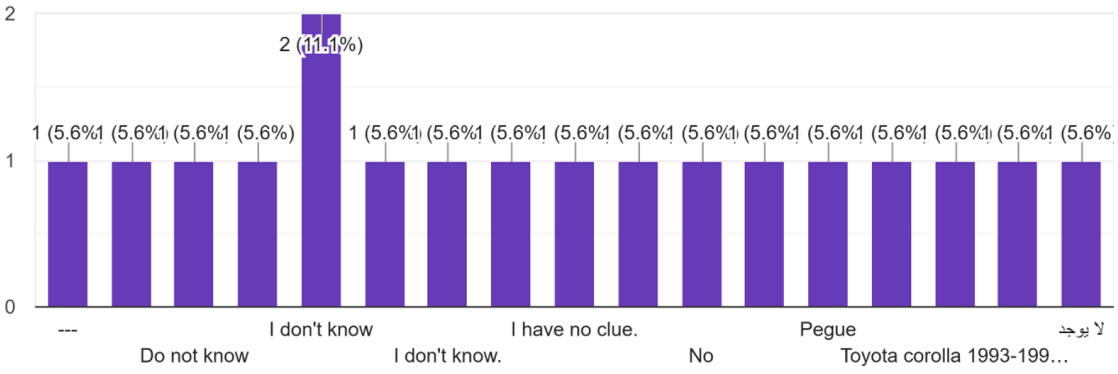

Figure 17. Responses to the open-ended question 'Please write below any other Egyptian tradename of an automobile trademark not included in the form' (18 responses)

The great majority of the participants suggested no more tradenames. Only two participants proposed three more autonyms that have been supported neither by the clang phenomenon nor by the inter-rater reliability form. Therefore, the analysis has been pared down to the tradenames rated higher than 50%. The criterion for excluding tradenames that received less than 50% of the votes is based upon a threshold of majority support.

This means that if a tradename was supported by less than half of the participants, it was considered to lack sufficient consensus or popularity to be retained in the sample selected for analysis. Setting this 50% threshold helps ensure that only those tradenames with majority-backed relevance are considered significant or representative in the analysed contexts.

The analysed autonyms prove to be branching off from two superordinate categories: (i) zoonyms (animal names) and (ii) ergonyms (object names). Each superordinate has its own ramifications into some subordinate categories. The quantitative analysis reveals a dominance of these two semantic categories – zoonyms and ergonyms – within a limited set of 15 tradenames. The distribution of both categories provides diverse patterns of naming practices and suggests a balanced but deliberate naming process, leveraging ergocentric and animalistic imageries. The blend reflects broader linguistic and branding trends, whereby vernacular naming conventions commonly seek both rational appeal (as seen in ergonyms) and symbolic resonance (as found in zoonyms). Zoonyms occupy 8 out of 15 tradenames with a percentage of 53.3%, compared with ergonyms that occupy 7 out of 15 (i.e., 46.7%). The statistical distribution is relative and nearly balanced, with zoonyms slightly more frequent. The marginal difference (≈6.6% for 1 tradename) suggests no marked supremacy of either category.

On the one hand, zoonyms subdivide into insect names (entomonyms), reptile names (herpetonyms), fish names (ichthyonyms), and bird names (ornithonyms).

On the other, ergonyms fall into crystal names (crystallonyms) and technological names (technonyms). The lexical analysis of the selected tradenames has resulted in a typological model of the onomastics of autonyms in Egyptian vernacular as shown in Figure 18.

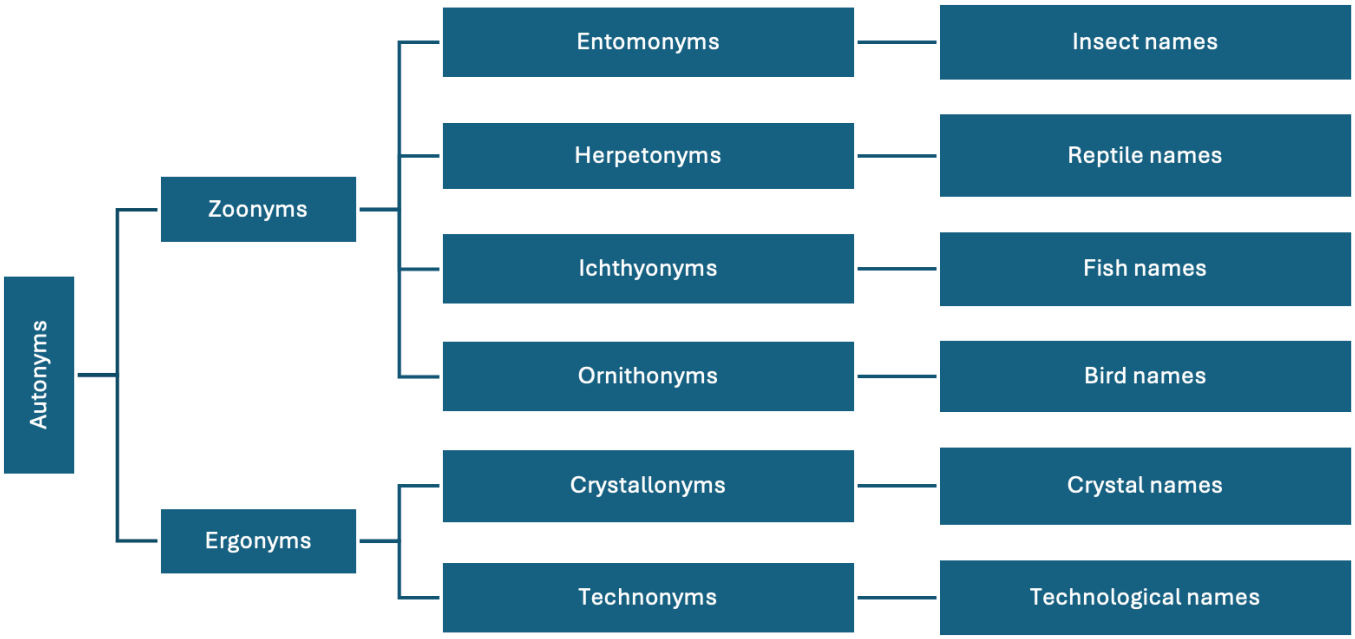

Figure 18. A culture-specific typology of autonyms in Egyptian Arabic

As for RQ II, the functional analysis has revealed triadic signification between the representamens, the objects, and the interpretants. The significational relation in between features the three Peircean categories of signs: icons, indexes, and symbols. Iconic autonyms bear a physical resemblance to the thing being represented. Indexical autonyms imply a causal relation between representamens and objects. Symbolic autonyms signify conventional and culture-learned connection between the object and the interpretant. The semiotics of autonyms in Egyptian Arabic figure a trio of signs to represent one thing in terms of another by resembling, causalising, and symbolising what they represent in a process of semiosis. The triad of icon-index-symbol and representamen-object-interpretant is metaphorically paralleled by a triad of tenor-vehicle-ground in autonomastics.

The mixed-methods approach to the lexicosemiotic analysis of car tradenames in Egyptian Arabic reveals semantic implications. Zoonyms, tradenames based on animals, at 53.3%, indicate a collective cultural trend to re-brand certain car models using natural or animalistic imagery with symbolic and metaphorical associations. Ergonyms, tradenames related to objects, at 46.7%,

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reflect a common tendency to rename specific car models using anthropocentric objects. The near-equal split suggests a dual branding strategy whereby zoonym usage evokes character, strength, vitality and distinctiveness. Ergonym use, by contrast, invokes functionality and service orientation. The analysis demonstrates a possible overlap where an ergonym (e.g., 'eyes') combines with an anthroponym (e.g., 'Safiyyah') to re-brand a car model. This overlap gives prominence to the need for narrative analysis to reveal how global car brands are localised through vernacular tradenames to create sub-brands tailored to Egyptian markets and consumers. Narrative analysis is suitable for studying how global and local narratives intersect in branding practices (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009). Understanding these narrative adaptations is important to assess market entry strategies and cultural cognitions. Narrative analysis is valuable for examining car tradenames in Egyptian contexts as it allows for a deeper and better understanding of cultural meanings, consumer perceptions, and socio-linguistic influences embedded in brand naming. Narrative analysis is fundamental to making sense of the world and reflects shared cultural identities (Polkinghorne, 1988). Narrative analysis provides a framework to analyse how language constructs social realities (Riessman, 2008). Recounting a narrative through a tradename is a semiotic technique for differentiating products in competitive markets of automobile industry and connecting these products with sociocultural discourses (Fournier, 1998).

Tradenames intersect with folk taxonomy by echoing intuitive classification systems, influence market behaviour by guiding consumer choices, and operate semiotically by conveying meaning layers and brand identities. This interlink makes tradenames powerful cultural and commercial tools. Just as folk taxonomies classify plants, animals, or objects into intuitive categories, tradenames draw on everyday language, metaphors, and cultural categories to make a product instantly recognisable, purchasable, and saleable. In market behaviour, tradenames play a pivotal role in shaping consumer perceptions and decisions, as a well-crafted tradename can influence brand recall, value, and resonance. Semiotically, a tradename acts as a sign that carries a meaning beyond the literal one and is part of a brand's sign system that contributes to brand identity.

A key limitation of this study lies in its small sample size, with only 18 participants completing the questionnaire. In the context of car tradenames – where consumer perceptions, brand recognition, and naming preferences can vary widely across demographic and psychographic segments – such a limited participant pool restricts the depth and breadth of insights drawn. The small sample undermines the statistical validity of observed trends and limits the generalisability of findings to a wider car-buying population. It also raises concerns about sampling bias, as responses may disproportionately reflect the attitudes of a small group of consumers. Given the competitive nature of the automotive market, a more robust sample would be necessary to yield more reliable and actionable conclusions.

6. CONCLUSION

Aside from their linguistic properties that are overstudied, names in general have evidently witnessed wide-range linguistic variation and embeddedness in their sociocultural contexts. To explicate this onomastic issue, my study has drawn upon car tradenames, the neologism *autonyms*, from Egyptian Arabic and illustrated cases of naming practices of cultural significance and prominence in Egyptian Arabic from a lexical-semiotic perspective. Autonyms which feature varied colloquial tradenames of cars are iconically and indexically signified and metaphorically represented. The principal inference drawn from the preceding analysis is that Egyptian car dealers, likely unconsciously, integrate car trademarks and tradenames under creatively coined autonyms, which are systematically related through iconic and metaphorical linguistic processes. In its sociocultural guise, iconicity reflects a basis for grasping cultural conceptualisations and their cognitive realisations in language, i.e. shared cultural cognition related to language and typical of a cultural group (Sharifian, 2017, p. 37), like car dealers in Egypt. Metaphor works in tandem with iconicity to mirror shared mental imageries (Palmer, 1996), strictly cultural conceptualisations (Sharifian, 2011), across time and space. Animating metaphor (Leech, 1969) and conceptual metaphor (Lakoff, 1993) combine to impart to an inanimate object, an ergonym like 'car', animate features characteristic of a zoonym like 'animal' and to map their conceptual correspondences (i.e., grounds) across two domains, a target domain (i.e., a tenor) and a source domain (i.e., a vehicle). The tenor is the thing to which features are attributed, and the vehicle is the thing from which features are derived, and the ground is the conceptual mappings they have in common.

Theoretical implications of the study at hand include advancing our understanding of how naming practices in the Egyptian automotive context intersect with sociolinguistic variation, cultural semiotics, and folk taxonomy. By analysing car tradenames as linguistic artefacts, the study contributes to emerging frameworks in cultural linguistics and onomastics – particularly the proposed field of *autonomastics* – by highlighting how vehicle names encode values, ideologies, and identity markers unique to local sociocultural milieus. Applied implications, on the other hand, are particularly relevant for fields such as branding, marketing, and lexicography. For branding and marketing professionals, the findings offer insights into consumer perception and cultural resonance, informing more culturally attuned naming strategies for vehicle models in Egypt and comparable markets. For lexicographers and language planners, the study emphasises the evolving status of vehicle names as part of vernacular lexicons, warranting both inclusion and categorisation in specialised dictionaries and glossaries reflective of everyday linguistic usage.

A strong recommendation is to apply the proposed typological model to a parallel dataset of car tradenames across diverse cultures and languages, to assess its replicability and enhance the

generalisability of the findings. Doing so might develop the dynamic typology, inform future onomastic research, establish autonomastics as a subfield not less important than toponomastics, and peripherally inspire automotive industries to redesign their cars accordingly. The contribution of the study at hand resides in illuminating how car tradenames function as a rich intersection of variational onomastics, cultural and vernacular linguistics, vehicle semantics and semiotics, folk taxonomy, market behavior, revealing the nuanced ways language shapes and reflects consumer identity and cultural meaning in automotive branding. This article presents a seminal study that lays the foundation for a new field – *autonomastics* – by demonstrating how vehicle naming practices intersect with linguistic, cultural, and market dynamics to form a distinct domain of onomastic inquiry. The term 'autonomastics' is used here not in the sense of 'self-naming' (Culleton, 1991, p. 305), but rather to denote the study of vehicle naming practices, examining how car tradenames reflect and shape linguistic patterns, cultural values, and consumer behaviours and identities. As an unstudied emerging subfield of onomastics, autonomastics integrates theories and approaches from cultural linguistics, vehicle semantics, folk taxonomy, and marketing to investigate how tradenames in the automotive world function as socially meaningful, embedded signifiers. Future research at the intersection of onomastics, semantics, and cultural linguistics stands to further elucidate the complex roles of tradenames in mediating social identity and meaning and cultural belonging. Future studies should aim for a significantly larger and more diverse participant base to better capture the complexities of consumer responses to car tradenames.

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Appendix. Transliteration symbols for Arabic vowels and consonants

ARABIC LETTER	ENGLISH SYMBOL	ARABIC EXAMPLE	ENGLISH EQUIVALENT
أ	a	amal	hope
ب	b	bāb	door
ت	t	tibn	chaff
ث	th	thaclab	fox
ج	j	jamal	camel
ح	h	hubb	love
خ	kh	khubz	bread
د	d	dubb	bear
ذ	dh	dhahab	gold
ر	r	rabb	Lord
ز	z	zayt	oil
س	s	sabt	Saturday
ش	sh	shams	sun
ص	s	sayf	summer
ض	d	dayf	guest
ط	t	tin	mud
ظ	z	zuhr	noon
ع	c	cabd	slave
غ	gh	gharb	west
ف	f	famm	mouth
ق	q	qalam	pen
ك	k	kitāb	book
ل	l	layl	night
م	m	makr	guile
ن	n	nawm	sleep
هـ	h	hudhud	hoopoe
وَ	w	ward	rose
يَ	y	yawm	day
ء	’	dā’	disease

ARABIC LETTER	ENGLISH SYMBOL	ARABIC EXAMPLE	ENGLISH EQUIVALENT
(فتحة)	a	kataba	he wrote
(ضمة) ُ	u	kutub	books
(كسرة)	i	sinn	tooth
مد طَويل ا/ى	ā	kātib	writer
ضمة طويلة و	ū	fūl	beans
كسرة طويلة ي	ī	fīl	elephant
أصوات مدغمة	aw	mawt	death
أصوات علة مركبة	ay	bayt	house

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