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# **THE BRAND NAMING OF JAPANESE SAKE, A LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF 200 VARIETIES.**

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# Abstract

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This paper reports on a study conducted on the brand names of the 200-top ranked Japanese rice wines in Japan in the year of 2016. The brand names are content analyzed using the same framework as was used for the Chinese brand names in the two studies by Chan & Huang (2001) and Chan & Huang (1997). With some modifications to fit the different orientation of this paper.

The purpose of this study is to show the main semantic theme in brand names of sake, to give insight into the linguistic aspects of the brand names of sake, and to do several comparisons with previous studies that was conducted on Chinese brand names. The applied linguistic parameters are semantic context, semantic connotation, modifier-noun phrase, kanji character and syllable count. Alongside the results, there will be discussions to get a deeper understanding of Japanese brand naming.

The results show that Japanese brand naming shares many of its linguistic aspects with Chinese brand naming. But it also revealed a difference in the syllable structure of the brand names of the two languages. Moreover, it showed that the most frequently occurring semantic theme of Japanese brand names is company names and personal names. Which fits the general image of the Japanese market in which corporate branding is the most frequently used method for branding products.

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# 1 Introduction

To start, we should first take a closer look at the nature of brand names as Chan & Huang (2001) states:

The value of a brand name is associated closely with its awareness, quality perception, and the customer satisfaction engendered by related products and offerings, among others. It is widely recognized that brand names play a crucial role in marketing products and services and in their acceptance by the public. And may contribute significantly to the success or failure of new products or services. The nature of brand names in adding value to a product is widely recognized, and conceptualized in research under the brand equity construct.

Researchers have generalized guidelines which are used in brand naming from the perspective of the firm marketing the brands, and they are regarded as being very valuable for the selection of brand names. The generalized criteria include: the short length of brand names, the ease of pronunciation, packaging needs, adaptability to the advertising medium, and so on. However, the studies which these guidelines are based upon have been largely conducted in Western countries and on products branded in the Western European languages. Only a few recent studies have looked closer at the brand names in Asia. Which is a problem that Robinson found in his study (as cited in Chan & Huang, 2001), and which they point out in their paper as well. They also doubt the applicability of Western brand naming models in the Asia Pacific due to differences in language but, mainly, in culture. And thus, they emphasize the importance of the studies they are conducting to better understand phenomena such as the significant brand dominance in many Asian packaged goods markets. Which they attribute to shared Asian values or Confucian-influenced values.

In the case of Japan this phenomenon can be seen in the practice of corporate branding, which is very common. Corporate branding is the use of a corporation's name on many of its products, the name of the corporation being the main element regardless of what is being sold. For example, take the leading food manufacturer with the name AJI-NO-MOTO. Many of its products, such as cooking oil, are crowned with the corporate name (Tanaka, 1993). So, corporations launch many brands that are integrated under a central single corporate brand system. This system enables Japanese corporations to launch new products and new models one after another within a short time period. This is because of the extremely competitive nature of the Japanese market. Within which incessant new product launches employing corporate branding are usually a better option than choosing an independent branding system.

Compared to the very multi-cultural and mixed nature of Western European cultures and languages, Japan's culture and language is more of its own due to the country's relative isolation both geographically and historically. Which makes it different in many ways from Western European languages. As an example, take the three vocabulary strata that exists in the Japanese vocabulary. Japanese Words (和語 *wago*), Sino-Japanese words (漢語 *kango*) and foreign words (外来語 *gairaigo*). According to scholars, basic concepts in our everyday life often fall under native-Japanese words, while Sino-Japanese words tend to be used to express abstract or scientific concepts because of their precision (Yamaguchi, 2007, p. 40). To add to this, Sino-Japanese and native-Japanese words have separate readings. *Kun*-reading (訓読み *kunyomi*) for native-Japanese words, and *On*-reading (音読み *onyomi*) for the Sino-Japanese words. Even though they might often use the very same *kanji*. Therefore, In Japanese brand naming, the reading of the *kanji* used in brand names is an important factor that needs to be taken into consideration. Depending on which reading is used, the perceived origin or feel for the product in question may vary greatly. A similar thing may occur in Western European languages in some cases. But then it is not a question of which reading it is that is defining the impression of said product, but rather that the use and arrangement of letters from the alphabet tells the consumer that the word is of a language other than their own. Which makes the Japanese situation unique in comparison.

Compared to the Chinese market, the Japanese one may not seem as alluring to foreign companies because of its smaller size. But an understanding of Japanese branding is very helpful to the development of successful business endeavors in the Japanese market. And beyond that, because of the commonly shared cultural values in Asia, insight into the Japanese brand naming system also furthers insight into the Chinese market among others.

## 1.1 Background

This paper will focus on the linguistic aspect (semantic interpretation & vocabulary) of the brand names of the top ranked 200 varieties of sake, as voted by members of the association 日本酒物語 *nihonshu-monogatari*, and no other products. Which at first glance might seem limiting in many aspects. But sake has long historical and traditional ties to the Japanese culture and society, and sake is thought of as something genuinely Japanese (*kikusui-sake* 菊

水酒, 2016). Thus, it will give us a much deeper understanding of Japanese brand names than we might think at first.

Previous studies of notice are the two studies conducted on Chinese brand naming by Chan & Huang (2001) and Chan & Huang (1997). Both in which they analyze the linguistic aspects of over 1,700 brand names of Chinese products.

The problem which this paper puts forth is; that studies focused on the analysis of brand names themselves appear to be very limited. And as noted above, these studies of brand naming have almost exclusively been conducted on Western brands which uses Western European languages. Studies published on brand naming in Japanese are very few and none of them have focused on the details related to the linguistic component of brand names. Much less so on the brand names of sake, where no studies have been found.

Thus, this gap in knowledge should be filled. Therefore, the aim of this study will be to show the linguistic structure of the brand names of said sake, and will shed light on what the base values are that permeates Japanese brand names.

The main research questions will be:

1. How is the brand naming of sake characterized in correlation with linguistic parameters?
2. Using the results of Chan & Huang's studies to compare with, what similarities and differences can be found with Chinese brand names?
3. With the chapter on Branding in Japan (Tanaka, 1993) in consideration, where he talks about the concept of corporate branding. Will the corporate branding system also be reflected in the semantic theme of Japanese sake?

## 2 Previous Studies

Many studies on brand names have so far strived to find the all the criteria needed in order to make a good selection of a brand name. However, though the guidelines presented by many researchers so far are sometimes overlapping, the majority of their criteria differ in various places. But in Chan & Huang's (1997) paper, they summarize the criteria from four different researchers into three general categories that are much easier to both apply and understand.

Since the first two components of their summary are not related to the study being conducted in this paper, they will not be mentioned more than briefly below. While the focus, which is the linguistic component, will be further explained.

### 2.1 The Market Component

The market component requires a brand to be suggestive of product benefits. For the product to be promotable and persuasive. And for the product to fit with the company image and other related products' image.

### 2.2 The Legal Component

The legal component demands the legal availability, that the brand name is not already taken, and the uniqueness of the brand name.

### 2.3 The Linguistic Component

Phonetic requirements:

- Easy to pronounce and pleasant to hear.

Morphologic requirements:

- Short and simple.

Semantic requirements:

- Positive, not offensive, obscene or negative.
- Modern or contemporary.
- Understandable and memorable.

As Chan & Huang (2001) argues in their paper, the linguistic component of a brand name is the essence of branding because it directly affects the function of a brand name. And the function of brands is to make whatever it is that is being offered recognizable and

distinguishable on the market. Charmasson further explains (as cited in Chan & Huang, 2001) that:

A brand competes better when it is legally protected from the adaptation and imitation from any potential competitors. However, the degree of market promotion and legal protection that can be derived from the use of a commercial name depends almost entirely upon the intrinsic characteristics of the syllables, words and phrases of the brand name.

Which makes it fair to say that the other two components are heavily reliant on the linguistic component. In Japanese, same as in Chinese, the linguistic aspect of brand naming is especially important because of the way naming is guided by the linguistic rules of the respective languages.

Within the syllable structure, the syllables being preferred over others depends on the speech communities themselves. Sternberg points out (as cited in Chan & Huang, 1997) that Japanese speakers considered *chi*, *tsu* and *pi* to sound strong, cheerful and pleasing while *zu*, *da* and *gu* sounded melancholic and dull. Furthermore, syllable structure is directly related to the ease of pronunciation and its structure changes from one language to another. The Japanese language, as opposed to Chinese which only have the CV or CVC structures, have the syllable structure of V, CV and CyV (Madsen, 1992, p. 25). But both languages share the fact that they do not allow any consonant clusters, which makes the syllable structure of both languages very simple. Whereas other languages have freedom to cluster consonants and this makes their syllable structure much more complicated. As an example, Chan & Huang (1997) mentions English. Which permits a syllable structure such as that of CCCVCC with an initial three-consonant cluster (e.g. *splice*). Words of this kind is therefore difficult for Japanese and Chinese speakers to pronounce because of the unfamiliarity of not having such clusters of consonants in their own languages. So, in order to promote something on the Japanese market, you should take this into serious consideration. As an example of a good brand name, let's look at some of the most powerful brand names in the USA, Europe and Japan respectively (Coca-Cola, Disney, Toyota, Kodak (see Chan & Huang, 1997)), where we see that the predominant structure is CV and CVC. Which not only benefits them in their own countries of origin, but also on an international market level.

The Japanese language, being of a different origin from Indo-European languages, has specific linguistic features that directly impacts brand naming. These parts will be explained



in some detail in the framework part. (For further details on the Japanese language, see books by Yamaguchi (2007)).

### 3 Framework

The framework used in this study is mostly based on the research conducted in Chan & Huang's papers titled: *Chinese brand naming: a linguistic analysis of the brands of ten product categories* (2001), *Brand naming in China: A linguistic approach* (1997). Where they content analyzed 1304 (2001), respectively 527 (1997) brand names of Chinese products to find the general preference of Chinese people for brand names. Here on follows two of the generalized linguistic principles which Chan & Huang (2001) believe to be governing Chinese branding (there are two more principles, but they have been neglected because of irrelevance due to this paper's orientation towards Japan instead of China).

1. The compounding structure of the brand names should follow the pattern of modifier-noun. Of the brands in the corpus Chan & Huang (1997) used, 78 percent were found to have the compound structure of modifier-noun. That is, the second component of the name being a noun and the first function is a modifier to this noun. The modifier-noun pattern is the most common compounding pattern in the Chinese language. So, this paper aims to test if this applies to Japanese as well. Since it is easy to construct the meaning of the two components of the compounds. Thus, it also meets the requirement of branding, mentioned in the background chapter, for being simple and understandable.
2. The compound brand should have a positive connotation. Of the brands Chan & Huang (1997) analyzed, 66 percent were semantically positive names by the excessive use of favorite Chinese animals and flora or other good luck words specific to Chinese culture. Due to the shared cultural values between China and Japan, also mentioned in the introduction, this paper will try to apply this to the Japanese brand names of sake.

#### 3.1 Japanese Word Formation

If we wish to understand brand name formation in Japanese, we must first know more about Japanese word formation. The Japanese language possesses two major ways of forming words; one is compounding, which is the form that this study is focusing on. And the other is affixation. Compounding creates words through compounding two characters (e.g. 電話 *denwa* "telephone") or two (or more) independent words (e.g. 携帯電話 *keitai-denwa* "Mobile-telephone"). Affixation on the other hand, is dependent on and uses what are called bound

morphemes. This kind of morpheme cannot stand on its own in a sentence, but have meaning (e.g. 帳 *chou* ”-book”). This character needs to be affixed to a word such as in (e.g. 電話帳 *denwa-chou* ”Telephone directory”). Words are in the linguistic definition, the smallest form of free units in language. While within the word structure itself, the basic unit called the morpheme is the smallest meaningful part of the word. The difference between words and morphemes is that words can freely appear in sentences while morphemes cannot. There are two kinds of morphemes, one of which was briefly mentioned above; Free morphemes and bound morphemes. Free morphemes can stand on their own in a sentence, and they are words. Though in Japanese, independent units are not only restricted to being free morphemes; they can also be Ideograms. Which will be further discussed below. Bound morphemes, mainly affixes (used in affixation), have meaning but cannot be used independently. Thus, they do not qualify as words.

In Japanese, something in general terminology called 表記のしくみ *hyouki-no-shikumi* is used for the writing system, in which 表記 *hyouki* is a special expression for writing numbers, scripts or symbols on a piece of paper (Yamaguchi, 2007, p. 72). And here is the important part, that there are three central types of script in the Japanese writing system. Not just *kanji* characters like in Chinese. The scripts are ひらがな *hiragana*, カタカナ *katakana* and 漢字 *kanji* which are the same as in Chinese. Of these three, the combination of *hiragana* and *kanji* are the scripts most commonly used in everyday communication.

Though in this study, since it is almost exclusively *kanji* that appear in the brand names, some further explaining on the topic of the main two scripts will be needed.

The first crucial difference is that each *kanji* functions as content words, which is opposite to grammatical words. Content words possess their own semantic content or lexical meaning, while grammatical words function as syntactic elements in sentences or as morphological elements in words. In other words, they possess grammatical meaning. The *kanji* are also called ideograms, and an ideogram represents an idea, a concept or a thing without necessarily becoming a word or morpheme. As an example (日本語 *nihon-go* “Japanese language”), is comprised of three ideograms. The first two combine to form “Japan” and the third adds the meaning of “language”, making this combination convey the meaning of “Japanese language”. This is one of the categories of what is called a nominal compound in Japanese. A nominal

compound refers to compounds that are classified as nouns, but they do not have to be composed of only nouns. But can rather be composed of two ideograms or *kanji*. Within a nominal compound the two elements modify one or another in different ways, and this gives rise to complex meaning and words based on the combined meaning of the composite parts or ideograms. Depending on the combination there are specific relationships between the composite parts, these relationships will be explained in further detail in the methodology chapter.

It is very important to know the above mentioned linguistic features of Japanese and its word formation. Especially the parts on *kanji*, ideograms and nominal compounds. Because the name formation in Japanese employs the very same procedure. Names in Japanese, be it personal names, place names or brand names, are all formed through compounding morphemes (*ideograms, kanji*). Making this a distinguishing feature of Japanese, though it exists in Chinese as well due to its use of *kanji* characters.

### 3.2 Meaningful Morphemes

Names in Japanese are meaningful because of their origin in the meaningful morphemes (*ideograms, kanji*). We can therefore assume that when creating a name in Japanese, the respective meanings of the component characters would be very carefully looked at before selecting them to form any type of name. In contrast to this, names in English are generally selected or coined only for the name's sake itself. As Chan & Huang (2001) further explains; Names in English, as terms of reference, generally lack the significance of meaning and to the vast majority of users they are, semantically speaking, completely opaque. This because of the nature of the English alphabetic system, where the characters on their own lack any form meaning.

The English language as Chan & Huang (2001) explains, due to its use of the alphabetic system can simply scramble together some alphabetic letters to form a name like Oreo (a brand name of cookies), or combine an existing word with some random syllables to form something such as Motorola (a brand name of mobile phones). English can also compound words like Pizza-hut, make combinations of incomplete words Smartone (a mobile phone company), or use the process of blending (Telstra, telecommunication company) or clipping (Intel, personal computer brand).

And as Bullock (2016) describes, Japanese names are also very flexible. Most personal names use *kanji*, but in the case of female names the use of *hiragana* or *katakana* in personal names can also be observed to some extent. Family names are usually written in *kanji* as well. And it is this part, the reading of the *kanji*, that makes Japanese naming very flexible. As an example; 中田 can be read as either *nakada* or *nakata*. Which gives rise to several possible readings of a selected *kanji* in a name, and thus, a lot of freedom in naming in the Japanese language.

## 4 Methodology

The analysis of the material will be broken into six parts, one per parameter, plus the translation. And will be conducted in the same order as the procedure is written. With discussions about the results following alongside.

The analysis of these brand names will to some extent follow the content analysis of the study undertaken by Chan & Huang (1997). With a few modifications to what it is that is being analyzed. Namely that they analyzed tone and pitch, which is important in Chinese but not in Japanese.

### 4.1 Material

This study uses a list of the top ranked 200 varieties of sake in Japan, as voted by the association 日本酒物語 *nihonshu-monogatari*. This list is originally from the association's website, which is updated regularly, where it's members can vote for the different brands of sake. This list was selected because of its popularity, number of members and votes placed respectively. Giving the brands that appear the credit of being well recognized and well known, which is deemed an important criterion of the material for this study to give the best results possible.

### 4.2 Procedure

The analysis will start off with translating all the 200 brand names on the list from Japanese to English. This in order to better grasp the meaning of each and every brand name. But this will also be done in order to make it easier to find out what category of nominal compound the brand name belongs to.

Seven different categories of nominal compounds were deemed relevant and chosen for this analysis. And they are the following (E stands for element, and E1 is the first element and E2 is the second (for detailed information on nominal compounds, see Yamaguchi, 2007, p. 104-107)):

1. E1 parallels E2: 水泳 *sui-ei* “swimming” where the *kanji* for water (水) is combined with the *kanji* for the verbal action “to swim” (泳). This kind of compound is created by joining two *kanji* with similar meanings (for this study this category is also applied to names, due to it being the closest resemblance).

2. E1 modifies E2: 墓石 *haka-ishi* "Gravestone" where the *kanji* for grave (墓) indicates that the stone (石) is used for the grave. In this compound both composite parts are nominal entities. E1 provides supplementary information about E2.
3. E1 modifies E2: 青空 *ao-zora* "Blue sky" where the *kanji* for blue (青) supplements the *kanji* for sky (空). In this compound E1 contains an adjective or an adjectival element that supplement the meaning of E2.
4. E1 modifies E2: 明記 *mei-ki* "(to) write clearly" where the first *kanji* (明) indicates the way in which the action in the second *kanji* (記) is performed. In this compound E1 contains an adverbial element that modifies E2 when E2 refers to a verbal element denoting action.
5. E2 is part of E1: 山頂 *san-chou* "The summit" where the *kanji* for summit (頂) is part of the mountain that is the first *kanji* (山). The compound exhibits both the part and the whole relationship. E2 refers to a part of what is indicated by E1.
6. E1 acts on E2: 讀書 *doku-sho* "Reading" where the *kanji* for reading (讀) refers to the reading of books as indicated by the second *kanji* (書). The compound has E1 as a verb or verbal element that modifies E2. E1 expresses the action and E2 is the entity the action targets.
7. E2 acts on E1: 日照 *nisshou* "Sunshine" where the first *kanji* (日) refers to the sun whose state is described as shining by the second *kanji* (照). The compound has E2 a verbal element that acts on or specifies the referent of E1.

After this, the level of difficulty (according to the JLPT (<http://www.jlpt.jp/e/>)), of the characters (*kanji*) used in the brand names will be classified. This is relevant to the study under the assumption that it might reveal something about the what the intended consumer group for each analyzed sake is.

The next stage is to analyze and determine whether the brand names are using *kun*-reading or *on*-reading. That is, whether the reading of the *kanji* is of the Japanese (*kun*) or Chinese (*on*) way. The result of this is important to the study and its implications will be discussed upon further below. Since *kanji* are characters imported from China, the results can point to either a big or small influence from the Chinese language.

Following this is a content analysis of the brand names to find the predominant semantic theme. And based on that, reach a conclusion as to what the predominant theme of Japanese brand names might be.

Before the last step, the syllable pattern will be analyzed in order to compare it to the results of the Chinese study done by Chan & Huang: *Chinese brand naming: a linguistic analysis of the brands of ten product categories* (2001). This will most likely show some big differences in the grammatical structure of the two languages.

And lastly the positive, neutral or negative connotation of the brand names will be analyzed. This to find out if the majority is, just as in Chinese brand naming, mostly positive or not.

The market for sake is to a very large extent restricted to the local market in Japan. Because of that, the results will only be able to determine the linguistic preferences in Japanese brand naming of sake in correlation with the local Japanese market.



## 5 Results & Discussion

Let's look at the what the results show about the linguistic patterns of the brand names of the 200 varieties of sake. Starting from research question one, two, three with the rest of the results following below. A continuing discussion will be had alongside the presentation of all the results.

### 5.1 Nominal Compounds

The structure of the compounds show a big preference for a modifier-noun compound name in Japanese brand naming. Just like in the results of Chan & Huang's: *Brand Naming in China: a linguistic approach* (1997) showed on Chinese brand names. Among the 200 brand names of sake from the list used, brand names with a modifier-noun compound name numbered 97 percent, with only 3 percent being single characters. As table 1 shows below, the first category of nominal compounds, where E1 and E2 are parallel (e.g. 米鶴 *yonetsuru*), is the most frequently occurring category by a large margin at 50.5 percent. Following is number one of the E1 modifies E2 nominal compounds (松の寿 *matsunokotobuki*, loosely translated as "best wishes of the pine tree") at 32.5 percent. And the numbers of the rest of the categories quickly fall off in terms of appearance.

<b>Nominal Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
<b>E1 parallels E2</b>	101	50.5	1
<b>E1 modifies E2:1</b>	65	32.5	2
<b>E1 modifies E2:2</b>	12	6	3
<b>E2 is part of E1</b>	11	5.5	4
<b>None (Single syllable)</b>	6	3	5
<b>E2 acts on E1</b>	5	2.5	6
<b>E1 acts on E2</b>	0	0	7
<b>E1 modifies E2:3</b>	0	0	8
<b>Total</b>	200	100	

Looking closer at table 1, the third type of E1 modifies E2 and E1 acts on E2 categories did not even appear once in all of the 200 brand names. But the most surprising fact is that the single character brand names numbered more than three out of the seven of the nominal

compound categories. But by looking at the entirety of table 1, it can clearly be seen that this is because of the very low frequency of occurrence among all categories except the top two.

This positively correlates with the first of the three research questions, as it shows that the theory of modifier-noun predominance in brand naming is applicable not only to Chinese but to Japanese as well.

In the case of brand names without any meaningful relationship between the parts of the compound, they have been given the E1 parallels E2 category (e.g. 田酒 *denshu*). This is because a name consisting of two or more parts have no clear core, both parts are equally important to the whole of the name. Thus, making that specific category seem the most appropriate one.

## 5.2 Semantic Connotation

Looking at table 2, the connotation of the brand names show that the neutral names at 55 percent number just slightly more than the positive ones at 45 percent. But not a single brand name has a negative connotation.

The study by Chan & Huang: *Brand Naming in China: a linguistic approach* (1997) showed that Chinese brand names with positive connotation very frequently used favorite Chinese flora, animals and creatures. This is shown to be true in Japanese brand names as well. With flora and nature related names at 15 percent (e.g. 花泉 *hanaizumi*, loosely translated as “Flower spring”). Creatures and animals at 11 percent (e.g. 白鶴 *hakutsuru*, loosely translated as “White crane”), and concepts of beauty, lucky, justice and so on that is favored in Japan at a surprisingly high 16.8 percent (e.g. 誠鏡 *seikyou*, loosely translated as “Mirror of Sincerity”).

Semantic Connotation	Frequency	Percentage	Ranking
<b>Neutral</b>	110	55	1
<b>Positive</b>	90	45	2
<b>Negative</b>	0	0	3
<b>Total</b>	200	100	

These are good results for the second research theory, though they do not apply flawlessly in regards to neutral connotations being slightly favored in the case of Japanese brand names. But the use of favorite creatures, such as dragons, cranes, deer, phoenix (and in Japan’s case also turtles) are, as according to the theory, the same as the results of the study done on Chinese brand names. The same goes for flora, with plum blossom, Japanese Sakura and chrysanthemum being heavily favored in Japanese brand names. This is also the same as in the case of the study conducted on Chinese brand names.

What is being deemed positive respectively neutral here was judged based on information collected from the following works; *Japan Nu: Strömningar och perspektiv* (Hagström, et al., 2012), *Japans Historia* (Ekholm & Ottosson, 2008) and *kikusui-sake* 菊水酒. (2016). Things such as nature, water, creatures and animals are deemed as positive. And concepts that usually

permeates Japanese tradition such as, cleanliness, whiteness, purity, beauty, luck or honor is also deemed to be positive. Things such as company, place and personal names are deemed to be neutral. That they are very frequent plays a big role in the neutral connotations numbering above that of the positive.

### 5.3 Semantic Theme

The results of the analysis, in Table 3 below, on semantic theme shows to some surprise that in the brand names of sake, company or personal names appears to be the most frequently occurring at 22.5 percent (e.g. 石鎚 *ishizuchi*, name of the company producing this variety of sake). With a very small margin of 19 in difference in frequency between place two and six. Water related names and place names ending up on the exact same number, just slightly behind the nature related names. Compared to the results of the study by Chan & Huang: *Chinese brand naming: a linguistic analysis of the brands of ten product categories* (2001). Place names in the brand names of Japanese spirits at 13.2 percent numbers considerably lower than they do in the brand names of Chinese spirits which is at a very high 40 percent. One could attribute this to the shear difference in size of the two countries and their population. As a thought experiment, let's start by looking at China. Being such a culturally diverse and big country in both geographical and populous size, makes locality and place names a bigger priority in the brand naming of Chinese spirits. While in Japan, which is a moderately small country with much less of a cultural diversity. It is instead various concepts, nature and water (all of them being things that are heavily valued in Japanese culture and tradition) become prioritized over locality and place names in the brand naming of Japanese spirits.

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
<b>Company/Personal names</b>	75	22.5	1
<b>Concepts (of thought etc.)</b>	56	16.8	2
<b>Nature (fauna, mountains etc.)</b>	50	15	3
<b>Water</b>	44	13.2	4
<b>Place names</b>	44	13.2	5
<b>Creatures / Humans</b>	37	11	6
<b>Sake</b>	13	3.9	7
<b>Shinto / Myths</b>	8	2.4	8
<b>Other</b>	7	2.1	9
<b>Total</b>	334	100	

As can be noticed in table 3 the frequency of occurrences, 334, are more than the total number of varieties of sake. This is caused by the fact that some of the brand names have been given

more than one semantic classification. Making the total number of occurring themes exceed 200.

As for the third research question, these results where the company / personal name theme number highest by a fair margin prove the theory to be true. That the very well-practiced corporate branding system that exists within the general market and general brand naming in Japanese also applies, although to a lesser extent, to sake brand names. In the book: *Brand Equity & Advertising: Advertising's Role in Building Strong Brands* (1993), Tanaka (1993) points this out to be one of the possible reasons:

One point of view is that the Japanese corporate branding system is derived from an important aspect of Japanese culture, namely harmony (和 wa). In which the consumers tend to rely on names of good reputation and to purchase a large corporation's branded products because they make the consumers feel more comfortable and secure.

In order to get a deeper understanding of the results on semantic theme in the brand names of sake, we can do a comparison with the next closest thing in the market of other alcoholic beverages in Japan. Where KIRIN, the largest brewery company in Japan rule the beer market together with Asahi and Suntory. Suntory which other than its beer lines also make whiskey which dominates the Japanese whiskey market (Tanaka, 1993). And just as the corporate branding model suggests, they all use their respective corporate names in the brand names of their products. Such as KIRIN Beer, Asahi Super Dry and Suntory Whisky. The case of sake is not as extreme as the beer or whiskey market, because of its much longer history and uniqueness to Japan, but we can see the influences of corporate branding here as well.

In all, the results were predicted by the theory but were at the same time surprising. Due to the rest of the results of this study mostly resembling those of the Chinese, this stark difference in preference stands out.

## 5.4 Kanji Level of Difficulty

The results of the analysis on *kanji* difficulty level, as shown in Table 4, shows quite an even spread among all the levels of difficulty. To some surprise, it is not the highest level of difficulty class (N1) that tops the chart. But rather the medium-high tier level (N2/3).

These results are incomparable to those of the Chan & Huang (1997) Chan & Huang (2001)'s studies of Chinese brand naming. Due to this classification of the *kanji* difficulty only existing within Japan and the Japanese language.

<b>Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
<b>N2/3</b>	139	28.5	1
<b>N1</b>	103	21.1	2
<b>N5</b>	100	20.5	3
<b>Unclassified</b>	84	17.2	4
<b>N4</b>	62	12.7	5
<b>Total</b>	488	100	

Looking at table 4, there is an unexpected high number of unclassified *kanji* in the charts. In trying to explain why, let's start with defining what the unclassified category is. These are *kanji* who are not considered to be neither commonly known nor used in modern Japan, hence they get neglected from the JLPT's classification system. This is because of the basic thought behind the JLPT, that being to make an exam that test one's ability in the Japanese language of modern day Japan. But they are also considered to be beautiful, or, a mark of refinement. Thus, using them in brand names might give the possible consumer the impression that the product is of high quality, is expensive etc.

One conclusion that can be extracted from the results of table 4 is that; people who don't have a deep knowledge of *kanji*, be they Japanese or foreign. Will have a hard time reading, grasping and understanding the meaning of the brand names given to sake. This because of the overall high number of N1, N2/3 and unclassified *kanji* shown to be used in the brand names. Which in turn can point to that the targeted audience or consumers for these 200 brands of sake are older of age, or belong to the groups that houses interest in sake. This especially when taking the list itself into consideration. Since the brands contained in the list

are voted forth by the members or associates of the 日本酒物語 *nihonshu-monogatari* association. In other words, people who most likely have moderate to strong interest in sake. Making this the most likely explanation to the results.



## 5.5 Readings of Kanji Used in Brand Names

The analysis of readings, as shown in table 5, shares some similarities with the results of the above analysis of kanji classification. In that they both show a very uniform distribution in frequency between the different criteria. Here in table 5, there is only a small 2.5 percent difference between the use of Chinese and Japanese reading of the *kanji* in the brand names. Which are surprising because of the fact that kanji with a high level of difficulty were the most prevalent. As for an explanation as to why one would make that kind of a correlation between high difficulty level of *kanji* and its reading. It is because *kanji* that seldom see any use or old *kanji* often are of the N1 or unclassified category. And these *kanji* also tend to only have the Chinese reading. Therefore, the results are quite surprising.

With regards to the results of table 5, some interesting facts might arise when looking at section that discusses shared cultural values in Asia in the study by Chan & Huang: *Chinese brand naming: a linguistic analysis of the brands of ten product categories* (2001). Here they talk about Chinese culture and its values being shared among other countries in Asia, which in Japan's case is obvious when looking at *kanji* and that their Chinese readings are still being used. As this study show is the case in the brand names of sake as well. On top of this, things that are specifically Chinese also appear in the brand names. The sake by the name of (鳳凰美田 *houou-biden*, loosely translated to “Fertile field of the Chinese Firebird”), and (陸奥八仙 *mutsu-hassen*, referring directly to Chinese mythology, loosely translated to “The eight immortals of mutsu”). Are both perfect examples for showing the cultural influence China has on Japan even in the brand naming of something so genuinely Japanese as sake. The first example falling under the category of On-reading, and the second under the Mixed-reading category.

<b>Reading</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
<b>Kun</b>	78	39	1
<b>On</b>	73	36.5	2
<b>Mix</b>	49	24.5	3
<b>Total</b>	200	100	

With the results shown in table 5, combined with the results and discussion on the semantic themes taken into consideration. The discussion being that Japanese values are permeating the brand names, together with sake having such a deep history and is tied to Japanese tradition (*kikusui-sake* 菊水酒, 2016). May lead to distilleries preferring to use Japanese reading of the kanji they choose for their brand names. Maybe in order to give the brand name a more Japanese feeling to it, or to accentuate the Japanese-ness of the product. So, the fact that the Japanese readings top the chart might not be too unexpected in the end. So one could argue that these results further add to cement sake as a thing that can be considered as genuinely Japanese.

## 5.6 Syllable Structure

The analysis of the syllable structure of the sake brand names turned up some quite intriguing results, as shown in table 6 below. With five, three and four syllable names making up 69 percent of the names combined. With two syllable names following at a relatively small 18.5 percent and the rest of the categories numbering very few overall.

These results are the most interesting when compared with the results of the study in Chan & Huang's: *Brand Naming in China: a linguistic approach* (1997). In which Chinese brand names were found to be made up out of 90.5 percent two syllable, 7 percent three syllable and only 2.95 percent were made up out of one or four syllable constructs. The two-syllable structure being heavily favored above the others. In contrast to what the results in table 6 shows, the difference between the Japanese and Chinese brand names' syllable structure is quite large. Especially with regards to how every other analysis and comparison in this paper so far has shown perfect likeness or likeness to some degree between Japanese and Chinese brand naming.

<b>Syllables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
<b>Five syllables</b>	49	24.5	1
<b>Three syllables</b>	46	23	2
<b>Four syllables</b>	43	21.5	3
<b>Two syllables</b>	37	18.5	4
<b>Six syllables</b>	15	7.5	5
<b>Seven syllables</b>	6	3	6
<b>Eight syllables</b>	2	1	7
<b>One syllable</b>	1	0.5	8
<b>Eleven syllables</b>	1	0.5	9
<b>Total</b>	200	100	

In explaining why this big difference between Japanese and Chinese syllable structure in brand names exists. We must first remember that even though both languages utilize *kanji* in their written text, Japanese also has two more scripts beyond *kanji*. But more importantly, in Chinese each morpheme only has one syllable (Chan & Huang, 1997). While in Japanese, one morpheme can contain one, two, three and in some cases even four (e.g. 寿 *kotobuki* "best

whishes”) syllables. And with this in consideration we can quickly see why the big difference in syllable structure might occur. So even though sake brand names in Japanese uses kanji characters about 98 percent of the time, in China it’s 100 percent, this small difference just mentioned changes the results of the syllable structure completely between the two languages.

## 6 Conclusion

This study reported an investigation into the linguistic aspects of the Japanese brand names of sake. The linguistic component of naming a brand of sake in Japanese was shown to have many hidden aspects that are important to take into consideration. The brand name of sake in Japanese was shown to have certain preferences to how its composition should be shaped. First, the brand name should be a two-morpheme compound with a modifier-noun structure, preferably the kind with two nominals (e.g. 神亀 *shinkame* “Turtle god”). Second, the brand name should have either a positive or neutral connotation, and not a negative one. The actual brand name should then either be the same as that of the company producing the sake, or it should be relating to traditional Japanese values. Like water, purity, cleanliness, nature or favored flora, creatures and animals. Third to the selection of kanji, which is not as important but still something to take into consideration. Here the selection of level of difficulty on the kanji should be done with the targeted audience in mind. Be they sake enthusiasts, young people, old people or foreigners. Then to the reading of the selected kanji. Whether to choose Japanese, Chinese or mixed reading should depend upon and complement the semantic theme of choice. In order to get the best possible impression of the product from the consumer. Lastly, syllable structure of brand names in Japanese is very evenly spread among two, three, four and five syllable compounds. Thus, making this criterion almost inconsequential. As long as the brand names consists of two to five syllables it is within the frames of what is preferred.

The above results when compared to the corresponding results of the studies done on Chinese brand naming by Chan & Huang, shows that Japanese and Chinese shares a lot of the same features in their brand naming. Both languages heavily prefer the modifier-noun structure in the brand names. They tend to use the same kind of flower, fauna and animal names. And they both favor the names of things, concepts of thought etc. that speaks to each country’s own traditions and way of thought. Lastly they are almost the same in connotation as well. The Japanese brand names having only a slight preference towards being neutral instead of positive while Chinese brand names favors being positive. As for the differences, the first and biggest one is the syllable structure. But the other big difference is that Japan favors company names the most as the semantic theme on sake, whereas in China the place names are no1 on spirits.

These findings set up a preliminary general branding framework for sake in Japanese. This framework makes, as mentioned in detail above, morphological requirements (two-morpheme compounding with a modifier-noun structure) and semantic requirements (the use of the corporate brand, or the use of words related to the semantic theme of what is thought of as Japanese). The results of level of difficulty analysis, syllable structure analysis and reading analysis did not provide any preferences as clear as the two above mentioned analyses. Hence they are not seen as requirements in this framework. Though following the trends of preference seen in the three analyses respectively would be recommended.

## 7 References

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## Appendix

This is the result of the various analyses conducted on the original list (日本酒物語, 2016). Which stood at the center of the study conducted in this paper. In analyzing the original list, the online dictionary <http://jisho.org/> alongside the language tool <http://language.tiu.ac.jp/> was used.

**Table 7**

Names	Reading	Translated meaning	Level	Kun/On	Theme	NCT	SYL
瀬祭	Dassai	"Making an offering"	UC, N2/3	On	F	2	2
十四代	Juuyondai	"14 <sup>th</sup> century"	N4, N5	Mix	I	2	3
醸し人 九平次	Kamoshibitokuh eiji	"Brewer Kuheiji"	N1, N2, N5	Mix	E	2	8
黒龍	Kokuryuu	"Black Dragon"	UC, N4	On	D	3	3
田酒	Denshu	"The Denshu"	N2/3, N4	On	G+E+C	1	2
久保田	Kubota	"The Kubota"	N1, N2/3, N4	Mix	C	1	3
出羽桜	Dewazakura	"The sakura of Dewa"	N1, N2/3, N5	Kun	C+B	1	5
飛露喜	Hiroki	"Flying tears of rejoice"	N1, N2/3	On	H+A	1	3
鳳凰美 田	Hououbiden	"Fertile field of the Chinese Firebird"	UC, N2/3, N4	On	F+D+C	5	4
八張鶴	Shimeharitsuru	"The sum of the cranes will- power/pride"	UC, N1	Kun	D+H	1	6
八海山	Hakkaisan	"Mt. Hakkai"	N4, N5	On	B+C	1	3
くどき 上手	Kudokijouzu	"Skillfull imploring"	N4, N5	Mix	H	7	5
天狗舞	Tengumai	"Dance of the Tengu"	UC, N2/3, N5	Mix	F+D	7	3
梵	Bon	"Brahma"	UC	On	F	x	1
磯自慢	Isojiman	"Seashore's pride"	UC, N1, N4	Mix	B+A	2	4
臥龍梅	Garyuubai	"Plum of the reclining dragon"	UC, N1	On	B+D	2	3
菊姫	Kikuhime	"The chrysanthemum princess"	N1	Mix	B	2	4
新政	Aramasa	"The Aramasa"	N2/3, N4	Kun	E	3	4
浦霞	Urakasumi	"The misty bay"	N1	Kun	B+A	7	5
蓬莱泉	Houraisen	"The Mt. Penglai spring"	UC, N2/3	On	A+B+C	1	3
大七	Daishichi	"Big Seven"	N5	On	E	1	3
真澄	Masumi	"Truth"	N1, N4	Kun	H	1	3
神亀	Shinkame	"The Turtle God"	UC, N2/3	Mix	D+F	1	3



あさ開	Asabiraki	"Morning opens"	N4	Kun	B	7	5
劍菱	Kenbishi	"The Kenbishi"	UC, N1	Mix	E	1	3
風の森	Kazenomori	"The forest of winds"	N2/3, N4	Kun	B+C	2	5
れいざん	Reizan	"Sacred Mountain"	-	On	B+C	2	2
雪の茅舎	Yukinobousha	"The thatched cottage of snow"	UC, N1, N2/3	Mix	A+H	2	5
菊水	Kikusui	"Chrysanthemum water"	N1, N5	On	B+A+E	2	3
南部美人	Nanbubijin	"The beauty from the South"	N2/3, N5	On	E+C	5	4
初孫	Hatsumago	"First grandchild"	N2/3	Kun	H	2	4
香梅	Koubai	"Smell of Plum"	N1, N2/3	On	B	1	2
豊盃	Houhai	"A rich cup of sake"	UC, N2/3	On	G	1	2
郷乃誉	Satonohomare	"Honor of the hometown"	UC, N1	Kun	H+C	2	6
仙禽	Senkin	"Hermit Bird"	N1, UC	On	D	1	2
雁木	Gangi	"Stepped"	UC, N5	Mix	H	2	2
東光	Toukou	"The Toukou"	N2/3, N5	On	E	1	2
開運	Kaiun	"Better Fortune"	N4	On	H	2	2
澤乃井	Sawanoi	"The well of Sawa"	UC, N1	Kun	A+E+C	1	4
上善如水	Jouzenmizunogotoshi	"Jouzen, like water"	N1, N5	Mix	A+E	2	8
悦凱陣	Yorokobigaijin	"Happy foreigner"	UC, N1	Mix	I	3	6
上喜元	Joukigen	"High class Kigen"	N2/3, N4, N5	On	H+G	3	3
ひこ孫	Hikomago	"Great-grandchild"	N2/3	Mix	H+D	2	4
越乃景虎	Koshinokagetora	"The better Kagetora"	UC, N2/3	Kun	E+H	1	7
日高見	Hitakami	"Excellent idea of the day"	N5	Kun	H	1	4
天明	Tenmei	"Daybreak"	N4, N5	On	B	2	2
鍋島	Nabeshima	"Nabeshima"	N1, N2/3	Kun	C	1	4
越乃寒梅	Koshinokanbai	"The withstanding early-flowering plum"	UC, N1, N2/3	Mix	B	2	5
緑川	Midorikawa	"The Midorikawa"	N2/3, N5	Kun	A+E+C	3	5
秋鹿	Akishika	"The Akishika"	UC, N4	Kun	E+D	1	4
貴	Taka	"The Taka"	N1	Kun	E	x	2
雅山流	Gasanyuu	"Elegant mountain stream"	N1, N2/3, N5	On	A+B+C	1	3
雪中梅	Secchuubai	"Plum in the snow"	N1, N2/3, N5	On	A+B	3	3
奥の松	Okunomatsu	"The secret/hidden pine tree"	N1, N2/3	Kun	B+E	2	5
東一	Azumaichi	"Orient's no 1"	N5	Mix	B	5	4
龍力	Tatsuriki	"Strength of the dragon"	UC, N4	Mix	D	1	4
清泉	Kiyozumi	"The Pure Spring"	N2/3	Kun	A+C	1	5
東洋美人	Touyoubijin	"Beauty of the Orient"	N2/3, N4, N5	On	H+C	5	4

竹鶴	Taketsuru	"The Taketsuru"	UC, N2/3	Kun	D+E	1	4
白岳仙	Hakugakusen	"The wizard of the white peak"	N1, N5	On	B	1	5
黒牛	Kuroushi	"The black cow"	N4	Kun	D	3	4
龍勢	Ryusei	"Force of the dragon"	UC, N2/3	On	D	1	2
満寿泉	Masuizumi	"The Masu spring"	N1, N2/3	Mix	A+C	2	5
南	Minami	"South"	N5	Kun	C	x	3
香露	Kouro	"Kouro" / "Smell of dew"	N1, N2/3	On	G	1	2
鶴齡	Kakurei	"Kakurei"	UC, N2/3	On	D	1	3
白瀑	Shirataki	"White Waterfall"	UC, N5	Kun	A	3	4
一ノ蔵	Ichinokura	"Ichi's Warehouse"	N2/3, N5	Mix	E	2	5
楯野川	Tatenokawa	"Tatenokawa"	UC, N4, N5	Kun	E+C	1	5
国権	Kokken	"National Sovereignty"	N2/3, N5	On	H	2	3
東北泉	Touhokuizumi	"The North-East spring"	N2/3, N5	Mix	C+A	2	6
陸奥八 仙	Mutsuhassen	"The Eight Immortals of Mutsu"	N1, N2/3, N5	Mix	E+F	5	4
写楽	Sharaku	"The Sharaku"	N4	On	E	1	3
手取川	Tedorigawa	"The Tedor River"	N2/3, N4, N5	Kun	C+A	1	5
村祐	Murayuu	"The Murayuu"	UC, N2/3	Mix	E	1	3
三重錦	Mienishiki	"The Mienishiki"	UC, N4, N5	Kun	C	2	5
十九	Juuku	"No 19"	N5	On	H	1	2
義侠	Gikyuu	"Chivalry"	UC, N1	On	H	1	2
酔鯨	Suigei	"Drunk Whale"	N1	On	D+G	2	2
会津娘	Aizumusume	"The daughter of Aizu"	N1, N2/3, N4	Kun	C+D	5	5
常きげ ん	Joukigen	"Regular Kigen"	N2/3	On	H+G	1	3
浜千鳥	Hamachidori	"The Hamachidori"	N1, N4, N5	Kun	D+E	2	5
五人娘	Goninmusume	"Five daughters"	N2/3, N5	Mix	H+D	2	5
勝駒	Kachikoma	"The winning piece"	UC, N2/3	Kun	H	1	4
鷹勇	Takaisami	"Hawk courage"	UC, N2/3	Kun	D+H	1	4
墨廼江	Suminoe	"The Suminoe"	UC, N1	Mix	E+A	1	4
幻	Maboroshi	"Phantom"	N1	Kun	D+F	x	4
天の戸	Amanoto	"The gate of heaven"	N2/3, N5	Kun	C+F	5	4
夜明け 前	Yoakemae	"Before the break of dawn"	N4, N5	Kun	B	2	4
李白	Rihaku	"The Rihaku"	UC, N5	On	E+B	1	3
美少年	Bishounen	"Pretty boy"	N2/3, N4, N5	On	E+H	3	3
呉春	Goshun	"The Goshun"	N1, N4	On	E	1	2
王祿	Ouroku	"Kings reward"	UC, N2/3	On	H+E	2	3
初亀	Hatsukame	"The Hatsukame"	UC, N2/3	Kun	E	1	4
富久錦	Fukunishiki	"The Fukunishiki"	UC, N2/3	Mix	E	1	5
銀嶺立	Ginreitateyama	"Snow-capped Mt. Tate"	UC, N4, N5	Mix	C+E+A+ B	2	6

山							
松の司	Matsunotsukasa	"The official Matsu"	N1	Kun	B+E	2	6
作	Saku	"A work (of art)"	N4	On	H	x	2
玉乃光	Tamanohikari	"The shine of the jewel"	UC, N2/3	Kun	E	2	6
鶴の友	Tsurunotomo	"The crane's companion"	UC, N5	Kun	D	2	5
伯楽星	Hakurakusei	"Star of the horse-trader"	N1, N2/3, N4	On	B	2	5
酔心	Suishin	"The Suishin"	N1, N4	On	G+E	1	2
紀土	Kido(kid)	"KID"	N1, N5	On	H	1	2
宗玄	Sougen	"The Sougen"	N1	On	E	1	2
日置桜	Hiokisakura	"The Hioki-sakura"	N1, N2/3, N5	Kun	B+C	1	6
花陽浴	Hanaabi	"Bathe in flowers"	N2/3, N4	Kun	B	1	4
来福	Raifuku	"Visiting Fukuoka"	N2/3, N5	On	C+E	1	3
姿	Sugata	"Figure"	N1	Kun	H	x	3
いづみ 橋	Izumibashi	"The Izumibashi"	N2/3	Kun	E+A	1	5
会津中 将	Aizuchujou	"The lieutenant general of Aizu"	N1, N2/3, N4, N5	Mix	C	2	4
乾坤一	Kenkonichi	"All or nothing"	UC, N2/3, N5	On	H	1	4
加賀鳶	Kagatobi	"The Kagatobi"	UC, N1, N2/3	Mix	D+C	1	4
梅錦	Umenishiki	"The Umenishiki"	UC, N1	Kun	E	1	5
高清水	Takashimizu	"Expensive spring water"	N2/3, N5	Kun	A+H	1	5
奈良萬	Naraman	"Nara 10 000"	UC, N2/3	Mix	C	1	3
尾瀬の 雪どけ	Ozenoyukidoke	"The thawing of Oze"	N1, N2/3	Kun	A+C	5	7
銀盤	Ginban	"The Ginban"	N1, N4	On	E+A	1	2
一白水 成	Ippakususei	"The best sake from white rice and water"	N2/3, N5	On	H+B+G	1	5
富久長	Fukuchou	"Chief Fuku"	N2/3, N5	On	H+E	1	3
朝日鷹	Asahitaka	"Hawk of the morning sun"	UC, N4, N5	Kun	B+D	2	5
麒麟山	Kirinzan	"Kirinzan"	UC, N5	On	E+D	1	3
宝剣	Houken	"The treasured sword"	N1, N2/3	On	E+H	2	2
美丈夫	Bijoufu	"The Good-looking man"	N1, N2/3	On	H+D	3	3
刈穂	Kariho	"The Kariho"	N1	Kun	E+B	2	3
大信州	Daishinshu	"Daishin County"	N2/3, N5	On	E+C	1	3
住吉	Sumiyoshi	"The Sumiyoshi"	N1, N4	Kun	E	1	4
雨後の 月	Ugonotsuki	"The moon after rain"	N5	Mix	A+B	2	5
会津ほ まれ	Aizuhomare	"The Aizu-homare"	N1, N4	Kun	E+C	2	5
廣喜	Hiroki	"The Hiroki"	UC, N2/3	Mix	E	1	3
国士無 双	Kokushimusou	"Distinguished person"	N1, N2/3, N5	On	H	2	5

明鏡止水	Meikyoushisui	"Clear as still water"	N1, N4, N5	On	H+A	2	4
まんさくの花	Mansakunohana	"Mansaku Flower"	N4	Mix	B	2	6
誠鏡	Seikyou	"Mirror of sincerity"	N1	On	H	1	2
琵琶のさゝ浪	Biwanosazanami	"Ripples of the Biwa"	UC, N1	Mix	A+H	5	7
月の輪	Tsukinowa	"Full moon"	N2/3, N5	Kun	E	2	4
太平山	Taiheizan	"Mt. Taihei"	N2/3, N5	On	B+C	1	3
喜久酔	Kikuyoi	"The Kikuyoi"	N1, N2/3	Mix	H+E+G	1	3
千代むすび	Chiyomusubi	"Forever lasting union"	N4, N5	Mix	H	2	5
亀泉	Kameizumi	"Spring of the Turtle"	UC, N2/3	Kun	E+D+A	1	5
庭のうぐいす	Niwanouguisu	"The nightingale of the garden"	N2/3	Kun	D+B	2	5
山間	Yanma	"The Yanma"	N5	Kun	B+H	1	2
あぶくま	Abukuma	"Abukuma"	-	Kun	C	1	4
小左衛門	Kozaemon	"The Kozaemon"	N1, N2/3, N5	Mix	E	1	4
白鶴	Hakutsuru	"The white crane"	UC, N5	Mix	E+D	1	4
末廣	Suehiro	"The Suehiro"	UC, N2/3	Kun	E	5	3
花泉	Hanaizumi	"The flower spring"	N2/3, N4	Kun	E+A+B	2	5
栄川	Eisen	"Stream of prosperity"	N2/3, N5	On	A+H+E	1	2
花の舞	Hananomai	"Wheel of flowers"	N2/3, N4	Kun	B+E	2	4
溪流	Keiryu	"Mountain Stream"	N1, N2/3	On	A+B	1	2
沢の鶴	Sawanotsuru	"The crane of grace"	UC, N1	Kun	E+D	2	5
すず音	Susune	"Sound of the bell"	N4	Kun	H	1	3
栗駒山	Kurikomayama	"Mt. Kurikoma"	UC, N5	Kun	B+C	1	6
お福正宗	Ofukumasamune	"Masamune of good fortune"	N1, N2/3, N4	Mix	H+G+E	1	7
飛良泉	Hiraizumi	"The spring of Hira"	N2/3	Mix	E+A+C	2	5
春鶯囀	Shunnouten	"Song of the spring nightingale"	UC, N4	On	D+B	1	3
秀鳳	Shuhou	"Firebird of excellence"	UC, N1	On	D+H	1	2
米鶴	Yonetsuru	"The crane of rice"	UC, N2/3	Kun	B+D+E	1	4
三芳菊	Miyoshikiku	"The Miyoshi chrysanthemum"	N1, N5	Mix	E+B+C	2	5
菊盛	Kikusakari	"Peak of the chrysanthemum"	N1	Mix	B	2	5
鯉川	Koikawa	"The Koi river"	UC, N5	Kun	A+E+C+D	1	3
男山	Otokoyama	"The Otokoyama"	N5	Kun	C+E	1	5
三千盛	Michisakari	"The Michisakari"	N1, N5	Kun	E	1	5
亀齢	Kirei	"The Kirei"	UC, N2/3	On	D+E	1	2

天鷹	Tentakata	"The sky falcon"	UC, N5	Mix	D+E	1	3
越の寒 中梅	Koshinokanchub ai	"The better late mid-winter plum"	N1, N2/3, N5	Mix	B+H	2	6
群馬泉	Gunmaizumi	"The spring of Gunma"	N2/3	Mix	C+A	2	5
正雪	Shousetsu	"Snow of Justice"	N2/3, N4	On	A+H	2	3
早瀬浦	Hayaseura	"Rapids of the inlet"	N1, N4	Kun	A	1	5
高砂	Takasago	"The Takasago"	N2/3, N5	Kun	E	1	4
宝寿	Houju	"Longevity of wealth"	N1, N2/3	On	H	1	2
五橋	Gokyou	"Five Bridges"	N2/3, N5	On	I	1	2
醴泉	Reisen	"The spring of sweet water"	UC, N2/3	On	A	2	2
おんな 泣かせ	Onnanakase	"Moving women to tears"	N2/3	Kun	H	7	5
菊正宗	Kikumasa-mune	"Chrysanthemum Masamune"	N1, N4	Mix	G+E+B	1	6
幻の瀧	Maboroshinotak i	"Phantom Waterfall"	UC, N1	Kun	A	2	7
大治郎	Daijirou	"The Daijirou"	N1, N2/3, N5	On	I	1	3
大雪溪	Daisekkei	"The big snowy valley"	N1, N2/3, N5	On	E+A+B	3	3
澤乃泉	Sawanoizumi	"The spring of Sawa"	UC, N2/3	Kun	A	2	6
国稀	Kunimare	"Rarity of the country"	N1, N5	Kun	H	1	4
雪氷室 一夜雫	Yukihimuroichiy ashizuku	"Snow in an ice room, drops all night"	UC, N2/3, N4, N5	Mix	A+H	1	11
武勇	Buyuu	"Bravery"	N2/3	On	H+E	1	2
屋守	Okunokami	"House Guard"	N2/3, N4	Mix	H	1	5
三井の 寿	Miinokotobuki	"Mii's best wishes"	N1, N5	Kun	C+H	2	6
泉川	Izumikawa	"The Izumikawa"	N2/3, N5	Kun	A+C	1	5
佐久乃 花	Sakunohana	"The flower of Saku"	UC, N1, N2/3, N4	Mix	E+B	2	5
鷲の尾	Washinoo	"Tail of the Eagle"	UC, N1	Kun	E+D	2	4
吉乃川	Yoshinogawa	"The Yoshi-river"	UC, N1, N5	Kun	A+E	1	5
英勲	Eikun	"Outstanding merit"	N1, N4	On	H	1	2
石鎚	Ishizuchi	"The Ishizuchi"	UC, N2/3	Kun	E+B+C	1	4
美和桜	Miwasakura	"The sakura of Miwa"	N1, N2/3	Mix	E+B	5	5
不老泉	Furousen	"The fountain of youth"	N2/3, N4	On	A+H	2	3
自然酒	Shizenshu	"Natural Sake"	N2/3, N4	On	B+G	2	3
渡舟	Wataribune	"The crossing boat"	N2/3	Kun	H+A	1	5
酒一筋	Sakehitosuji	"A straight line of sake"	N1, N2/3, N5	Kun	G+H	2	6
翠露	Suiro	"The green dew"	UC, N1	On	A	3	2
小鼓	Gotsuzumi	"The Gotsuzumi"	N1, N5	Kun	I	1	4
麒麟	Kirin	"Giraffe"	UC	On	D	1	2
松の寿	Matsunokotobu ki	"The pine tree's best wishes"	N1	Kun	B+H+E	2	7

越州	Esshu	"The Esshu"	N2/3	On	I	1	2
繁榊	Shigemasa	"The Shigemasa"	UC, N1	Kun	I	1	4