Merci-Jens and *Lösch-Leyen*
The Semantics of Personal Name Compounds in German

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PN compounds: examples

Impfstoff-Bestellung: „Der Verdacht, dass Deutschland ein Unternehmen bevorzugt haben könnte" Die Daten hierfür sind leider schon wieder von **Berater-Ursula**'s Handy gelöscht worden.

'Vaccine ordering: "the suspicion that Germany might have preferred one company" Unfortunately, relevant data have again been deleted from **Advisor-Ursula**'s cell phone.'

Ursula (von der Leyen): German defense minister involved in a scandal about hiring expensive political advisors

PN compounds: examples

Können wir den **Laber-Lindner** nicht einfach mal nicht einladen? Den will doch keiner mehr hören.

'Could we just for once not invite **Babble-Lindner**? Nobody wants to hear him anymore.'

https://twitter.com/joergbartz/status/1350720500515942401?s=20

PN compounds: examples

Wenn die Streiks ins Leere laufen, versuchts die heilige **Zopfgretel** halt mit der Opferrolle.

'When the strikes fail, St. **Braid-Gretel** tries playing the role of the victim.'

https://twitter.com/chemiepeter1/status/1152670311126622208?s=20

PN compounds

- German modifier-head compounds with a personal name as their head and a lexical modifier
    - considered rare in the literature (cf. Wildgen 1981, Fleischer & Barz 2012, Kürschner 2014, 2020)

- Personal name: first name (*Berater-Ursula*), last name (*Laber-Lindner*), nickname (*Zopfgretel*)

- Modifier: different syntactic categories: e.g. noun (*Berater*), verb (*laber*)

- Proper name status

cf. e.g.

Why are PN compounds interesting?

Proper names do not bear lexical meaning.

We can observe

- how extra-linguistic knowledge about the name bearer shapes the interpretation of compounds

- how evaluative meanings arise in context

Extralinguistic knowledge

Three types of PN compounds according to the type of the knowledge about the name bearer:

1. Eventive reading: Advisor-Ursula < Ursula was involved in advisor affair (**discursive knowledge** about a social/extralinguistic event in which Ursula participated in the past, one concrete instantiation of event)

2. Attitudinal reading: Babble-Lindner < Lindner babbles habitually (**contextual knowledge**)

3. Property-based reading: Braid-Gretel < Gretel wears braids (**encyclopedic knowledge** about the appearance of Greta Thunberg)

Our approach

Berater   -   Ursula

Semantics
Referents of constituents are participants in a semantic frame which is accessed on the basis of extralinguistic knowledge about the name bearer.

Pragmatics
 Modification invites two implicatures about the instantiation of the frame: (1) its value is beyond a default value; (b) it is relevant for the message intended in context.
=> PN compounding is a type of appositive construction in the sense of Potts (2012)

Our approach

Berater   -   Ursula

=> The relations between compound constituents are **predictable**

=> German PN compounding is an instance of **evaluative** morphology.

Methodology

- Frame-based word-formation theory (Löbner 2013; Kotowski et al. 2021; Olsen 2019: 117ff.)

- Semantic frames from the German Framenet

- Semantic frames: "any system of concepts related in such a way that to understand anyone of them you have to understand the whole structure in which it fits" (Fillmore 1982: 111).

- By drawing on frame elements, we can systematically extract different types of (presupposed) knowledge (contextual, encyclopedic, discursive) about name bearers.

Methodology

Welcome to the „German FrameNet"!

The „German FrameNet " (GFN) is a **frame-based digital lexicon for words and fixed multi-word units in German**. It is based on Berkeley FrameNet, but the database is constantly being expanded and modified, aiming at identifying and describing as comprehensively as possible meaning structures in the lexicon of contemporary German. The GFN repository continues to grow, providing all previously validated frames in a structured form. Currently, it covers about 1,200 frames:

→ German FrameNet repository

https://gsw.phil.hhu.de/framenet/

I'll give you my coat.

Give: a lexical unit that serves as a frame-evoking element (evokes the GIVING frame)
Coat, I: Frame-elements (elements that are dependent on the frame-evoking element)

Data

- 532 PN-compound types based on the names of politicians from Twitter

- Data extraction: manual search by name lists (20 well-known names of German politicians)

Data

Word class of the modifier	Percentage	example	gloss
common noun	83.8 %	*Geldkoffer-Schäuble*	money case Schäuble´
proper name	7.6 %	*Schweden-Greta*	´Sweden Greta´
verb	4.5 %	*Laber-Lindner*	´babble Lindner´
adjective	4.1 %	*Dummgabriel*	´stupid Gabriel´

Methodology

- The data has been manually coded in *Maxqda* for

(a) relevant semantic frames (according to German FrameNet) and their frame elements (considering the linguistic, cotextual, discursive as well as encyclopedic knowledge about the name bearer)

(b) the pragmatic function of the compounds in context

Semantic frames for PN compounds

Frame	Example	Gloss	percentage
MENTAL_PROPERTY	Dummlindner	´stupid Lindner´	25.7 %
ENFORCING	Dosen-Jürgen	´tin Jürgen´	13.4 %
SERVING_IN_CAPACITY	Finanzscholz	´finance Scholz´	9.9 %
PEOPLE_BY_ORIGIN	Bayern-Toni	´Bavaria-Toni´	9.1 %
PREDICAMENT	Berater-Ursula	´advisor-Ursula´	9.1 %
TRAVEL	Kalifornien-Katha	´California-Katha´	8,6 %
WEARING	Kopftuch-Claudia	´headscarf Claudia´	7.2 %
COMMERCE_BUY	Villen-Spahn	´Villa-Spahn´	6,2 %
EXPRESSING_PUBLICLY	Eiskugel-Jürgen	´scoop Jürgen´	5.2 %
INGESTION	Erdbeeren-Ricarda	´Strawberries-Ricarda´	4,9 %
MEDICAL_CONDITIONS	Ischias-Schulz	´sciatica Schulz´	0.7 %

Semantic frames for PN compounds

Three types of PN compounds (based on the type of knowledge about the name bearer) and their semantic frames

Property-based reading: *Bayern-Toni*

> SERVING_IN_CAPACITY, PEOPLE_BY_ORIGIN, MEDICAL_CONDITIONS

Attitudinal reading: *Dumm ('stupid')-Lindner*

> MENTAL_PROPERTY

Eventive readings: Berater ('*Advisor')-Ursula*

ENFORCING, PREDICAMENT, EXPRESSING_PUBLICLY, TRAVEL, WEARING, COMMERCE_BUY, INGESTION

Semantic frames for PN compounds

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MENTAL_PROPERTY

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ENFORCING, PREDICAMENT, EXPRESSING_PUBLICLY, TRAVEL, WEARING, COMMERCE_BUY, INGESTION

Frames for eventive readings COMMERCE_BUY frame

Wer übernimmt die Verantwortung für das Versagen? Mit BILD bzw. Herr Reichelt stimme ich selten überein, ABER sein Kommentar ist wirklich gut. Die fette Frau im Kanzleramt und der unfähige **Villen-Spahn** sollten das lesen und dann zurücktreten!

'Who takes responsibility for the failure?
With BILD or Mr. Reichelt I rarely agree, BUT his comment is really good. The fat woman in the Chancellery and the incompetent **Villa-Spahn** should read this and then resign!'

https://twitter.com/Notabaris/status/1341036904322625539?s=20

Frames for eventive readings COMMERCE_BUY frame

- *Villen-Spahn ('villa-Spahn')*

- Paraphrase based on the discursive knowledge, encyclopedic knowledge and the context: *Spahn has bought a villa*

- Coding in *Maxqda* for the frame COMMERCE_BUY and for the frame elements BUYER (Spahn) and GOODS (VILLA)

- Presupposed frame elements: TIME and MONEY

Pragmatic functions of eventive readings

Mostly evaluative function (cf. Štekauer 2015, Barbaresi & Dressler 2020), referring to and evaluating events that

- have damaged their reputation (*Heli-Cem*),

- have functioned as an emblem of their stance on a political question (*Kopftuch-Claudia*), or

- have characterised their political actions (*Dummlindner*)

Pragmatic functions: evaluative PN compounding

Evaluative morphology

PN compounds have the function of associating a value which is différent from that of the standard or default (cf. Grandi & Körtvélyessy 2015: 13)

Villen-Spahn

The activity of the name bearer (the German health minister) deviates from the activity expected for a minister (Usually, ministers do not have enough money to buy a villa)

Pragmatic functions: appositive construction

Syntactic apposition

a. Charlie, <u>a pizza delivery person</u>, is at the door!

b. Charlie, <u>an infamous axe murderer</u>, is at the door!

$\Rightarrow$ Appositives "effectively force enriched interpretations",

by means of inviting conventional implicatures.

(Potts 2012: 2530)

Pragmatic functions: appositive construction

Berater- (Advisor-) Ursula

'Vaccine ordering: "the suspicion that Germany might have preferred one company" Unfortunately, relevant data have again been deleted from **Advisor-Ursula**'s cell phone'

=> PN compounding also forces enriched interpretations of the current discourse context

(here: von der Leyen's handling of European vaccine ordering, her handling of organizing German military reform with the help of external advisors)

Summary & discussion

- PN compound interpretation relies heavily on discoursive knowledge.
  - This poses problems for traditional approaches to the semantics of compounds
  - A frame semantic approach accounts for all three types of knowledge.
- German PN compounding is productive
  - 532 different types on the basis of 20 politicians' names alone
  - Social media: rich resource for productive word-formation in non-standard language usage
- Semantics
  - The relations between compound constituents are predictable
- Pragmatics
  - German PN compounding is evaluative morphology

Summary & discussion

Does this make PN compounding 'marginal' or 'special'?

(e.g. Wildgen 1981, Kürschner 2014, 2020)

We argue the answer is 'no' (probably…).

Semantics   (e.g. Wildgen 1981, Kürschner 2014, 2020)

coffee mug: interpretation of the relation between the constituents involves accessing a DRINKING frame (Löbner 2015, Schulzek 2014, 2019)

Most approaches assume that such access is somehow triggered by the semantics of the constituents (esp. affordances, relational nouns). PN compounding shows that such access seems also possible by means of implicature.

Summary & discussion

Pragmatics

Pejorative compounding is an under-researched field, in which metaphorical interpretations have received most attention.

(cf. e.g. Meibauer 2013, Stekauer 2015)

Thank you very much for your attention!

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