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## ***Sogenannt* ('so-called') and the lexicon-pragmatics interface\***

### **Abstract**

Quotation is a device that is used to refer to the particular linguistic shape of an expression. An instance are name-mentioning constructions involving *sogenannt* as in *sogenannte Sepsis* ('so-called sepsis'). The present paper examines the varying interpretations a *sogenannt*-construction can adopt. In contrast to *Sepsis*, a noun like *Hotel*, for example, as in *sogenanntes Hotel* ('so-called hotel') gives rise to a 'distanced' interpretation of the construction rather than one informing about a concept's name. A unitary semantic analysis will be proposed for *sogenannt*, where the individual readings emerge from an interplay between lexical factors like the head nominal's establishedness, on the one hand, and pragmatic implicatures rooted in relevance- as well as manner-based principles, on the other. From a compositional perspective, the *so* in *sogenannt* will be reasoned to be identical in function to quotation marks as a means to refer to a linguistic shape through demonstration. The different interpretations of the construction will be coupled with the type of binding of the agent-argument variable as well as the event variable of the verbal root *nenn-* ('call') of *sogenannt*.

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### **1 Introduction**

The British sitcom *Miranda* has a running gag, which is thought-provoking from a lexical-semantic as well as from a pragmatic perspective. The gag is about Miranda's mother Penny, who frequently uses the catch phrase *what I call* as a parenthesis in contexts where it does not seem to be appropriate:

- (1) a. *There was a little, what I call, incident, in which the police unnecessarily got involved.*  
[Season 2, Episode 5]
- b. *The only thing missing is a, what I call, groom.*  
[Season 3, Episode 8]

Every now and then in the show, Miranda delivers an explanation for the comical effect when she reprimands her mother by pointing out that words like *incident* or *groom* are common words used by everyone and by no means

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something that only Penny could possibly use in a somehow special way.

Miranda's comment suggests that *what I call* has a restriction to be compatible only with lexical material that is not common or that is used in an unusual way. This intuition will be the starting point for our investigation. Specifically, we will discuss why constructions involving the name-mentioning modifier *sogenannt* ('so-called') in German receive non-canonical interpretations with certain words. In its default use, *sogenannt* informs the addressee about the status of the head nominal as a conventionalized term used in a certain speech community. In *sogenannte Sepsis* ('so-called sepsis'), for example, *sogenannt* indicates the head noun's status as an established (medical) term for the corresponding denotatum, i.e., for blood poisoning. This, however, is different with high-frequent nouns like *Hotel* ('hotel') or *Garten* ('garden') as in *sogenanntes Hotel* and *sogenannter Garten*, that is, with nouns that can be assumed to be globally conventionalized. With nouns like these, the construction is more likely to receive a 'distanced' interpretation rather than a name-informing one, often in combination with an ironic or sarcastic undertone.

The current paper aims to shed light on the linguistic factors relevant for an explanation of the interpretational differences in *sogenannt*-constructions. For an account, we will examine the interplay between the lexical-semantic properties of *sogenannt* as a derivative of the verbal root *nenn-* ('call'), on the one hand, and pragmatic factors affecting the interpretation, on the other. As concerns the compositional properties of *sogenannt*, the function of the demonstrative anaphor *so* will be in focus. We will claim for *so* to operate as a pointer to the particular linguistic shape of a name, which is provided by the head nominal of the *sogenannt*-construction. This view is compatible with Davidsonian-style approaches towards quotation as a device used to 'talk' about language, which have argued for quotation marks to refer to a linguistic shape through demonstration. Accordingly, we will reason that quotation marks, which are often found around the head nominal in a *sogenannt*-construction, are a graphemic materialization of the *so* in *sogenannt*.

As for the pragmatic factors, we will assume a relevance-based implicature to be effective with highly conventionalized head nominals. In *sogenanntes Hotel*, for example, a name-informing *sogenannt* is in fact irrelevant and, as a consequence, a non-canonical, distanced interpretation of the construction is produced. Further, quotation marks will be analyzed as an indicator of a deviation of the expression in quotes from the linguistic norm on the basis of a manner-based principle. We will present evidence from a corpus study, which shows that phrasal (adjective-noun) names are used more often with quotes than compounds in a *sogenannt*-construction. The effect will be attributed to the more pronounced name status inherent in compounds as products of word-formation. Our analysis allows a unitary treatment of *sogenannt* in the different readings it adopts under the assumption of an underspecified lexical-semantic

representation, to be enriched contextually as a result of the interplay between lexical and pragmatic components of language.

The structure of the paper is as follows. Section 2 discusses argument-structural properties of *sogenannt* from a compositional perspective as well as the function of quotation marks in name-mentioning contexts. Section 3 examines the interplay between lexical and pragmatic factors in the composition of *sogenannt*-constructions. Here, the behavior of complex nominals will be in focus, which leads to an implementation of pragmatic implicatures to account for the varying interpretations of *sogenannt*-constructions as well as the proportion of the head nominals to be used with quotation marks. The summary in section 4 concludes our investigation.

## 2 The semantics of *sogenannt*

Constructions involving the name-mentioning modifier *sogenannt* can adopt different semantic interpretations<sup>1</sup> and we will concentrate on two basic types in the following. With the first variety – which we assume to be the semantic default – the modified material is a neologism or a low-frequent expression, where *sogenannt* denotes the status of the expression as a conventionalized name. Consider the examples in (2), with quotation marks placed around the nominal head in ((2)a) and without quotation marks in ((2)b):

- Sogenannt* – name-informing
- (2) a. *Käufer dürfen sogenannte “Montagsautos” ohne weiteres zurückgeben.*<sup>2</sup>  
           customers may so-called “Monday cars” without difficulty  
           return  
           ‘Customers may return so-called ‘Monday cars’ without difficulty.’
- b. *Der sogenannte Persilschein war ein Entlastungsschein, der bestätigte, dass man kein Nationalsozialist war.*<sup>3</sup>  
           ‘the so-called persilschein was a whitewashing certificate  
           that confirmed that one not a national socialist was’  
           ‘The so-called Persilschein was a whitewashing certificate  
           that confirmed that one had not been a national socialist.’

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<sup>1</sup> See Klockow (1980) for an overview.

<sup>2</sup> [www.mainpost.de/aktiv-region/specials/lifestyle/mobilewelt/art508,7258905](http://www.mainpost.de/aktiv-region/specials/lifestyle/mobilewelt/art508,7258905)  
 Access: December 22, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> [www.geschichtsatlas.de/~gd9/stadtplanung/entnazifizierung.html](http://www.geschichtsatlas.de/~gd9/stadtplanung/entnazifizierung.html)  
 Access: December 22, 2015.

*Montagsauto* and *Persilschein* are nouns with a low lexical frequency. Their *Wortschatz* frequency class is 21 and 16, respectively.<sup>4</sup> This is different with the second construction type, in which low lexical frequency is not a necessary condition and which, thus, can also contain high-frequent expressions. Consider the relevant nouns in the examples in (3), *Hotel* and *Garten*, which are both of frequency class 9:

- Sogenannt* – distancing
- (3) a. *Das sogenannte "Hotel" entpuppte sich als schäbige Gastwirtschaft.*  
           the so-called "hotel" turned out REFL as shabby inn  
           'The so-called 'hotel' turned out to be a shabby inn.'
- b. *Der sogenannte Garten bestand aus einer ungepflegten Wiese mit einigen Bäumen.*<sup>5</sup>  
           the so-called garden consisted of an ill-kept lawn with a couple of trees  
           'The so-called garden was an ill-kept lawn with a couple of trees.'

*Sogenannt* is semantically related to *angeblich* ('pretended') in such contexts, where often an ironic or sarcastic reading of the construction is intended. Observe, however, that a high-frequent noun can also be used non-ironically in a *sogenannt*-construction. This is illustrated in (4), where *sogenannt* is used to signal an atypical meaning of otherwise established nominal expression:

- Sogenannt* – name-informing / non-standard meaning
- (4) a. *Geschickt duckt sich das Mädchen, damit ihr beim Wenden der horizontale Mast des Segels, der sogenannte „Baum“, nicht an den Kopf schlägt.*<sup>6</sup>  
           agilely ducks REFL the girl so that on turning the horizontal pole of the sail, the so-called 'boom', not on the head hit  
           'The girl agilely ducks down so that the horizontal pole, the so-called "boom", does not hit her head when turning.'

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<sup>4</sup> The *Wortschatz* frequency class is computed in relation to the frequency of the article *der* ('the') in the corpus ([wortschatz.uni-leipzig.de](http://wortschatz.uni-leipzig.de)). For instance, frequency class 21 means that *der* is 2<sup>21</sup> times more frequent than the search word.

<sup>5</sup> [www.fewo-direkt.de/ferienwohnung-ferienhaus/p435201](http://www.fewo-direkt.de/ferienwohnung-ferienhaus/p435201)  
 Access: December 22, 2015

<sup>6</sup> [www.kurzlink.de/GT5kenAY5](http://www.kurzlink.de/GT5kenAY5)  
 Access: May 12, 2016

- b. *Eine Übung für die Kräftigung von Beinen und Po ist der sogenannte Stuhl.*<sup>7</sup>  
 an exercise for the strengthening of legs and butt is the so-called chair  
 ‘The so-called chair is an exercise to strengthen legs and butt.’

This is a name-informing use of *sogenannt*, coupled with the additional instruction to the addressee, however, that the head noun’s meaning differs from the commonly understood meaning of the word. In ((4)a), for instance, *sogenannt* signals that *Baum* (‘boom’) has – as a nautical term – a meaning that departs from the predominant denotation of the German noun *Baum* (‘tree’). An analogous reasoning applies to ((4)b), where *Stuhl* (‘chair’) is the name for a yoga exercise.

The quotation marks used in distancing *sogenannt*-constructions of the type in (3) above have commonly been characterized as scare quotes in the literature, see, among others, Meibauer (2007) and Predelli (2003). Quotes have an apologetic function here and express a specific speaker modality implying a certain reservation w.r.t. the semantic appropriateness of the expression in quotes. This use of quotes is also illustrated in (5), where they signal a figurative sense of *wissen* (‘know’) and, thus, a non-literal meaning of the verb:

- (5) *Die Pflanzen “wissen” anhand der Taglänge, ob Winter oder Sommer ist.*  
 the plants ‘know’ based on the length of the day if winter or summer is  
 is  
 ‘The plants “know” if it is winter or summer based on the length of the day.’

In an identical way, quotes are used in distancing *sogenannt*-constructions as in (3) to indicate a non-literal meaning of the head nominal. This is different with name-informing *sogenannt*-constructions. With them, quotes are used to point out the use of the respective expression as a name, see Saka (1998) and Washington (1992) for analyses. This function of quotes traces back to the fact that an expression can, besides its denotational component, be used to ‘mention’ the name of the expression, see, for example, Quine (1981: 23–26). The example in ((6)a) illustrates this use, where the linguistic shape of the noun

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<sup>7</sup> [www.kurzlink.de/ibB487zUj](http://www.kurzlink.de/ibB487zUj)  
 Access: May 19, 2016

*Kuchen* ('cake') is referred to and not its canonical extension as is the case in ((6)b):<sup>8</sup>

- (6) a. *Max hat "Kuchen" gesagt.*  
Max has 'cake' said  
'Max has said "cake".'
- b. *Max hat Kuchen gebacken.*  
Max has cake baked  
'Max has baked cake.'

The interpretational differences between the types of *sogenannt*-constructions introduced above lead to the question whether the corresponding occurrences of *sogenannt*- are linked to one lexical root. Alternatively, the occurrences could be seen as coupled with distinct lexical roots, where the name-informing type in (2) and (4) is a realization of the predicate *nenn*- ('name', *call*) and the distancing type in (3), in contrast, is a lexicalized synonym of *angeblich* ('pretended'). Below, we will opt for the former and argue that the construction types should be described in a unitary semantic format, with pragmatic principles triggering the different interpretations.

## 2.1 The lexical-semantic format of *sogenannt*

In this section, we will take a closer look at the lexical-semantic properties of *sogenannt* as an instance of a name-mentioning predicate. A reference in the semantic literature dealing with expressions of this type is Krifka et al. (1995). In their description of kind-referring NPs like *the liger*, the authors, building on Carlson (1977), make use of the *so-called* construction to illustrate the proper-name like characteristics of kind-referring NPs, see Krifka et al. (1995: 65):

- (7) The liger is so called because it is the offspring of a lion and a tiger.

The lexical features of the name-mentioning predicate are not in the authors' focus. Note, however, the apparent double function of the subject NP in the example: *the liger* somehow denotes (as the offspring of its parents) a kind of animal and, at the same time, delivers the concept's name, i.e., /ligər/. For a better understanding of this peculiar two-faced appearance of nouns in name-mentioning contexts consider, to begin with, the following sentence:

- (8) Man nennt das Sepsis.

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<sup>8</sup> Of course, one can argue that an expression in quotes refers to itself, i.e., the name. This is the essential idea of the so-called *Identity Theory* of quotation, see Washington (1992). We will stay agnostic about the particulars of a philosophical analysis of quotation. For detailed explorations, see Brendel et al. (2011b) and Cappelen & Lepore (2007), and also section 2.2 below.

one calls this sepsis  
 ‘One calls this sepsis.’

The sentence asserts that some occurrence of blood poisoning, denoted by the demonstrative *das* (‘this’) in the example, is commonly referred to as *Sepsis*. We conclude that the verbal root *nenn-* predicates over three thematic arguments: an agent  $x$ , a theme  $y$  as well as an argument representing the theme’s name, cf. Härtl (2015a):

- (9)  $y\ z\ \textit{nenn-}$  (‘call  $y\ z$ ’)  
 $\exists e [\text{CALL}(e) \ \& \ \text{AGENT}(x, e) \ \& \ \text{THEME}(y, e) \ \& \ \text{NAME}(z, w, e): w = y]^9$

In (9), the actual name is linked to a relational function, which reads:  $z$  is the linguistic name of entity  $w$  (at the time of the event  $e$ ). Further, the theme argument  $y$  is identified with the name argument  $w$  to account for the fact that both terms have the same extension ( $w = y$  in (9)). In the example in (8), the agent argument is represented by the generic pronoun *man* (‘one’), the demonstrative *das* (‘this’) functions as the theme argument and *Sepsis* represents the name:

- (10)  $\text{GEN}_x\ \text{GEN}_e [\text{CALL}(e) \ \& \ \text{AGENT}(\textit{man}, e) \ \& \ \text{THEME}(\textit{das}, e) \ \& \ \text{NAME}(\textit{Sepsis}, w, e): w = \textit{das}]$

The event variable in (10) is also bound generically. We assume this to meet the intuition about name-mentioning as in contexts like (8): Whenever it is the case that an occurrence of blood poisoning is referred to, the label *Sepsis* is commonly used in the relevant speech community. The generic nature of the event variable is illustrated also by the compatibility of the construction with VP-adverbials like *üblicherweise* (‘usually’):

- (11) *Man nennt das üblicherweise Sepsis.*  
 one calls this usually sepsis  
 ‘Usually, this is called sepsis.’

As a participle form derived from *nenn-*, we expect the argument-structural setup of the verbal root to be preserved with *sogenannt*. Surprisingly, this does not seem to be the case. Consider the example in (12) and note that, apparently, only one internal argument, i.e., *Sepsis*, is overtly realized in a *sogenannt*-construction:<sup>10</sup>

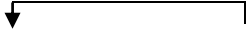
- (12) [*Der Doktor diagnostizierte*] *eine sogenannte Sepsis.*  
 [the doctor diagnosed] a so-called sepsis

<sup>9</sup> We use the colon to introduce supplementary interpretational conditions.

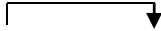
<sup>10</sup> We ignore the external argument, i.e., the agent, for a moment. It is never overtly realized in a past participle form.

‘[The doctor diagnosed] a so-called sepsis.’

The ‘missing’ argument is still present, though. It is bound by *so*. *So* is a demonstrative, used anaphorically here, see Umbach & Gust (2014), and it is identified with the name argument of the verbal root. The following paraphrase illustrates the rationale behind this notion, cf. Härtl (2015a):

- (13)   
*Der Doktor diagnostizierte eine Sepsis<sub>i</sub>. Man nennt das so<sub>i</sub>.*  
 the doctor diagnosed a sepsis. this calls one so  
 ‘The doctor diagnosed a sepsis. This is called so.’

In the second sentence in (13), just like in the sentence in (8) above, both internal arguments are again realized: The theme argument of *nenn-* is denoted by *das* and the name argument is bound by *so*, pointing to some other lexical item. The same logic can be applied to the *so* in *sogenannt*:

- (14)   
*eine sogenannte Sepsis<sub>i</sub>.*  
 a so-called sepsis  
 ‘a so-called sepsis’

In this case, however, the theme argument of *nenn-* is realized by *Sepsis* itself and *so* points to the linguistic name of this very theme. Hence, *eine sogenannte Sepsis* can be paraphrased as *ein Sepsis genanntes Etwas* (‘a sepsis called something’, a *something called sepsis*), with *etwas* as the theme and *Sepsis* as the name argument.

The question remains of how to describe the linking behavior of *sogenannt* from a compositional perspective. According to Umbach & Gust (2014), adnominal *so*, as in *So ein Auto hat Anna auch* (‘such car has Anna too’, *Anna owns a car like this, too*), points to the target of a demonstration on the basis of a similarity relation. The demonstration target and the nominal in the assertion – Anna’s car in this case – have certain traits in common, which Umbach and Gust analyze as a set of features of comparison. The authors’ reasoning can also be applied for *so* in name-mentioning contexts. *So* points to a particular occurrence of a linguistic form in an utterance, i.e., the word *Sepsis* in (13) and (14), which has the same shape as the conventionalized linguistic representation for the concept SEPSIS, stored in the mental lexicon. In other words, *so* implies a similarity relation between the individual item *Sepsis* occurring in an utterance (a word token), on the one hand, and the shape of the corresponding linguistic sign (a type), on the other. In (15), we use a modified version of the semantic representation Umbach and Gust suggest in their analysis for *so*:

- (15)  $[[so]] = \text{SIM}(n, n_{\text{target}}, f)$



$n_{target}$  represents the target of the demonstration, which is the word token occurring in the specific utterance, in our case the word *Sepsis* in the above sentences.  $n$  is the lexical form of the concept and  $f$  represents the features of comparison, which is based on the shape of the word *Sepsis* in our case. In (16), the token character of *Sepsis* is symbolized through a phonemic transcription.

$$(16) \quad \text{SIM}_{so}(\text{SEPSIS}, /'sepsis/, f)$$

In discourses like (13), *so* points to the occurrence of the name as it is used in the first sentence and identifies it with the name argument of *nenn-* in the second sentence. We indicate the identification by means of the equality relation  $z = n_{target}$  in (17):

$$(17) \quad y \text{ so } nenn- \text{ ('call } y \text{ so')} \\ \exists e [\text{CALL}(e) \ \& \ \text{AGENT}(x, e) \ \& \ \text{THEME}(y, e) \ \& \\ \text{NAME}(z, w, e) \ \& \ \text{SIM}_{so}(n, n_{target}, f)] \text{ (: } z = n_{target} \text{) (: } w = y \text{)}$$

With the participle form in *sogenannte Sepsis* as it is used in the sentence in (12), repeated as (18) below, *so* points to the object NP of the clause, i.e., the direct object of the verb *diagnostizieren* ('diagnose'):

$$(18) \quad \text{Der Doktor diagnostizierte eine sogenannte Sepsis.} \\ \text{the doctor diagnosed a so-called sepsis} \\ \text{'The doctor diagnosed a so-called sepsis.'}$$

$$(19) \quad \text{sogenannte Sepsis ('so-called sepsis')} \\ \exists y \text{ GENx GENe} [\text{CALL}(e) \ \& \ \text{AGENT}(x, e) \ \& \ \text{THEME}(y, e) \ \& \\ \text{NAME}(z, w, e) \ \& \ \text{SIM}_{so}(\text{SEPSIS}, /'sepsis/, f)] \\ \text{(: } z = /'sepsis/ \text{) (: } w = y \text{)}$$

Observe that the head noun of the object NP of the clause and the theme argument of *nenn-* are coreferential. To capture this, we use an existential closure of the theme argument  $y$  in (19) as an indication that the theme argument needs to be identified contextually with the object argument of the clause. This observation brings us back to the issue raised at the beginning of the section: The apparent double function of NPs in name-mentioning contexts of the type in (7) above is rooted in the fact that an NP can be used denotationally and mentioned as a name at the one and the same time. In our example, see (18), *Sepsis* is used denotationally as the object argument of *diagnostizieren* ('diagnose'). At the same time, *Sepsis* delivers the name argument of *nenn-*, to which the *so* points.

An interesting aspect of Umbach and Gust's study is their analysis of the similarity class produced by *so* as an (ad-hoc) kind. In the example above, i.e., *So ein Auto hat Anna auch* ('such car has Anna too', *Anna owns a car like this, too*), this kind comprises the type of car similar to the one pointed to, say a

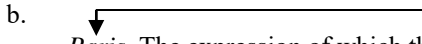
lemon-yellow retro-style automobile. As we have suggested, the same can be assumed for *so* in *sogenannt*: *So* points to a token of a word, which demonstrates certain (phonemic) properties of a type of word, i.e., a kind. Crucially, similar views have been formulated for the function of quotation marks. With this background, we will argue in the next section that quotation marks are in fact a graphemic materialization of the *so* in *sogenannt*.

## 2.2 The meaning of quotation marks in name-mentioning contexts

Recanati (2001) claims that quotation marks in report constructions like *Greta Garbo said, 'I want to be alone!'* display a token of a sentence, which is used to depict a type as the target of the quotation, i.e., Greta Garbo's famous words, see Recanati (2001: 642). Below, we will adopt this view for name-mentioning contexts and argue that quotations marks and *so* fulfil the same function in that both display a linguistic form by means of demonstration.

Quotation marks are a metalinguistic tool that is used to draw the addressee's attention to the linguistic side of an expression. Canonically, an expression is used to denote its extension but it can also be used to mention<sup>11</sup> the corresponding linguistic sign and refer to it explicitly. For instance, with an assertion like *'Paris' has five letters*,<sup>12</sup> in contrast to *Paris has a subway system*, the graphemic setup of the word *Paris* is described and quotes around *Paris* indicate this use.

Diverging views on quotation as a device for talking about language have been formulated from a language-philosophical perspective, see, among others, Brendel et al. (2011a) and Cappelen & Lepore (2012) for overviews. An influential, though hotly debated,<sup>13</sup> theory of quotation is Davidson's Demonstrative Theory (Davidson 1979). Its central claim is that quotation marks are used to refer to a linguistic shape by pointing to something that has this shape. Quotes, in Davidson's approach, have the meaning 'the expression of which this is a token', which, in the example above, reads as illustrated in ((20)b), cf. Davidson (1979: 38–39):

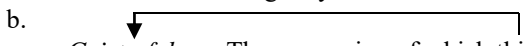
- (20) a. *'Paris' has five letters.*  
       b.   
           *Paris*. The expression of which this is a token has five letters.

<sup>11</sup> It is a common definition of quotation that an expression is quoted if it is *mentioned*, see Cappelen & Lepore (2012).

<sup>12</sup> The example is an instance of what is known as *pure quotation* in the literature, as opposed to *direct quotation* (*Greta Garbo said, 'I want to be alone!'*), *mixed quotation* (*Max believes that the Pope 'has God on speed dial'*) and *scare quotation* (*We arrived at the 'hotel'*), cf. Cappelen & Lepore (1997).

<sup>13</sup> For discussion, see, among others, Harth (2011), Saka (1998), Washington (1992).

According to Davidson, quotation is a special case of demonstrative reference, which is what we also claimed for *so* in *sogenannt* ('so-called') in the previous section. *So* points to a word token, which is employed to exhibit certain lexical properties of an expression. Under this assumption, *so* and quotation marks fulfill an identical function in name-mentioning contexts of the sort in (21), which we indicate by means of the subscript *i* in ((21)b):

- (21) a. *ein sogenannter "Geisterfahrer"*  
           a so-called 'wrong-way driver'  
           'a so-called "wrong-way driver"'
- b.   
           *Geisterfahrer*. The expression of which this<sub>i</sub> is a token is  
           called so<sub>i</sub>.

There is a debate in the literature about whether the quoted content is a compositional part of the meaning of the sentence. Davidson denies this (Davidson 1979: 37). Although the issue is not decisive for our purpose, observe, however, that in *sogenannt*-constructions the quoted content indeed constitutes a compositional part of the whole sentence, as was also discussed in the previous section. The following example underlines this point:

- (22) *Der Unfall wurde durch einen sogenannten "Geisterfahrer" verursacht.*  
           the accident was by a so-called "wrong-way driver" caused  
           'The accident was caused by a so-called "wrong-way driver".'

In this example, the quoted material, i.e., *Geisterfahrer* ('wrong-way driver'), provides the name argument of *nenn-* and, at the same time, realizes the agent role of the main predicate *verursach-* ('cause'). As we can see, the content in quotation marks represents a constitutive element in the compositional meaning of the clause, and a truth-conditional representation of the sentence will need to account for that by an identification of the two arguments.

The use of quotes is optional in name-mentioning contexts. Often, they are left out. Besides, there are other graphemic means to signal the naming function of an expression such as capitalization as in *sogenannter Roter Zwerg* ('so-called red dwarf') or italics. Below we will argue that quotes occur more often with expressions whose naming function is less self-evident and, thus, needs to be promoted by additional linguistic means. We will analyze this finding as a pragmatic effect, which is caused by the markedness produced by quotes.

### 3 Name-mentioning and the interface between lexicon and pragmatics

In this section, we will examine the lexical properties of the head noun in a *sogenannt*-construction and relate them to the different interpretations the construction can adopt. To begin with, consider the contrast in acceptability between *Straße* and *Schnellstraße* in the following example:<sup>14</sup>

- (23) *die sogenannte <sup>??</sup>Straße / Schnellstraße*  
 the so-called road / expressroad  
 ‘the so-called road / expressway’

It seems that, in a null context, *Straße*, in contrast to *Schnellstraße*, is less suited to be mentioned as a name: *Straße* is ‘too conventionalized’, its naming function is elementary and, thus, reference to the naming function is superfluous. A name-mentioning predicate requires the corresponding name to be ‘worth’<sup>15</sup> to be identified explicitly as a name – otherwise the speaker would not use a name-mentioning construction.

In name-mentioning constructions a label is identified which a certain speech community has agreed on, but which the addressee is assumed to be unfamiliar with. If the expression is a highly familiar one, the construction is likely to convey a distanced interpretation, often in combination with an ironic or sarcastic reading of the head nominal, as is illustrated in (24):<sup>16</sup>

- (24) *Die sogenannte Straße erwies sich als ein schlammiger Sandweg.*  
 the so-called road turned out REFL as a muddy sand track  
 ‘The so-called road turned out to be a muddy sand track.’

In consequence, an interpretational condition for *sogenannt* must entail that the head nominal’s meaning is either unfamiliar to the addressee or that the head nominal supports a distanced interpretation to be construed contextually.

<sup>14</sup> We have (episodically) observed a general tendency of high-frequent compounds to be less marked to some extent than high-frequent stems in the context of *sogenannt*, cf. *sogenannte <sup>??</sup>Lampe / <sup>?</sup>Stehlampe* (‘lamp’ / ‘floor lamp’), *sogenanntes <sup>??</sup>Ei / <sup>?</sup>Rührei* (‘egg’ / ‘scrambled eggs’). Possibly, the contrast is rooted in the semiotic motivatedness of compound expressions. The issue must be left to further investigation.

<sup>15</sup> For a semantic analysis of *name-worthiness* see, e.g., Dayal (2015: 53–59).

<sup>16</sup> Note that this does not imply that a low-frequent head noun cannot receive a distanced interpretation in a *sogenannt*-construction, cf. *The so-called “sepsis” turned out to be a harmless mosquito bite.*

### 3.1 Complex expressions in name-mentioning constructions

The unworthiness of an expression to be mentioned as a name is also reflected in the markedness of certain phrasal expressions in *sogenannt*-contexts. Consider the contrast in acceptability in (25) between the phrase *rotes Dach* ('red roof') and the compound *Rotdach* ('redroof'):<sup>17</sup>

- (25) *Die Schule hat ein sogenanntes <sup>??</sup>rotes Dach / Rotdach.*  
 the school has a so-called red roof / redroof  
 'The school has a so-called red roof / redroof.'

The explanation for the contrast lies in the condition outlined above: *rotes Dach*, as a phrasal expression, is used to describe a referent compositionally and is, as such, not unfamiliar enough to be identified as a name. In contrast, a novel compound like *Rotdach*, as a non-conventionalized expression, is better suited to be identified in its naming function. The example shows that, in languages like German, adjective-noun (A-N) compounds are predisposed to embody names for concepts in comparison to their phrasal counterparts.<sup>18</sup> Corresponding evidence also comes from the fact that a (novel) A-N compound is more prone to represent the name of a kind. Consider the following example, which involves the kind-sensitive particle *an sich* ('on REFL', *per se*) and in which a contrast is again produced between phrase and compound, see Härtl (2015a):

- (26) *Das <sup>?</sup>rote Dach / Rotdach an sich ist der Hit in allen Neubausiedlungen.*  
 the red roof / redroof on REFL is the hit in all new housing estates  
 'The red roof / redroof per se is a big success in every new housing estate.'

The tendency of compounds in German to represent names for kinds does not imply that phrasal expressions cannot adopt a naming function – there are numerous phrasal names in German, like *Kleiner Tümmler* ('common porpoise'), *rote Karte* ('red card'), *grüner Tee* ('green tea'), all clearly referring to kinds of things. Observe, however, that A-N phrases show a preference to be used with an additional marking when mentioned as a name, that is, with quotation marks (see (27)a) or with capitals ((27)b):

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<sup>17</sup> To avoid circularity, novel, i.e., unestablished compounds are used in the examples.

<sup>18</sup> See Härtl (2015a), Härtl (2015b) for further discussion and a theoretical implementation of this view.

- (27) a. *Der Klassiker [...] ist das sogenannte “kleine Schwarze” aus dem Hause Coco Chanel [...].*<sup>19</sup>  
 the classic is the so-called ‘little black’ from the house Coco Chanel  
 ‘A classic is the so-called ‘little black dress’ from Coco Chanel.’  
 b. *HATS-6 ist ein sogenannter Roter Zwerg.*<sup>20</sup>  
 HATS-6 is a so-called Red Dwarf  
 ‘HATS-6 is a so-called red dwarf.’

We argued in the previous section that quotes are used in name-mentioning constructions involving *sogenannt* to highlight the status of the expression as a name. Thus, complex expressions for which we hypothesize a less pronounced name status, like A-N phrases, are expected to be used with quotes more frequently than expressions with an intrinsic naming function, like A-N compounds. In Härtl (2015a), this hypothesis was tested in a corpus study, in which we compared the following (established) A-N phrases and A-N compounds in their tendency to be used with quotes in a context involving *sogenannt*:

- (28) A-N phrases  
*blauer Brief* (‘blue letter’, *pink slip*)  
*grüner Pfeil* (‘green arrow’, *turn-right sign*)  
*roter Faden* (‘red thread’, *golden thread*)  
*grüne Welle* (‘green wave’, *synchronized traffic*)  
*kleine Anfrage* (‘minor interpellation’, *minor interpellation*)  
 A-N compounds  
*Grauwasser* (‘graywater’, *gray-water*)  
*Weißfäule* (‘whiterot’, *white rot*)  
*Grünbrücke* (‘greenbridge’, *wildlife crossing*)  
*Schwarzlicht* (‘blacklight’, *black light*)  
*Langholz* (‘longwood’, *side grain*)

Importantly, using the *Wortschatz* corpus,<sup>21</sup> all items were balanced for frequency so that neither item type used in the study was more conventionalized. *Sogenannt*-constructions were then extracted from the IDS corpus (W /

<sup>19</sup> [www.kurzlink.de/ngkAujV5f](http://www.kurzlink.de/ngkAujV5f)  
 Access: March 07, 2016

<sup>20</sup> [www.scinexx.de/wissen-aktuell-18833-2015-05-04.html](http://www.scinexx.de/wissen-aktuell-18833-2015-05-04.html)  
 Access: March 07, 2016

<sup>21</sup> See footnote 4.

Deutsches Referenzkorpus DeReKo-2014-II) via the COSMAS II web application, searching for *sogenannt*- followed by the items listed in (28). The total number of returns showed that our phrases ( $n = 173$ ) occur more often in a *sogenannt*-context than the compounds ( $n = 58$ ). We take this as a first indication of a higher pressure for phrasal items to expose their name status in this type of construction. Crucially, then, the phrasal items were indeed used significantly more often with quotes in comparison to compounds. The difference was still significant when only phrasal items written in capitals were included in the analysis. Taken the results together, we concluded the lesser tendency of the compounds to highlight their name status when used in a name-mentioning context to reflect a more prominent name status inherent in compounds as compared to phrases.

The question remains why exactly quotes are used more often with A-N phrases than with A-N compounds in a name-mentioning context. To explain this, in the remainder of this paper, a pragmatic approach will be pursued, which holds that quotes are used as a means to create markedness of the expression and thus to indicate a non-canonical use – as is the case when an expression is mentioned as a name.

### 3.2 Pragmatic account

In the classical studies, e.g., Davidson (1979), Washington (1992), Saka (1998), quotation is standardly approached from a hearer-centered, semantic viewpoint, where conversational aspects play only a minor role. Pragmatic aspects of this sort have been explicitly taken into consideration by only a few studies, among them Gutzmann & Stei (2011), Klockow (1980), Meibauer (2007a), and Recanati (2001).

#### 3.2.1 *Sogenannt* and relevance

In the context of the latter studies, our starting point will be rooted in the above assumption that a name-mentioning construction involving *sogenannt* informs the recipient about the specific lexical shape of a concept's name. Thus, in the canonical meaning of *sogenannt* as in *sogenannte Sepsis*, the speaker assumes the corresponding nominal to be unfamiliar to the recipient. Above, we linked the unfamiliarity of an expression to its low lexical frequency.<sup>22</sup> In (29), this notion is represented as a usage condition on *sogenannt*-  $X$ . It holds that the frequency  $F$  of the head nominal  $X$  lies below a norm value  $N$  to some significant extent  $c$ , where  $N$  is effective in a speech community  $s$ .

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<sup>22</sup> See the examples in (2) above.

(29) *sogenannt- X*

$$F(X) = N_s - c$$

Consequently, if *X* has a high lexical frequency, and with *c* being not significant, the use of *sogenannt* is perceived as deviant in a neutral context. In (30), this is illustrated with the example of *Handtasche* ('handbag') and *Stuhl* ('chair'):

- (30) a. *Die ("sogenannte") Handtasche ist ein Accessoire der Frau.*  
           the (so-called) handbag is an accessory of the women  
           'The (so-called) handbag is a women's accessory.'  
       b. *Der ("sogenannte") Stuhl ist als Möbelstück klar definiert.*  
           the (so-called) chair is as piece of furniture well defined  
           'The (so-called) chair as a piece of furniture is well-defined.'

Deviance of this sort results from a flouting of a relevance-based maxim, see Grice (1975), Horn (1984), and Levinson (2000). Along the lines of Horn, we can use the (speaker-based) R-principle ('Say no more than you must', Horn 1984: 13) to characterize *sogenannt* as irrelevant with a high-frequent noun. Compliance with the principle in cases of high-frequent head nominals is only guaranteed if their interpretation is shifted away from their conventionalized meaning. This is illustrated in ((31)a), where *Handtasche* ('handbag') is used to refer to a carrier for six-packs of beer. In ((31)b), *Stuhl* ('chair') denotes a yoga exercise.

- (31) a. *Die sogenannte Handtasche, der Sechser-Träger, ist für alle Damen und Herren, auch außerhalb der Hansestadt, das Geschmackserlebnis.*<sup>23</sup>  
           'the so-called handbag, the six-pack carrier, is for all ladies and gentlemen, even outside of the hanseatic city, the taste experience'  
           'The so-called handbag, a six-pack carrier, is a taste experience for all ladies and gentlemen, even outside of the Hanseatic City.'

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<sup>23</sup> [www.home-mag.com/fileadmin/red/PDF\\_Download/\\_\\_hmbg\\_adressen.pdf](http://www.home-mag.com/fileadmin/red/PDF_Download/__hmbg_adressen.pdf)  
 Access: March 10, 2016



- b. *Eine Übung für die Kräftigung von Beinen und Po ist der sogenannte Stuhl.*<sup>24</sup>  
 an exercise for the strengthening of legs and butt is the so-called chair  
 ‘The so-called chair is an exercise to strengthen legs and butt.’

Pragmatic reasoning entails that here the hearer will deduce the nouns in question to be used in a non-standard way, under the assumption that the speaker does not intend an R-principle violation. An R-principle violation would be produced with the standard interpretation of the nouns due to their high frequency, as shown in the examples in (30). Viewed from the speaker’s perspective, the use of *sogenannt* in ((31)a & b) indicates that the intended interpretations, i.e., *Handtasche* denoting a six-pack carrier and *Stuhl* a yoga exercise, are assumed not to be established enough in the hearer’s lexicon. Thus, with *c* being significant now, see (29) above, the use of a name-informing construction is appropriate.

An alternative option for high-frequent nouns to conform with the R-principle in a name-mentioning construction is to adopt a distanced interpretation. Consider the following examples:

- (32) a. *Das sogenannte “Hotel” entpuppte sich als schäbige Gastwirtschaft.*  
 the so-called “hotel” turned out REFL as shabby inn  
 ‘The so-called ‘hotel’ turned out to be a shabby inn.’  
 b. *Der sogenannte Wald ist genau genommen nur ein verwilderter Schlosspark.*<sup>25</sup>  
 ‘the so-called forest is strictly speaking just a savaged castle garden’  
 ‘The so-called forest is, strictly speaking, just a savaged castle garden.’

Observe that here, too, *sogenannt* signals a non-standard meaning of the head noun. The so-called forest in ((32)b), for instance, is actually not a forest but something else, namely something that would be better described as a savaged castle garden. An analogous logic applies to ((32)a). In both cases, the actual denotatum of the head noun of the *sogenannt*-construction is asserted to be outside its standardly accepted extension. Importantly, the latter is not the case with constructions like those in (31), which are name-informing. Here, the extension of the head noun of the *sogenannt*-construction is asserted to include

<sup>24</sup> [www.kurzlink.de/ibB487zUj](http://www.kurzlink.de/ibB487zUj)  
 Access: May 19, 2016

<sup>25</sup> [www.fluchdesfalken.de/node/1014](http://www.fluchdesfalken.de/node/1014)  
 Access: March 11, 2016

the corresponding denotatum, that is, a six-pack carrier and a yoga exercise, respectively. To conclude, *sogenannt* signals two types of non-standard meanings with high-frequency nominals: While a name-informing *sogenannt* signals a broadening of the head's extension, a distancing *sogenannt* implicates an exclusion of the corresponding denotatum from the head noun's extension.

An open question concerns the binding of the agent argument of the verbal root of *sogenannt*, as it was represented in (9) above, repeated here for convenience:

- (33)  $y \ z \ nenn-$  ('call  $y \ z$ ')  
 $\exists e \ [CALL(e) \ \& \ AGENT(x, e) \ \& \ THEME(y, e) \ \& \ NAME(z, w, e): w = y]$

Recall that we argued the agent argument ( $x$ ) to be bound generically if the head nominal has a low lexical frequency as in *sogenannte Sepsis* ('so-called sepsis'). Crucially, the producer ( $= S_u$  in (34)) of a corresponding utterance can be assumed to be part of the set of individuals that is defined by the generic binding of  $x$ :

- (34)  $S_u \in [[x]]$

(34) reflects the fact that, in such cases, the speaker complies with the appropriateness of the name identified by *sogenannt*.<sup>26</sup> This is different with distancing *sogenannt*, i.e., when *sogenannt* is interpreted as synonymous with *angeblich* ('pretended'). Here, the speaker asserts himself/herself to oppose the semantic appropriateness of the name. This implies that, in this case, the speaker is dissociated from the agent-argument set of *nenn-*:

- (35)  $S_u \notin [[x]]$

*Sogenanntes Hotel* in ((32)a), for example, entails that some agent entity  $x$ , at some point in time, (inappropriately) named  $y$ , i.e., the shabby in our example, *Hotel* ('hotel'). In (36), we represent this meaning through an existential closure of the agent-argument variable as well as the event variable to reflect the fact that the corresponding entities need to be resolved contextually:

- (36) *sogenanntes Hotel* ('so-called hotel')  
 $\exists y \ \exists x \ \exists e \ [CALL(e) \ \& \ AGENT(x, e) \ \& \ THEME(y, e) \ \& \ NAME(z, w, e) \ \& \ SIM_{so}(HOTEL, /hoʊ'tel/, f)] \ (: z = /valt/) \ (: w = y)$

In this way, the different interpretations *sogenannt* adopts can be implemented as a result of the interplay between lexical-semantic features and pragmatic information as it relates to the relevance of the utterance as well as the speaker modality. Hence, our analysis implies that *sogenannt* is polysemous and its

<sup>26</sup> We assume the same to hold for constructions like those in (31).

different realizations are linked to only one lexical root. We consider such an approach to also capture cases of vagueness occurring with *sogenannt* that meander between a name-informing interpretation and a distanced reading:

- (37) a. *Die sogenannte Zwischenstufentheorie sorgte für kontroverse Debatten in der Medizin.*  
 the theory of intermediate stages caused for controversial debates in the medical science  
 ‘The so-called theory of intermediate stages caused controversial debates in medical science.’
- b. *Die sogenannte Alternative für Deutschland hat ihren Parteitag in Essen begonnen.*  
 the so-called alternative for Germany has its party convention in Essen started  
 ‘The so-called Alternative for Germany has started its party convention in Essen.’

With utterances of this type, the speaker’s intention to use *sogenannt* is in fact not clear: The *sogenannt* in *sogenannte Zwischenstufentheorie* (‘so-called theory of intermediate stages’), for example, can either be interpreted as an indicator of a neologism or as an indicator of the speaker’s doubts regarding the status of the referent as a proper theory. Note, though, that such utterances are usually not perceived as particularly marked due to their ambiguity (as is the case with, e.g., *Max saw an Alaskan bare / bear*) but rather as underspecified and the selected semantic specification as dependent on conceptual content as well as the contextual embedding.

To sum up, we have proposed pragmatic factors to trigger the different interpretations *sogenannt* can adopt, with the understanding that the latter is associated with only a single semantic format. First, the default case is realized with a name-informing interpretation of *sogenannt*- *X* as we can observe it with low-frequent head nouns like *Sepsis*:

- (38) *sogenannte Sepsis* (‘so-called sepsis’)  
 Frequency of *X*: low
- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| → R-principle:    | ✓ |
| → name-informing: | ✓ |

In contrast, a highly conventionalized noun like *Hotel* is likely to adopt a distanced, ironic interpretation, resulting from an ostensive flouting of the R-principle:

(39) *sogenanntes Hotel* ('so-called hotel')

Frequency of *X*: high

- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| → R-principle:              | ✗ |
| → name-informing:           | ✗ |
| → distanced interpretation: | ✓ |

Here, the implication is communicated to the addressee that the head noun is in fact a misnomer. We have a different situation with cases like *sogenannte Handtasche* ('so-called handbag'), where an ironic interpretation is not supported, see the examples in ((31)a & b). In these cases, *sogenannt* does inform about the name status of the expression, with the implication, however, that the head nominal is used with a non-standard meaning, which deviates from the head noun's predominant meaning:

(40) *sogenannte Handtasche* ('so-called handbag')

Frequency of *X*: high

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| → R-principle:                 | ✗ |
| → name-informing:              | ✓ |
| → non-standard interpretation: | ✓ |

The regularity in (39) does not imply that we cannot find distanced readings with low-frequent lexical material also. An example we discussed is *sogenannte Zwischenstufentheorie* ('so-called theory of intermediate stages'), see the example in (37), which is semantically vague as it in fact supports both a name-informing as well as a distanced reading.

The question remains of what the exact function of quotation marks is in name-mentioning contexts and how to account for the observation reported in section 3.1 that phrasal names are accompanied by quotation marks more often than the corresponding compound counterparts. We will address these matters in the following section.

### 3.2.2 *Sogenannt* and markedness produced by quotes

Recall that quotes in instances of pure quotation (e.g., '*Paris*' has five letters, see section 2.2 and footnote (9) above) have commonly been described as a means used to refer to a linguistic shape by pointing to something that has this shape. In name-mentioning contexts, we argued, quotes highlight the use of an expression to mention its name. In constructions like *The doctor diagnosed a so-called 'sepsis'*, quotes are employed to signal the name-mentioning use of the expression, which – via *so* – is asserted to represent the conventionalized

name for blood poisoning. In that regard, the *so* in *so-called* and quotation marks fulfill the same function as both point to the lexical shape of a concept's name.

Crucially, the use of an expression to identify a concept's name can be seen as a non-canonical use of an expression: The default function of an expression is to denote something and not to name a name. We assume this deviation from the standard denotational use of an expression to require an additional marking of the expression, and quotation marks are used to fulfill this requirement. In other words, quotes are used as a means to create markedness of the expression and indicate its non-canonical use. Regarding its prosodic equivalent, markedness of this sort can also be signaled by a prominent pitch accent and by a noticeable prosodic gap placed before the name, cf. *The doctor diagnosed a so-called \_ SEPSIS*.

From a pragmatic angle, an additional marking of this sort when an expression is used as a name can be understood to trigger a manner-based implicature along the lines of Levinson's M-principle. The principle holds that a non-stereotypical meaning is indicated by using a marked expression that contrasts with the expression used to describe a default meaning, see Levinson (2000: 136). For instance, Levinson uses the M-principle to explain interpretational differences between noun-noun compounds and corresponding phrasal expressions like *box for matches*, which can denote any non-prototypical box used for matches – in contrast to the compound *matchbox*, which embodies the default interpretation of a specific type of box, see Levinson (2000: 147).

In an analogous way, we assume that markedness is added to the expression by means of quotes and their prosodic equivalents to signal the expression's non-standard use as a name. Here lies the answer also to the question of why phrasal adjective-noun names like *blauer Brief* ('blue letter', *pink slip*) have been found to be marked by quotes more often than adjective-noun compounds like *Grauwasser* ('graywater', *gray-water*), see section 3.1 above. As was argued, A-N phrases are less prone than compounds to function as names for concepts in German and, thus, lexicalized phrasal names can be assumed to exhibit their name status only indirectly. Consequently, in a name-mentioning construction, which explicitly refers to the naming function of an expression, a higher tendency to signal the name status is expected for A-N phrases than for A-N compounds.

The proposed pragmatic reasoning is in line with approaches like Klockow's (1978), who utilizes the Gricean conversational maxims to account for the function of quotation marks as an indicator of a deviation from the linguistic norm. In a similar fashion, Meibauer (2007a) as well as Gutzmann & Stei (2011) implement quotes as pragmatic markers that give rise to a non-stereotypical interpretation of the expression in quotes. Importantly, the latter approaches aim at a unitary pragmatic description to account for all varieties

of quotes including pure quotation as well as scare quotes. A comprehensive account of this sort is also desirable for the data discussed in the current paper, where quotes appear in name-informing as well as in distancing *sogenannt*-constructions. In all cases, quotes are used to signal a deviation from the canonical use of the expression in quotes: In a name-informing construction quotes highlight the use of the expression as a name as well as the name status itself, and in a construction with a distanced interpretation quotes indicate a departure from the regular meaning of the expression. Our reasoning implies that the use of quotes correlates with the degree of the expression's deviation from its canonical function: The more an expression deviates from the linguistic standard, the higher is the expression's tendency to be used with quotes.

#### 4 Conclusion

The present paper aimed at illuminating the semantic properties of name-mentioning constructions involving *sogenannt* as an instance of quotation. In particular, we focused on the question of how to explain the different interpretations *sogenannt*-constructions can adopt and whether these relate to a single semantic format of *sogenannt* or not. To clarify these matters, first, the compositional makeup of *sogenannt* was described on the basis of its verbal root *nenn*-, which entails three thematic arguments, an agent, a theme as well as an argument representing the theme's name. Crucially, with *sogenannt* we reasoned the name argument of the verbal root to be bound by the demonstrative anaphor *so*. *So* was argued to be functionally identical to quotation marks in name-mentioning constructions as both refer to a linguistic shape by pointing to something that has this shape. It was argued that quotes are used to highlight the use of the expression as a name as well as the expression's status as an established name.

To explain the varying interpretations of *sogenannt*-constructions, we pursued a pragmatic reasoning in light of the initial observation that the name used in a name-informing construction requires the name to be worth to be identified as a name. Against this background, we found (adjective-noun) compounds to less frequently occur in a *sogenannt*-context than adjective-noun phrases and to be less frequently accompanied by quotes. The corresponding results of a corpus study were concluded to reflect a less pronounced name status inherent in phrasal expressions as compared to compounds. Importantly, then, the worthiness of an expression to be explicitly identified as a name was correlated with the expression's degree of establishedness. Expressions with a low lexical frequency are compatible with a name-informing interpretation of a *sogenannt*-construction (e.g., *sogenannte Sepsis* 'so-called sepsis'), whereas with high-frequent head nouns (*sogenanntes Hotel* 'so-called hotel'), the construc-

tion is likely to adopt a distanced interpretation. If a distanced, ironic interpretation is not supported, a high-frequent noun (e.g., *sogenannte Handtasche* ‘so-called handbag’) receives a non-standard interpretation coupled with a broadening of the noun’s default extension.

To explain the interpretational variation, a relevance-based implicature was assumed to be at work, which brings about non-standard interpretations of high-frequent nouns in name-mentioning contexts. Furthermore, a manner-based implicature was assumed to be effective for quotation marks. We implemented them as an indicator of a deviation from the linguistic norm, thus promoting non-canonical interpretations – which we argued to include the use of an expression to mention its name. From a compositional point of view, the different interpretations of *sogenannt*-constructions were associated with the type of binding of the agent-argument as well as the event variable of the verbal root of *sogenannt*. While the canonical, name-informing interpretation was assumed to be linked to a generic binding of the two variables, the distanced interpretation was linked to an existential closure.

Our unitary analysis treats *sogenannt* as polysemous and, thus, connected to a single underspecified semantic representation, with the named pragmatic factors determining the different interpretations. The proposed approach is compatible with a lexicalist understanding of the boundary between grammar and lexicon in light of the assumption that varying interpretations of complex expressions emerge as a result of the structural composition of lexical and semantic as well as contextual features.

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