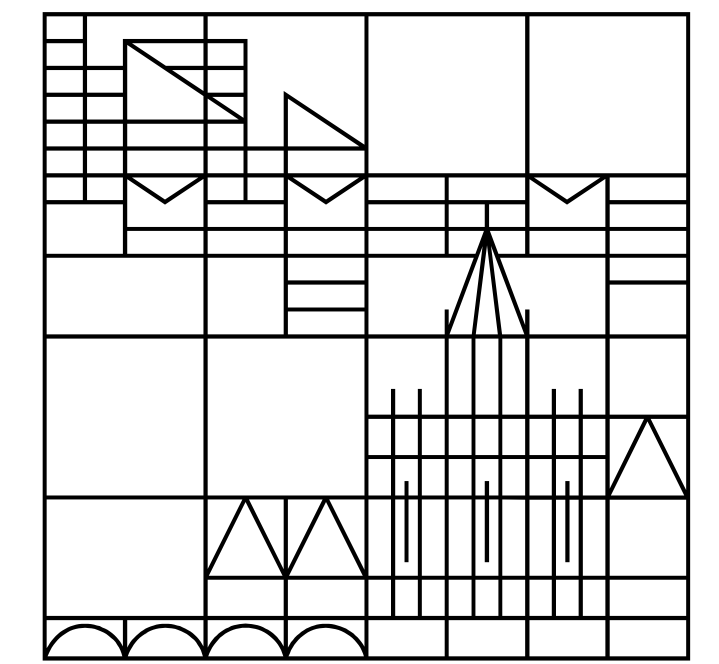


# Compound-Coinages as Sources of Attitudinal Meaning

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## DATA & RESEARCH QUESTION

**DATA:** Intended but masked attitudinal meaning of speakers (S) in German political discourses conveyed by *compound-coinages* (CC)

(1) **Merkel-Land** 'Merkel-land': Refugees avoid Austria and prefer Merkel-Land because they can bring families there. (Source: Facebook)

- a. attitudinal meaning of S: S accuses Merkel of causing German refugee crisis.
- b. neutral alternative: Deutschland 'Germany'

(2) **Kopftuch-Praktikantin** 'hijab-intern': New position for hijab-intern (Source: Bild, 2016-08-26)

- a. attitudinal meaning of S: S regards the intern as a religious alien who is possibly difficult to integrate into German society.
- b. neutral alternative: die palästinensische Praktikantin 'The Palestinian intern'

- All constituents of the CC are sentimentally neutral
- However, a non-neutral attitude of S is understood by hearers (H)

**RESEARCH QUESTION:** How do such attitudinal meanings arise?

## EARLIER STUDIES

### COMMON ASSUMPTION IN STUDIES ON COMPOUND MEANING:

A covert semantic relation  $R$  between the constituents decides the compound meaning (see Levi 1978, Fanselow 1981, Meyer 1993, Olsen 2019 etc.):

Let  $C_1C_2$  be a compound where  $[[C_1]]=m_1$  and  $[[C_2]]=m_2$ .

Then  $[[C_1C_2]]=m_1Rm_2$ .

### RESTRICTIONS:

- Attitudinal meanings of CC do not arise from the semantics of the “harmless” neutral constituents
- Neither do such attitudinal meanings constitute semantic relations between constituents

## ANALYSIS

**PROPOSAL:** H interprets CC such as (1)-(2) by identifying S's intended operation on common ground (CG; Stalnaker 2002).

i. **Property-highlighting with surface form:** S makes certain property  $r$  of the object under discussion salient by explicitly emphasizing them in a compound constituent position (cf. *maxim of manner*, Grice 1975)

- (3) a. **Merkel-land**: Merkel is the person in power in Germany.
- b. **hijab-intern**: The intern wears a hijab.

ii. **Activation of attitudinal belief:**  $r$  activates stereotypes  $A$  with which S intends to update  $CG_{S,H}$ .

- (4) a. German refugee crisis is Merkel's fault.
- b. Muslims are cultural-religious outcomers and problematic subjects for integration.

iii. **H's recognition of S's intended operation on CG:** H identifies that S intends to update  $CG_{S,H}$  with  $A$ .

→ **H's Interpretation:** H interprets the CC as implicitly insinuating  $A$ .

## FUTURE WORK

### ATTITUDINAL MEANING OF CC AS EXPRESSIVE MEANING?

Interaction with sentence operators such as negation posts a challenge:

- (5) a. Refugees want to go to Merkel-land.
- b. Refugees **don't** want to go to Merkel-land.

→ Attitudinal meaning of (5b): it is Merkel's fault that Germany is made *unattractive* for refugees. (cf. expressive meaning: no interaction with sentence operators, see Potts 2007 on *nondisplaceability*)

## SELECTED REFERENCES

Fanselow. 1981. *Zur Syntax und Semantik der Nominalkomposition*. • Grice. 1975. *Logic and Conversation*. • Levi. 1978. *The syntax and semantics of complex nominals*. • Meyer. 1993. *Compound comprehension in isolation and in context*. • Olsen. 2019. *Semantics of Compounds*. • Potts. 2007. *The expressive dimension*. • Stalnaker. 2002. *Common ground*.