

## Schwa-Deletion in German compounding

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In the presentation, I will report ongoing joint research with Tom Juzek on linking elements in German compounds. We focus on noun-noun compounds in which the first constituent is a noun ending in schwa. We present a corpus of about 3000 nouns ending in schwa annotated for various phonological and morphosyntactic features such as syllable structure, gender, plural suffix etc. Two annotators evaluated for each noun the dominant linking strategy, i.e. type of linking element. The corpus is complemented by a pilot experiment asking native speakers of German to indicate the linking strategy they would choose for a two given nouns. In addition to existing nouns, the experimental stimuli also included nonce words, also ending in schwa. While neither the corpus study nor the experiment exhibits a clear picture, the results nevertheless provide some interesting insights into the intricacies of German compounding. We find a predominance of paradigmatic linking elements, in particular *-n* for feminine and masculine nouns. At the same time, the results for nonce words show that *-n* is not a default strategy.