

Versicherungsheini or *Versicherungssuse*? The structure of deonymic second stem in German compound words

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In present-day German, there are so-called deonymic second stems like *-heini* ‘Heinrich’ in *Versicherungsheini* ‘security freak’ or *-suse* ‘Susanne’ in *Heulsuse* ‘crybaby’ (Fleischer/Barz 2012: 184, Leuschner/Wante 2009: 62 - 63).

Regarding the word formation with deonymic second stem, Wellmann (1975: 390 - 392), Bergmann (1971), Harsányi (2020) as well as Sánchez Hernández (2009: 72) argue that several factors lead to selecting the first stem in compound words. For instance, nouns as the first stem are usually formed with deonymic second stem derived from male nickname like *Computerheini* ‘computer freak’. On the contrary, deonymic second stems derived from female nickname prefer verbs with a negative connotation as first stem. Moreover, female deonymic stems are less productive than male deonymic stems. However, these arguments haven’t been verified empirically enough. Thus, it leads to the following research questions:

- Can be the preference for part of speech influenced by the deonymic stems such as ‘noun + male deonymic stem’?
- Is the word formation with female deonymic stems less productive than with male deonymic stems?

To answer these questions, a corpus study based on W-archive in German reference corpora (Deutsche Referenzkorpora) was performed. In this study, the following deonymic stems are analysed: male *-heini*, *-fritze*, and female *-suse*, *-trine*¹. For productivity, the potential productivity according to Baayen (2009) was applied for this study.

The corpus results show that the gender of deonymic second stems controls the word formation. For example, the male deonymic stems tend to use nouns as first stems, whereas the female deonymic stems with the verb as first stem are more frequent than with noun. Furthermore, the gender of deonymic second stem contributes also to morphological productivity. Male deonymic stems are more productive than female stems.

Literature

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¹ According to Bouchez (2012), these 4 stems are the most productive deonymic stems.

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Corpus

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