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Nota di contenuto	Why compounding? / Sergio Scalise and Irene Vogel -- Part I. Delimiting the field. The role of syntax and morphology in compounding / Peter Ackema and Ad Neeleman -- Constraints on compounds and incorporation / Marianne Mithun -- Compounding versus derivation / Angela Ralli -- Part II. At the core of compounding. Units in compounding / Fabio Montermini -- Compound construction: schemas or analogy? A construction morphology perspective / Geert Booij -- The head in compounding / Sergio Scalise and Antonio Fabregas -- On the lexical semantics of compounds: non-affixal (de) verbal compounds / Rochelle Lieber -- The phonology of compounds / Irene Vogel -- Part III. Typology and types of compounds. The typology of exocentric compounding / Laurie Bauer -- Coordination in compounding / Giorgio F. Arcodia, Nicola Grandi and Bernhard Walchli -- Parasynthetic compounds: data and theory / Chiara Melloni and Antonietta Bisetto -- Synthetic compounds: with special reference to German / Livio Gaeta -- Corpus data and theoretical implications: with special reference to Italian v-n compounds / Davide Ricca -- Part IV.

Quantitative and psycholinguistic aspects of compounding. Frequency effects in compound processing / R. Harald Baayen, Victor Kuperman and Raymond Bertram -- Computational issues in compound processing / Vito Pirrelli, Emiliano Guevara and Marco Baroni -- Relational competition during compound interpretation / Christina L. Gagne and Thomas L. Spalding -- Sign languages and compounding / Irit Meir ... [et al.] -- First language acquisition of compounds: with special emphasis on early German child language / Wolfgang U. Dressler, Laura E. Lettner and Katharina Korecky-Kroll.

Sommario/riassunto

This chapter discusses early phases of first language acquisition of compounds in German based on longitudinal data of two Austrian children and compares these data to results on compound acquisition in other languages. The first compounds to emerge in German (simultaneously with the emergence of noun and verb inflection and of diminutives) were subordinate and endocentric two-member noun-noun compounds without linking elements. The first correct linking element which emerged later on is -n after word-final schwa of the first member. Order of emergence of compound patterns can be related to factors such as frequency, productivity, morphotactic and morphosemantic transparency. Left-headed and exocentric compounds had not yet emerged in our child speech corpora, and only one coordinate compound appeared.
