

The importance of being unproductive. Morphology and the mental lexicon

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Word formation patterns in Germanic languages are often unproductive. For example, German does not allow for new instrumental nouns in *-el* (*Hebel* ‘lever’, *Deckel* ‘lid’, *Zügel* ‘rein’), English has no new verbs in *-ish* (*vanish*, *cherish*, *publish*), Dutch does not produce new adjectives in *-(e)lijk* (*pijnlijk* ‘painful’, *sterfelijk* ‘deadly’, *lieflijk* ‘lovely’). Such patterns are particularly interesting for morphological theory, as they combine grammatical regularity with lexical idiosyncrasy. In this talk, I will discuss a variety of relevant cases and the questions they raise for the relation between grammar and lexicon on the one hand and between morphology and phonology on the other. I will interpret the findings within a constructional approach to morphology (Booij 2010, Jackendoff & Audring 2020).

Bibliography

Booij, Geert. 2010. *Construction Morphology*. Oxford: OUP.

Jackendoff, Ray & Jenny Audring. 2020. *The Texture of the Lexicon*. Oxford: OUP.