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Why are there more English words ending in *-ness* than ending in *-ity*? What is it about some endings that makes them more widely usable than others? Can we measure the differences in the facility with which the various affixes are used? Does the difference in facility reflect a difference in the way we treat words containing these affixes in the brain? These are some of the questions examined in this book.

Morphological productivity is one of the most contested areas in the study of word-formation. This book takes an eclectic approach to the topic and concludes by applying the findings for morphology to syntax and phonology. Bringing together the results of twenty years' work in the field, it provides new insights and considers a wide range of linguistic and psycholinguistic evidence.

LAURIE BAUER is Professor of Linguistics at Victoria University of Wellington. He is the author of *English Word-Formation* (Cambridge University Press 1983) and *Introducing Linguistic Morphology* (1988).

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Contents

	<i>Figures</i>	<i>page ix</i>
	<i>Tables</i>	<i>x</i>
	<i>Preface</i>	<i>xiii</i>
1	Introduction	1
1.1	The issue	1
1.2	Diachronic variation in productivity	7
1.3	Summary	10
2	A historiographical conspectus	11
2.1	<i>Productivity</i> and its synonyms	11
2.2	What is productive?	12
2.3	Degrees of productivity	15
2.4	Prerequisites for productivity	20
2.5	The domain of productivity	22
2.6	How to define productivity	25
2.7	Synchrony and diachrony	25
2.8	Competence and performance	29
2.9	Summary	32
3	Fundamental notions	33
3.1	Introduction	33
3.2	Words: existing, new, potential and probable	34
3.3	Lexicalisation	43
3.4	Frequency	47
3.5	Transparency and opacity	51
3.6	Regularity	54
3.7	Attestation	56
3.8	Markedness and naturalness	58
3.9	Default	60
		vii

viii	<i>Contents</i>	
3.10	Creativity	62
3.11	Paradigm pressure	71
3.12	Analogy	75
3.13	A working definition of productivity	97
3.14	Summary	98
4	Psycholinguistic evidence about productivity	100
4.1	Introduction	100
4.2	Storage	102
4.3	Production and comprehension	112
4.4	Summary	124
5	Scalar productivity	125
5.1	Introduction	125
5.2	Restrictions or constraints	126
5.3	Measuring productivity	143
5.4	Summary	161
6	Exemplification	163
6.1	Introduction	163
6.2	Proto-Germanic * <i>-dōm</i>	163
6.3	Nominalisations of colour words	172
6.4	Nominalisation endings in English	177
6.5	Agentive and non-agentive <i>-er</i>	199
6.6	Summary	203
7	Conclusion	205
7.1	Productivity summarised and defined	205
7.2	Productivity in other areas of linguistics	213
7.3	Summary	222
7.4	Looking back and looking ahead	223
	<i>References</i>	224
	<i>Indexes</i>	
	<i>Language index</i>	239
	<i>Subject index</i>	240

Figures

1.1	Productivity of <i>-ment</i>	9
3.1	Relationship between various factors connected with productivity	60
5.1	Ordinal <i>-th</i> in the Wellington Corpus of Written New Zealand English	149
5.2	Productivity of <i>-ment</i> in the Wellington Corpus of Written New Zealand English	152
5.3	Global productivity (P*) of a number of English word-formation processes	154
5.4	Productivity as rate of increase	157
5.5	Productivity of <i>-ness</i> according to Tulloch (1991)	157
5.6	Comparison of the productivity of two morphological processes	160
6.1	Relative profitability of five nominalisation processes	185
6.2	Ratio of new nominalisations to neologisms at different periods	186

Tables

1.1	Historical development of <i>chevaux</i> and <i>bals</i>	7
3.1	Token frequency of nouns based on adjectives in <i>-ive</i>	50
3.2	A hierarchy of transparency	52
3.3	Sub-types of transparency	53
3.4	Single or double // in adverbial forms of certain adjectives	82
3.5	Words ending in <i>-icative</i> and correlative facts	94
3.6	Numbers of new words in various categories in Tulloch (1991)	95
5.1	<i>Xivity</i> vs. <i>Xiveness</i>	147
6.1	Comparison of <i>-dom</i> formations with the meaning 'territory, jurisdiction' from three Germanic languages	170
6.2	Colour words used as bases in the experiment	173
6.3	Acceptability ratings depending on the familiarity of the base	174
6.4	Acceptability ratings for words with different etymological classes of base	175
6.5	Acceptability ratings depending on the morphological status of the base, matched data	175
6.6	Acceptability ratings depending on the morphological status of the base, trisyllabic bases	175
6.7	Acceptability ratings for words with different length bases	176
6.8	Asymptotic Z statistic for Wilcoxon Ranked Pairs Tests; data from table 6.7	176
6.9	Numbers of nominalisations from the sample in various categories	180
6.10	Words from the sample with <i>-ation</i> added to a base which does not end in <i>-ise</i>	182

6.11	Number of nominalisations in three patterns listed in Barnhart et al. (1990), along with number of new verbs which form potential bases for these formations	188
6.12	The influence of morphemic status on the productivity of the <i>-ation</i> patterns	192
6.13	Words ending in <i>-ion</i> with a verbal base found in the Wellington Corpus and not listed in <i>COD7</i>	197
6.14	Comparative productivity rankings	198
6.15	Comparison of base-types used in different kinds of <i>-er</i> nouns	202

Preface

In 1995, when introducing a talk based on material later published as Bauer (1996) at the Free University of Amsterdam, I commented that I had been working on morphological productivity for over twenty years, but still did not feel that I had a coherent picture of the topic. In the intervening five years, I believe that I have achieved some degree of coherence in my view, and this book is an attempt to communicate that understanding. I still regard the picture presented here as provisional, and I expect it to change in the next five or ten years. Twenty-five years ago, morphological productivity was not at the forefront of linguistic theorising, but today, thanks to the dispute between connectionists and purveyors of alternative views of morphology, it has taken on a far greater importance. This not only makes it timely to provide a statement of a position, but guarantees that further research in the near future will outdate some of the comments that are made here. It is my hope that the work presented here will provide a stepping-stone in the development of a new deeper understanding – even if it is one which contradicts my own cherished positions.

I should like to thank all those who have helped in the evolution of this work over a number of years, but especially those connected with the production of this book: Mark Aronoff and Salvador Valera read and commented on a draft of the book, and made many useful suggestions, as did anonymous referees for Cambridge University Press; Andrew Carstairs-McCarthy provided examples and bibliographic help; colleagues and students from the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies at Victoria University commented on individual portions of the work; and colleagues from the School of Mathematical and Computing Sciences at Victoria University gave help and advice on statistical matters. And most of all, I should like to thank my wife, Winifred Bauer, for all her editorial and academic help.