Call for papers

The representation and processing of morphologically complex words
A special issue of *The Mental Lexicon* in honor of Gary Libben

Manuscript Submission Deadline: July 1, 2024

Guest Editors

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About the topic

The mental lexicon plays a central role in language representation and processing. This is so because words—or their constituent morphemes—are the key elements upon which we build syntactic and semantic representations of sentences. The representation and processing of morphologically complex words, in particular, constitute an important test case for how the linguistic system coordinates different sources of information during language processing—and, more broadly, a test case for the cognitive architecture that underlies the workings of the linguistic system and its interfaces. For over 50 years now, research on morphological representation and processing has revolved around numerous controversies, ranging from the influence of morphological and semantic information in word recognition to the kinds of representations that embody lexical knowledge.

The mental lexicon is, thus, at center stage in psycholinguistics—and, within it, Gary Libben has played a pivotal role. In a prolific 40-year career, Libben has advanced theory and the empirical investigation on the mental lexicon, drawing on numerous languages, morphological phenomena, experimental methods, and populations. His work has challenged common assumptions about the nature of lexical representation and processing, the workings of the morphological parsing system, how words and morphemes are represented in bilinguals, what the patterns of dissolution of morphological knowledge in aphasia tell us about the healthy brain, and what are the neuronal correlates of morphological processing. Among his most recent contributions, Libben (2014, 2022) has disputed the notion of the lexicon as a static repository of entries and their representations, proposing instead a system of lexical "superstates", where words have no fixed morphological structures. Superstates are the product of *morphological transcendence*—a usage-based principle that gives rise to realizations of the same free morpheme into diverse morphologically bound forms. In addition to his numerous theoretical and experimental contributions to key topics on the nature of the mental lexicon, Gary Libben is the co-founder and former co-editor of *The Mental Lexicon* and is a leader in fomenting psycholinguistic research in Canada and abroad, helping establish research on the mental lexicon at the confluence of many important issues in cognitive science.

This special issue of *The Mental Lexicon* will be dedicated to Gary Libben and the topics that have been at the forefront of his research on the mental lexicon. We invite submissions on the nature of morphological information in word recognition, the architecture of the morphological parsing system, compound processing, morphological hierarchical structures, morphological deficits in aphasia, the dynamic nature of lexical representations, and the morphological transcendence hypothesis.

Submissions

Articles should be submitted via *The Mental Lexicon* submission portal (https://www2.cloud.editorialmanager.com/ml/default2.aspx) following the journal guidelines. Please specify in the cover letter that the article is for the Special Issue in honor of Gary Libben. Papers should present original, unpublished theoretical or experimental work, modeling, or meta-analysis.

Submitted papers will undergo peer-reviewing with consideration given to their empirical or theoretical contribution, methodological rigor, and fit within the themes of the special issue.

Timeline (tentative)

Manuscript submission deadline: July 1, 2024
Peer-reviewing decision notifications: August 31, 2024
Final decisions: September 30, 2024.
Publication: Fall 2024/Winter 2015.