

8 A little Dutch problem (20 marks)

In Dutch there are various suffixes which can be added to a word to make a diminutive form, meaning roughly “little”, and sometimes expressing endearment or contempt as in the next table:

boek	‘book’	boekje	‘little book’, ‘booklet’
paar	‘couple’	paartje	‘little couple’, ‘just two’
raam	‘window’	raampje	‘little window’
som	‘sum’	sommetje	‘little sum’, ‘small amount’

The choice of these suffixes follows rules which are generally strict but allow exceptions. Here are some more Dutch diminutives, listed in alphabetical order. In this list, two words are exceptions. (Note: all multisyllabic words in this list are stressed on the first syllable, except *geluid*.)

baan	baantje	‘job’	man	mannetje	‘male’
boer	boertje	‘peasant’	meer	meertje	‘lake’
bloem	bloemetje	‘flower’	noot	nootje	‘nut’
bon	bonnetje	‘ticket’	oom	oompje	‘uncle’
dak	dakje	‘roof’	paard	paardje	‘horse’
ding	dingetje	‘thing’	ploe	ploetje	‘plough’
geluid	geluidje	‘noise’	pluim	pluimpje	‘feather’
gracht	grachtje	‘canal’	pot	potje	‘pot’
kamer	kamertje	‘room’	saam	saampjes	‘together’
kast	kastje	‘table’	slang	slangetje	‘snake’
kleed	kleedje	‘rug’	soep	soepje	‘soup’
koning	koninkje	‘king’	ster	sterretje	‘star’
koe	koetje	‘cow’	stoel	stoeltje	‘chair’
kom	kommetje	‘bowl’	teen	teentje	‘toe’
koop	koopje	‘purchase’	tuin	tuintje	‘garden’
kop	kopje	‘head’	warm	warmpjes	‘warmly’
lam	lammetje	‘lamb’	wel	welletjes	‘well’
lepel	lepeltje	‘spoon’			

Questions

8.1. What will the diminutive form of the following words be?

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| a. kan ‘jug’ | b. kar ‘cart’ |
| c. kwart ‘quarter’ | d. la ‘drawer’ |
| e. moeder ‘mother’ | f. riem ‘strap’ |
| g. stil ‘quietly’ | h. tafel ‘table’ |

8.2. Which are the two exceptional words?

8.3. Give the rules which normally determine the choice of a diminutive suffix in Dutch. State them as briefly and as clearly as possible.

8 A little Dutch [20 marks]

20 points:

- 8.1: 1 point each for a-h completely correct. No half marks.
- 8.2: 1 point for each word.
- 8.3: 10 points for Set A, 6 for Set B, 2 for Set C
 - Use judgement in
 - adding points for generalisations and insights
 - deducting points for inaccuracy and gaps.
 - Accept terms such as ‘hard/soft’ if you can interpret them as recognised phonetic categories which make the rules work.

See below the solutions for the marking scheme used for 8.3 in the final remarking.

8.1. a. kannetje	b. karretje
c. kwartje	d. latje
e. moedertje	f. riempje
g. stilletjes	h. tafeltje
8.2. bloem/bloemetje, koning/ koninkje	
8.3. At least three rule-sets are possible (though not equally good):	
Set A: ordered rules, no ‘or ...’ (except natural classes e.g. m/n/r/l)	
1. Prepare the stem:	
a. after a single vowel + [C = m/n/r/l], double C and add e	
b. after a single vowel + ng, add e	
c. after two vowels (or vowel+r) + m, add p.	
2. Then add the suffix:	
a. after p/b/t/d/k/g, add -je	
b. otherwise, add -tje.	
3. Then add -s for adverbs.	
Set B: partially ordered rules with some repetition	
1a. Double the final consonant and add -etje if monosyllabic word ends in m/n/r/l preceded by a short [or: one] vowel.	
1b. Add -etje if word ends in ng.	
1c. Add -tje if word ends in:	
• n, r or l preceded by a long vowel [or: two vowels],	
• or ends in a vowel,	
• or ends in an unstressed syllable.	
1d. Add -pje if word ends in m preceded by a long [double] vowel or consonant	
2. Otherwise add -je	
3. Add an -s to the suffix for adverbs.	
Set C: no rule ordering, much repetition	
1. separate lists of rules for using -tje, -etje, -pje, -kje	
or: separate lists of rules for words ending in particular consonants ...	
2. rule for adding -s to adverbs	

Final remarking of 8.3

10+ points. Look for the following generalisations:

1. add *p* after VVm
 2. double *C = m, n, r, l* after a short vowel
 3. add *e* after a short vowel followed by two consonants (including *ng*)
 4. add *je* after *C = p, b, t, d, k, g* (a 'plosive')
 5. add *tje* otherwise
 6. add *s* for an adverb
 7. the resulting suffix always consists of *je* following a consonant.
- Score 1 for each generalisation made with roughly the right conditions, even if it's combined messily with other generalisations (e.g. 'add *etje* after a short vowel + *CC*'). Add nothing if it's broken down into a lot of little sub-rules.
 - Add 1 for the first use of any of the words 'double', 'geminate', 'reduplicate', 'default', 'otherwise', 'all other ...', 'then', 'basic'.
 - Add 1 for helpful presentation using e.g. tables or arrows.