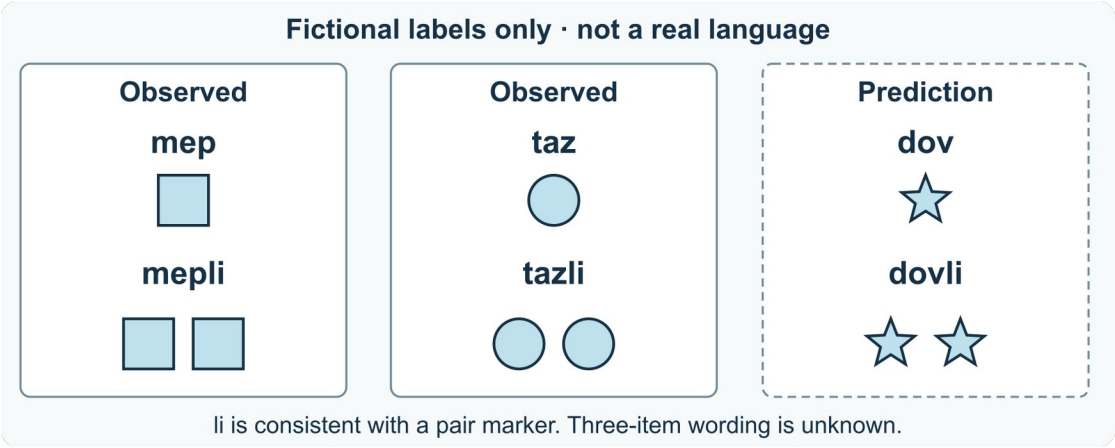
Find a rule in invented words

What pattern can a small set of made-up words support?

Find a pattern in a tiny fictional label system and state how far the evidence goes.

Investigate | 10-20 minutes, or one small comparison | Scrap paper and a pencil or pen, The supplied original model; no account, purchase or online search needed

Start here Read the supplied made-up pairs: mep labels one box; mepli labels two boxes. taz labels one circle; tazli labels two circles.



An observed ending and a prediction

1 Compare pairs

Underline the ending li in the two-item labels. These are invented puzzle labels, not words presented as a real language.

2 Propose a narrow rule

Try the hypothesis: adding li marks a pair of the named item in this toy system. Do not assume it means any number greater than one.

3 Make a prediction

A new card says dov labels one star. Predict dovli for two stars and mark it as a prediction, not another observed card.

4 Choose a test

A two-star label would check that prediction. A three-star card would help distinguish pair from a wider plural rule; its label is not supplied.

Original model a made up pair marker

All labels and meanings in this small dataset were invented for the puzzle.

• mep → one box; mepli → two boxes. taz → one circle; tazli → two circles.

• The shared ending li is consistent with a pair marker in both observed examples.

• Given dov for one star, dovli is a prediction for two stars. The label for three stars remains unknown.

What this example can show A small set can support a useful hypothesis without proving every future case. No claim is made about an actual language or culture.

A different way

Match labels to simple drawings, point to the repeated ending or direct someone else's underlining. Pronouncing the invented labels is optional.

If you want to go further

Invent a separate marker for exactly three items and supply two worked pairs. Keep your invented rule distinct from the observed dataset.

Something to notice

Which examples did I observe, and which result did I predict?

Read or explore more

Horizon topic Word Building

https://launchhorizonhq.com/learn/word-building/

Horizon topic Sounds Grammar

https://launchhorizonhq.com/learn/sounds-grammar/

Horizon topic Languages

https://launchhorizonhq.com/learn/languages/

NSW Education Standards Authority English K-10 Syllabus (2022): Glossary

https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/english/english-k-10-2022/glossary

The Open University, OpenLearn Describing language

https://www.open.edu/openlearn/languages/describing-language