



Universidad de Valladolid

Departamento de Filología Inglesa



CONFERENCE

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Facultad de filosofía y letras

English department seminar

Lexical access in the context of language change: Grammatical gender in L1 and L2



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Since Schriefers' (1993) initial study on the representation of grammatical gender in the lexicon of L1 Dutch speakers, gender in both L1 and L2 lexical access has been the focus of a significant number of studies. To date, evidence from diverse languages has shown that gender information competes for selection in language production and processing and that L1 and L2 gender systems interact in the lexicon. In spite of this substantial body of evidence, very few studies have taken additional relevant factors into account, such as how gender is manifest in the languages or how gender changes over time. In this talk, I focus on the latter: the effect of language change on the representation of grammatical gender in the lexicon. I will discuss data from L1 Norwegian speakers in a context of ongoing language change (the loss of feminine in Norwegian) as well as data from L1 Flemish-L2 Spanish speakers in a historical change scenario (modern Dutch displays only two gender values, while Flemish has retained the historic three-value system). Together these very different contexts will show that such changes have a pervasive effect on the representation of grammatical gender in the lexicon.

Schriefers, H. (1993). Syntactic processes in the production of noun phrases. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 19(4), 841–850.