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## Why a special issue on lexical access?

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Este número de *Psicológica* está dedicado al *acceso léxico*. Se centra en el estudio de cómo las palabras son representadas y organizadas en nuestra mente y cómo se accede a ellas en el transcurso de actividades de comprensión y producción. ¿Por qué un número especial sobre acceso léxico?. Se pueden enumerar varias razones para seleccionar este tema. De entre ellas, dos han motivado esta elección: su importancia en Psicolingüística y la amplia actividad que varios grupos de investigación en el contexto español vienen desarrollando en la actualidad.

This issue of *Psicológica* is dedicated to lexical access. This means the study of how words are represented and organized in the mind and how they are accessed during the comprehension and production activities. Why a special issue on lexical access? We could enumerate lots of reasons to select this topic but two of them have been the ones that mainly influenced our decision.

Firstly, because of the way words are organized in our mental lexicon is a prominent topic in Psycholinguistic. In fact, in the last decade a number of publications have been devoted to this topic, including several special issues (e.g. Jacobs & Grainger, 1994, in the Journal Experimental Psychology, Jarema, 1999, in Brain and Cognition, etc). However, the majority of such works have been run in English, and although probably most conclusions can be generalized to any language, in some cases generalizations cannot be directly drawn because of the specific features of each language. Spanish has some lexical peculiarities which differ from those of English, such as the morphological structure or the syllabic segmentation or the grapheme-phoneme relation. So it is highly probably that both languages show differences in lexical processing. If we bear in mind that Spanish is the second language in the world, it seems a good reason to make a special issue on lexical access in Spanish.

The second reason to select this topic is that several groups of Spanish researchers are at present actively working on lexical access, and their articles are published in international journals. Thus, Perea & Rosa have published several

papers on orthographic neighborhood in visual word recognition, Alvarez, Carreiras & De Vega on the role of the syllable in visual word recognition, Domínguez, Cuetos & Seguí on the morphological structure, and Costa, Colomé & Caramazza on lexical access in production using bilingual subjects. It seemed to us that given the existing human resources we cannot miss the opportunity to prepare a good issue. This is the result.