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Reading and Speaking Words in Two Languages: A Problem in Representation and Control

Research on bilingual word recognition and production suggests that even when a bilingual intends to read or speak in one language only, information in the other language is available. In the present work we examined the course and consequence of this unintended activation by comparing performance on production tasks which differed in the degree to which words in both language were required to be prepared. The results suggest that in the absence of language-specific cues, words in both of the bilinguals languages compete for selection well into the process of lexicalizing concepts into spoken words. We consider the implications of these results for models of language production and for the development of second language proficiency.