

Understanding the nature and acquisition of vocabulary knowledge in second languages

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Held on Zoom: ALT students, find link information on Moodle; all others please register by completing this form no later than 2nd November <https://forms.gle/17oFRCCi2GuTQw3u9>

Abstract:

Vocabulary knowledge is a complex construct that involves mastering various types of word knowledge, such as spelling, form-meaning mapping, collocations and derivatives (Nation, 2020). Achieving this depth of vocabulary mastery is deemed challenging and problematic for second language (L2) learners, and yet it is key for successful and appropriate language use (Schmitt, 2014; Webb & Nation, 2017). By understanding how these various kinds of knowledge behave and relate, practitioners can better systematise when and how they are introduced to the students, and thus facilitate the overall vocabulary learning process.



Nevertheless, little is still known about how these multiple types of word knowledge are acquired by L2 learners, which in turn leads to inconsistent opinions regarding the nature of vocabulary knowledge as a general construct. The present talk will discuss existing research on how the various components involved in word knowledge are known and acquired in L2 English, and will interpret these findings in order to shed light on an empirical conceptualisation of vocabulary knowledge in second languages.

Bio

Beatriz Gonzalez-Fernandez is a Lecturer in Applied Linguistics and TESOL at the University of Sheffield. She has taught a range of applied linguistics modules both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, including introductory modules on English language and general linguistics, and more specialised modules on second language acquisition, development and pedagogy. Her research focuses on the acquisition and teaching of vocabulary in second and foreign languages. In particular, Beatriz is interested in looking at how second or foreign language users acquire multiple aspects of vocabulary knowledge and how this data can inform second language vocabulary theory and pedagogy. Her research interests also involve examining the relationships between vocabulary and other linguistic and extra-linguistic factors, and their effect on second language lexical development.