



## How mood influences affective word processing in bilinguals: Gender differences

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Previous research has pointed to differences between women and men in their sensitivity to emotional content (see McCormick-Huhn & Shields, 2016 for a review), as well as in how their current mood influences their language processing (Federmeier et al., 2001). However, the role of mood and gender in affective word processing has so far received little attention, especially in the bilingual context. Here, we investigated how fast and accurately women and men put in positive and negative moods responded to affective words in their native (L1 – Polish) and non-native (L2 – English) language. Building on previous research, we expected to observe a facilitatory effect (faster reaction times and higher accuracy rates) in positive compared to negative mood, the effect being stronger in women than men. To test this prediction, we first induced positive and negative moods via animated language-non-specific film clips ( $n=28$ ) during separate sessions in 63 proficient unbalanced late Polish–English bilinguals (35 females, 28 males). Participants then performed an emotive decision task: they decided if a displayed word was positive/negative/neutral. The stimuli included Polish and English positive, negative, and neutral words, matched on their valence, arousal, concreteness, length, and frequency. Self-reports confirmed the effectiveness of our mood induction procedure. Behavioural data further showed statistically significant interactions between participants' mood and gender that were independent of language nativeness. Namely, in positive mood, women were faster yet less precise than men. In negative mood, both genders were equally fast, with men again achieving higher accuracy. Such results show that women are more susceptible to mood fluctuations, and they process both L1 and L2 more automatically in the positive than negative mood. Men, on the other hand, seem to encounter cognitive difficulty when experiencing strong positive emotions, in both the context of their native and non-native language.

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