The Gender-Neutral Language Ideological Debate in Catalonia

Gender-neutral and gender-inclusive language proposals have flourished across a wide range of language communities around the world. Almost unavoidably, such proposals have been met with heated public debates about language. In this talk, I set out to do two things: first, I will provide an overview of a language ideological debate that has been unfolding in Catalonia since July 2021 on the question of gender-neutral and gender-inclusive language. I will present the terms in which the debate is structured, and the key actors involved in it. Building on the latter, I will then examine the central role of linguists in the very debate and in shaping the circulating discourses in it. This should allow for a closing discussion in which I open questions such as: what role should linguists play in these language ideological debates? How can we best contribute to advancing the knowledge by the general public of complex language related questions?

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