



Alessandro Devigus,
Dr. med. dent.
Editor-in-Chief

Old English had a system of grammatical gender similar to that of modern German, with three genders: masculine, feminine, and neuter. In modern English there is a movement toward a preference for gender-neutral language. So why should we care about the word tooth being female in French? Do teeth have a gender?

The results from studies that compare male and female tooth sizes and shapes are conflicting. It has been said that tooth forms might be determined by, among other things, gender, age, gingival arrangement, facial form, and even a person's emotions. Different studies have concluded that not even experts can determine gender by looking at a person's teeth alone, so it comes down to fitting the teeth to the individual's personality.¹ Perhaps patients feel that their teeth are too small for their face, and express it by saying their teeth look feminine, or if they are too large, they say they look masculine. In this context, the term 'smile design' has become very popular in dentistry in recent years. Different tools can assist dentists, laboratory technicians, and patients to find the best individual tooth match. But we have to be clear – a smile is an expression and cannot be designed. You can modify the soft and hard tissue involved in the anatomy and function of a smile but not its expression, which is genetically encoded. Recent studies have

Why a snail shell on the cover? The beauty of a winding staircase or the architecture of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum are felicitous examples of the transfer to art and technology of a helix that occurs in nature. These structures were inspired by the snail shell, with its spiralling calcareous walls. The size, morphology, and texture of the snail shell are specific to each species. Engaged with the mollusc's body through a pair of muscles, the shell provides housing and protection. Its helioid form is due to asymmetric growth during ontogenesis, with one side of the body evolving more rapidly and determining the winding of the hardening shell. Snails are capable of repairing lesions in

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Why is the word 'tooth' female in French?

In Switzerland we have four national languages. Recently, I asked a French-speaking patient whether he knew why the word tooth is female in his language. It is male in other European languages. He was not able to answer this question. In the old French, tooth was masculine, as in Latin, and it changed to being feminine in the 14th century.

their shells by depositing chalk from gland cells, forming patches of varying texture. Hence, every shell is of unique beauty, and it is for this reason we have featured a snail shell on our cover.

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shown that gender is encoded in the smile, and that a person's gender can be recognized by just looking at their smile.²

So, we can conclude that the smile has a gender, but not the teeth.

Enjoy reading.

Sincerely yours



This year, the European Academy of Esthetic Dentistry (EAED) organized the third photo contest, where all participants at the conference in May were invited to submit images related to dentistry without the need to follow any rules. After a pre-

References

1. Mahn E, Walls S, Jorquera G, Valdés AM, Val A, Sampaio CS. Prevalence of tooth forms and their gender correlation. *J Esthet Restor Dent* 2018;30:45–50. <http://doi.org/10.1111/jerd.12341>
2. Ugail H, Al-dahoud A. Is gender encoded in the smile? A computational framework for the analysis of the smile driven dynamic face for gender recognition. *The Visual Computer* 2018;34:1243–1254. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s00371-018-1494-x>

selection made by a jury, all the conference participants selected their best images. The photographs that won the first three places (printed in this issue) can also be seen online at: <http://munich.eaed.org/photo/>.

