Typologizing 'natural' gender in actual gender systems

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Out of 112 languages marking the property of grammatical gender in a sample of 257 languages (Corbett 2013), 84 present a system at least partially based on natural gender (what Corbett calls sex based systems). This means that most gender systems in languages of the world make some reference to 'natural' gender in their gender assignment rules.

This paper proposes a typological view of the relationship between 'natural' gender and grammatical gender. 'Natural' gender is not always apparent (only) in the grammatical gender system of a language: some languages make reference to it, outside the grammatical gender system if they have it (e.g. I'saka for object agreement on some verbs, Donohue & San Roque 2004) or if they do not mark any grammatical gender (e.g. Finnish agentive nouns marking the natural gender of the referent). This marking of 'natural' gender outside the grammatical gender system is interesting, in that it is often referred to as 'gender marking' in the descriptive literature, which is a source of confusion. There are obviously languages that do not make any reference to 'natural' gender in their grammatical gender system: these are most commonly based on features such as ±HUMAN or ±ANIMATE.

For languages assigning nouns to grammatical genders (partially) based on 'natural' gender semantics, there can be more than one dimension of analysis. The first one is directionality: if 'natural' gender predicts grammatical gender, is the reverse true as well? Thus in Tamil, only rational male entities are masculine (Corbett 1991), while in French many other concepts are also classified as masculine. The second one is symmetry: are both 'natural' genders symmetrical in their grammatical gender assignment. Thus in I'saka, there is an opposition between masculine and non-masculine, with no specific reference being made to female/feminine features (Donohue & San Roque 2004). The third dimension is completeness: does the natural gender feature assign all nouns to that grammatical gender. The fourth one is limitedness: are there many other gender categories, based on other semantic criteria or on formal criteria, or only broad categories based on 'natural' gender?

The last dimension to consider is limited to languages with sex based assignment for animates: it is the question of the threshold for sex-differentiability (Corbett 2013), i.e. for animals for example, which ones are included in a sex-based assignment system, and which are assigned without any reference to sex.

These criteria devise a typology of gender systems depending on the place that semantic assignment according to sex plays in the grammatical gender system of the language, and in the language more broadly outside the grammatical gender system.

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Animacy-based semantic agreement and the evolution of gender systems: a Bantu study

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Recent experimental studies (Vihman et al., 2018) show that animacy distinctions in noun class systems emerge in response to a learning bias and increase the learnability of such systems. This experimental evidence is paired by a wealth of historical-comparative data (Igartua, 2018; Seifart, 2018). In this paper, we investigate how animacy-based restructuring unfolds in gender systems and the non-linguistic factors that may favor this type of restructuring. Our focus is on the evolution of patterns of gender agreement in the Bantu language family. We present the results of two studies that are based on a sample of 179 northwestern Bantu (henceforth NWB) languages, and we also outline ongoing work aiming to expand this research to the entire Bantu family.

Study 1 (Di Garbo and Verkerk 2022) investigates the distribution of patterns of animacy-based agreement in the languages of the sample, and discusses how animacy-based agreement is related to the emergence of highly eroded systems of gender marking. We present a bottom-up typology of gender systems in NWB, which accounts for the distribution of animacy-based gender marking as opposed to lexically-specified gender. We argue that the different types of attested gender systems form a continuum and suggest that highly eroded gender systems could be explained as the result of the evolutionary dynamics by which animacy-based semantic agreement rises and spreads in more conservative languages.

In Study 2 (Verkerk and Di Garbo 2022), we investigate whether animacy-based agreement in NWB can be explained as a function of population history and language contact dynamics. In particular, we test whether highly eroded and/or semantically transparent gender systems are more common (1) in NWB languages of wider communication, (2) in areas in which NWB languages are in contact with non-Bantu groups (e.g. Ubangi and Central Sudanic) and/or (3) where language shift from indigenous non-Bantu languages is suspected to have occurred (i.e. the Central African rainforest). Our assumption is that animacy-based agreement is favored in contact situations by virtue of its higher learnability and semantic transparency.

To test these hypotheses, we build generalized linear mixed effects models (GLMMs) using the package brms (Bürkner, 2017) in R (R Core Team, 2019). We find that sharing a border with Ubangi and/or Central Sudanic and the number of L1 speakers, are the most relevant effects across different methods of genealogical control. These analyses match evidence from a qualitative investigation of the sociolinguistics of 17 NWB languages with highly eroded gender systems, whose social history is clearly shaped by contact with non-Bantu neighbors or by pidginization/creolization. To our knowledge, this is the first quantitative cross-linguistic study that confirms the oft-repeated claim (Trudgill, 1999) that situations of intense language contact or language shift favor the restructuring and erosion of grammatical gender, and that animacy distinctions are a likely blueprint for restructuring.

In future work, we aim to target the entire Bantu family, asking whether the patterns of contact-induced gender restructuring identified in NWB can be found in east and south Bantu, too. Special focus will be placed on comparing contact scenarios within Bantu and with non-Bantu languages via a combination of macro- and micro-level studies.

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Preconditions for non-binary agreement within the binary gender system of French
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This paper forms part of a collaborative research programme bringing rigorous analytic techniques from descriptive linguistics to the study of innovative GENDER-NEUTRAL, GENDER-INCLUSIVE and NON-BINARY forms in Romance languages. Linguistic scholarship has significant contributions to offer in this area, as shown by Bach & Esher (2023, under revision) for non-binary pronouns in French. Conducting a systematic examination of existing language structure allows us to pinpoint all and only functions which require novel forms, and identify the linguistic properties which characterise successful proposals. The findings inform the development of strategies which meet the needs of non-binary (e.g. AGENDER, GENDERFLUID, GENDERQUEER) speakers as well as of the wider speech community.

Here, I explore the extent of gender agreement phenomena in modern French and the characteristics of observed alternation patterns. Since early mediaeval times (Buridant 2019), French has had a grammatical gender system with two values traditionally termed MASCULINE and FEMININE. Gender is lexically stipulated for all nouns (CONTROLLERS, in the terms of Corbett 1991), while morphosyntactic TARGETS for agreement include determiners, quantifiers, adjectives and participles (Abeillé & Godard 2021). For human referents, there is broad correlation between grammatically masculine/feminine forms and individuals perceived as male/female respectively; correct gendering is perceived as a key aspect of politeness (Bach & Esher 2023, under revision, ms.). This inflectional, morphosyntactic and pragmatic context presents particular complexity for reference to non-binary individuals: correct gendering is essential, yet the language structure available to speakers in production and perception overwhelmingly instantiates a binary gender opposition.

In existing literature on non-binary reference in French, agreement receives less attention than pronominal forms (Mackenzie 2019, Swamy 2019, Lexie 2021:47-50), and discussion focuses on written language (Bolter 2019, Greco 2019); Alpheratz (2018) and Ashley (2019) are unusual in considering agreement in spoken language. The limited coverage is unlikely to reflect a lesser concern for agreement compared to pronouns: rather, the lack of emergent consensus or usage preferences hampers discussion. Responses to survey questions on non-binary speakers' agreement preferences (LVEQ 2018) reveal a wide range of strategies alongside awareness of practical difficulties in establishing distinctive non-binary forms.

I contextualise such responses within the morphological parameters of the existing system. For relevant word classes, due to historical phonology (Pope 1952), some lexical items exhibit syncretism between masculine and feminine forms for a given number value (e.g. *fermé* /fɛʁme/ 'close.PST.PTCP.M.SG', *fermée* /fɛʁme/ 'close.PST.PTCP.F.SG'), and require no new phonological forms (though orthographic forms may be needed), while others instantiate a binary contrast (e.g. *ouvert* /uvɛʁ/ 'open.PST.PTCP.M.SG' vs. *ouverte* /uvɛʁt/ 'open.PST.PTCP.F.SG') and require novel forms. The substance of alternation patterns affects how readily they can be adapted to a three-way gender contrast: some are based solely on minimal pairs (e.g. *sec* /sɛk/ 'dry.M.SG' vs. *sèche* /sɛʃ/ 'dry.F.SG'), while others involve contrast between presence and absence of phonological material (as in /uvɛʁ/ vs. /uvɛʁt/), and some combine both strategies (e.g. *familier* /familje/ 'familiar.M.SG' vs. *familière* /familjɛʁ/ 'familiar.F.SG'). I further highlight the role of analysability (Blevins 2016), type frequency and phonological naturalness for the persistence and productivity of morphological patterns (Hay & Baayen 2003, Baayen 2009, Fernández-Domínguez 2010, Maiden 2011, 2013).

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Natural and grammatical gender: mappings and mismatches in New Guinea languages

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Many New Guinea languages have familiar-looking grammatical gender systems with MASCULINE and FEMININE values, but they can show interesting and unfamiliar mappings and mismatches between natural and grammatical gender.

In a gender system, canonically, each noun has a single gender value (Corbett & Fedden 2016: 495). In Mian (Trans New Guinea, Ok; Fedden 2011; Corbett, Fedden & Finkel 2017; Allassonière-Tang, Fedden & Brown 2021) gender assignment is generally fixed for humans and inanimates, but there is variable assignment for large animals, e.g., *éil=e* [pig=SG.M] 'the boar', *éil=o* [pig=SG.F] 'the sow'. Speakers are aware of gender distinctions and refer to the values MASCULINE and FEMININE using the terms *naka* 'man' and *unáng* 'woman'. Another example of a language with fixed assignment is Kuot (Lindström 2002).

There are intriguing cases of New Guinea gender systems that deviate from the canonical ideal in that they allow assignment of gender on a pragmatic basis. Manambu (Sepik; Aikhenvald 2012) has MASCULINE and FEMININE gender values. Most nouns can be assigned the other gender in the right context. For humans, gender is assigned according to sex. Genders are strongly associated with size (large > MASCULINE, small > FEMININE) and shape (long > MASCULINE, round > FEMININE). Gender assignment is related to social stereotypes. The noun *du* 'man' can be used with feminine agreements if the referent has characteristics stereotypically associated with women, in (1). The converse is possible for a large, boisterous or bossy woman.

> Manambu (Aikhenvald 2012: 54)

(1) kə numa du
    this.F.SG big.F.SG man
    'this smallish, fat or woman-like man'

For similar systems in the Sepik languages Alamblak and Iatmul, see Bruce (1984) and Jendraschek (2012), respectively.

Grammatical gender is not the only type of classification system showing a connection to ideas about gender roles. A range of New Guinea languages (mainly, but not exclusively from the Trans New Guinea family) show a covert classification system in which posture verbs, usually 'stand', 'sit' or 'lie', grammaticalized into existential verbs which partition the concrete nominal vocabulary. Whenever speakers of Enga (Lang 1975) and Ku Waru (Rumsey 2002) want to predicate the existence of a concrete entity they need to choose the correct existential verb, e.g., men and trees are 'standing', women and possums are 'sitting'. The association with women as 'sitting', i.e., more passive than men, is a social stereotype, which is reflected in the way people move and behave (Rumsey 2002: 186-7).

Enga is strict in its classification. In Lang's (1975:149-155) list of 240 nouns, only ten allow multiple classification (approximately 4%). In Ku Waru, many more nouns allow choice of verb (Rumsey 2002:192).

Due to their immense diversity New Guinea languages are important for linguistic typology. In the area of nominal classification, they exhibit to a large extent systems that – although superficially similar – are fundamentally distinct from the familiar European gender systems in that the relation between natural and grammatical gender is more fluid. This reminds us that we need flexible typologies to model the various dimensions that make up a linguistic phenomenon.

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Grammatical vs. natural gender in Italian participle agreement with polite pronouns: an experimental approach

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With this talk we account for the mismatch of grammatical and natural gender in Italian past participle agreement (IPPA) in combination with polite pronouns, presenting the quantitative findings of a pilot study and a follow-up study.

While IPPA has been studied from a theoretical as well as from an empirical perspective (see Hall 1958, Brinker 1984, among others), fine-tuned research on IPPA in politeness context is lacking and very much divided (see Reumuth & Winkelmann 1999, Maiden & Robustelli 2013). By building upon this instance Gaglia (2023) operationalized an online acceptability judgment task on Labvanced which showed that more than 50% of the informants recruited (n=97 L1-speakers of Italian) are more likely to evaluate the grammatical agreement between past participle and polite pronoun as the sole viable choice (see 1a). However 44% agree that the natural gender agreement (see 1b) is equally or mutually acceptable.

(1) a.   Signor Marchetti,   l(a)'   ho   vista   ieri.
Mr Marchetti,   DO.CL.3SG.**F**(POL)   have   see.PP-SG.**F**   yesterday
'Mr Marchetti, I saw you yesterday.'
→   IPPA with the grammatical gender of the feminine direct object clitic (polite clitic)

b.   Signor Marchetti,   l(a)'   ho   visto   ieri.
Mr Marchetti,   DO.CL.3SG.**F**(POL)   have   see.PP-SG.**M**   yesterday
'Mr Marchetti, I saw you yesterday.'
→   IPPA with the natural gender of the male addressee

The aim of the follow-up study is to expand on these insights and provide a more accurate depiction of IPPA in politeness on statistical grounds. Through an acceptability study deployed online on Labvanced, Italian native speakers will be evaluating four different types of constructions:

- direct object clitic *la* (both elided and not; see 1a and 1b)
- sequence of two past participle forms (2a)
- explicit direct objects (2b)
- passive constructions with ESSERE (2c)

(2) a.   Signor Marchetti,   l(a)'   ho   sentita   / sentito
Mr Marchetti,   DO.CL.3SG.**F**(POL)   have   hear.PP-SG.**F**   / hear.PP-SG.**M**
preoccupata   / preoccupato.
concerned.PP-SG.**F**   / concerned.PP-SG.**M**
'Mr Marchetti, I felt that you were concerned.

b.   Signor Marchetti,   ha   visto   / viste   le foto?
Mr Marchetti,   have   see.PP-**SG.M**   / see.PP-**PL.F**   the pictures.ACC-PL.F
'Mr Marchetti, have you seen the pictures?'

c.   Signor Marchetti,   è   stata   / stato   arrestata
Mr Marchetti,   be   be.PP-SG.**F**   / be.PP-SG.**M**   arrested.PP-SG.**F**
/ arrestato   ieri?
/ arrested.PP-SG.**M**   yesterday
'Mr Marchetti, have you been arrested yesterday?'

To avoid confounder effects we control for:
- syntax and illocution type
- frequency of the main verbs

- natural gender of the addressee
- allocutive forms
- presence of polite personal pronoun *Lei*
- grammatical gender, number and inflectional ending of the explicit direct objects

We expect to find robust evidence on the oscillation of the IPPA matching the natural gender of the addressee or the grammatical gender and number of the explict direct objects and/or pronoun.
In line with Gaglia (2023) we reckon not to ascertain any variation linked to the geographical distribution of the informants. We do however hypothize a correlation between IPPA and the allocutive form given by the activation of a more prescriptive register.

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Abstract Gheno

"We don't need no other genders": Italian language and the ongoing discussion on inclusive language

Italian is a language with a binary grammatical gender; such a linguistic structure is clearly not welcoming to those who do not identify as male or female. Consequently, this language has lately witnessed a plethora of non-systematized experimental linguistic solutions, initially used only inside queer communities, as well as the emergence of a front that opposes these changes in the name of their presumed uselessness, of the danger that they would represent for the emergence of the female gender and of their impossibility to permanently enter the language system. What is the value of these experiments, and what can we learn from them?

A gender-blind French for both natural and grammatical gender

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Following the growing philosophical queer and non-binary identifications in contemporary Western societies, the need to create an epicene way of speaking and writing has been addressed in the French non-binary community (Livia 2001; Coutant et al. 2015; Ashley 2019; Swamy & Mackenzie 2022). This linguistic strategy deals not only with *natural gender*, but also with *grammatical gender*, as French has a grammatical gender system that matches a sex classification for people. This strategy is obstructed at different levels, the most conspicuous being that the epicene strategy is confused with the so-called and already well adopted *inclusive* feminist strategy (partial or complete duplication of words, feminization of job names). The inclusive strategy, which tries to equal both linguistic genders to counter the mental invisibility of female-assigned subjects (Gygax et al. 2012; Gygax et al. 2021), has an important side-effect: it makes natural gender in French even more salient (Michard 1991; Wittig 2010). In this way, it opposes the epicene/non-binary strategy in its aims to get rid of the female/male classification. Those divergent policies are largely responsible for the epicene strategy actually lacking coherence and compactness for French.

The epicene strategy requires epicenizing gendered words at the lexical and at the grammatical level: it has been done for English (Barron 2020), but only in partial or convoluted ways for French (Borde 2016; Alpheratz 2018). We propose a systematic and consistent solution for French using a device already present in Romance languages: vocalic alternation in final position (Marsolier et al. to appear). In French, derived forms of nouns, along with inflected forms of adjectives and determinants, among others, can generally be schematized in the singular as: feminine form = lexical base + e, masculine form = lexical base + ø. To these two forms, a third, gender-blind (GB) form is added = lexical base + i. Taking 'a candidate' as an example, this results in: 'une candidate' (a.F candidate.F), 'un candidat' (a.M candidate.M), 'uni candidati' (a.GB candidate.GB). Such a solution is theoretically different from the so-called inclusive writing adopted academically in France. It also diverges from the existing non-binary solutions. First, it is applicable in both writing and speaking, and second, it is extremely compact, as it can be summarized in one concept: changing the -e of feminine forms to -i.

Three experiments have been conducted to evaluate this system. First, texts from different genres (job descriptions, law texts, experiment forms, newspapers, etc.) have been analyzed to quantify the percentage of words that would need to be changed based on the gender-blind system. The results show that in all cases less than 5% of the text would need to be changed. Second, preliminary online tests designed with PsychoPy have been conducted with thirty participants. The results indicate that a brief learning phase of around five minutes leads to remarkably high accuracy rates (more than 85%). Third, we are developing a software that automatically converts texts to the gender-blind speech of our system. It will be deployed in collaboration with the ORTOLANG infrastructure (Tools and Resources for Optimized Language Processing, https://www.ortolang.fr).

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Gender-denoting patterns of word formation in Italo-Romance

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This paper investigates mapping and mismatches between grammatical and 'natural' gender both in the lexicon and in usage in some key Italo-Romance non-standard varieties.

First, I conduct a dictionary analysis in order to explore how 'gender'-denoting patterns of word formation are represented in dictionaries, whether feminine forms of profession nouns are included (e.g., 'mayor', 'minister', 'doctor'), and which devices are attested. See Rohlfs (1969) for word formation in Italian and Italian dialects, Thornton (2004) for a full account of the different types of gender-denoting patterns of word formation in Italian and Rainer (2020) for an overview of these in the Romance languages. A major point of interest concerns whether changes in the patterns can be observed due to disruptive factors such as contact with Standard Italian and external changes. In a further step, I complement the forms which are included in dictionaries with elicited information and explore whether profession nouns are different depending on the social and professional prestige of the profession, e.g., whether 'director(F)', 'rector(F)' are expressed with the suffix -*tora* typical of non-standard varieties, or with the suffix -*trice*, borrowed from Italian.

In the second part, an analysis of elicited and spontaneous data is conducted to describe the use of profession nouns, many of which are lexical hybrids (Corbett 1991, 2015; Loporcaro 2018). A central question is to what extent these are constrained by the Agreement Hierarchy (cf. Corbett 2022). The examples in (1) illustrate the responses reported in 'The Zurich database of agreement in Italo-Romance' (DAI) given by four speakers of Agnonese (Molise) asked to translate the sentence 'The mayor [woman] has gone on holiday for two weeks'.

(1) a. DiDM (b.1994)

la	**sənəchéssa**	/	***la**	**sinəchə**	sə=	n'=	é	**ìuta**
DEF.F.SG	mayor(F).SG		DEF.F.SG	mayor(F).SG	REFL		is	go.PTCP.F.SG
n	vacanza	(pə)	ddu		səttəmmèanə			
in	holiday	for	two		weeks			

b. EsCa (b.1975)

ru	**sinəchə**	sə=	n'=	é	**ìuta**/ ?-ə		//
DEF.M.SG	mayor(M).SG	REFL		is	go.PTCP.F.SG / -M.SG		
la	**sindaca**	sə=	n'=	é	**ìuta**	...	
DEF.F.SG	mayor(F).SG	REFL		is	go.PTCP.F.SG		

c. FaSc (b.1989)

la	**sindaca**	é	**ìuta**	...
DEF.F.SG	mayor(F).SG	is	go.PTCP.F.SG	

d. MiSc (b.1963)

ru	**sinəchə**	é	**ìutə** / *-a	...
DEF.M.SG	mayor(M).SG	is	go.PTCP.M.SG / -F.SG	

These data illustrate the variation in referring to a woman serving as 'mayor', including derived forms as in (a, b, c), a lexical hybrid (b), and a masculine noun with a mismatch between grammatical and natural gender (d). Finally, particular emphasis is given to data and judgements on conjoined noun phrases, and to the possibilities of resolution, allowing us to identify the importance of semantic vs. syntactic factors.

The key varieties under investigation have been selected according to the following parameters: (i) representativity of different two- (masculine and feminine), three- (masculine, feminine and neuter) and four-value gender systems (masculine, feminine, neuter, and non-autonomous neuter); (ii) different language-specific linguistic properties; (iii) availability of a

fairly recent dialectal dictionary; (iv) availability of a (comparable) corpus of elicited and spontaneous data such as DAI.

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The (discourse) semantics of gender and R-loci in German and German Sign Language
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In this presentation, I propose a unified analysis of spatial referential loci (R-loci) in German Sign Language (DGS) and grammatical gender in German within a modified version of Discourse Representation Theory (DRT). The core idea of this approach is that spoken and sign languages use similar strategies to distinguish discourse referents (DRs) in the discourse semantic representation. However, while sign languages make full use of the expressive power of the three-dimensional signing space, spoken languages are limited to fixed set of morphological markers such as gender.

Example (1) illustrates a typical strategy to introduce new DRs in DGS with the IX sign, which overtly localizes a DR in a specific area of the signing space. In the first sentence, the first DR is linked to the ipsilateral area (glossed as IL) and the second DR to the contralateral area (glossed as CL). Crucially, the pronominal IX in the second sentence singles out the ipsilateral area of the signing space thus unambiguously establishing an anaphoric link to the first DR.

(1) P-E-T-E-R IX$_{IL}$ J-O-H-N INDEX$_{CL}$ LOVE. IX$_{IL}$ LAUGH.
     'Peter loves John. He (i.e. Peter) is laughing.'

While at first glance, spoken languages, unlike sign languages, face a huge ambiguity issue, the situation is ameliorated by gender (or more general noun class) distinctions found in many spoken languages. For instance, while the German translation of (1) remains ambiguous, sentence (2) with a similar structure is non-ambiguous due to the MASC feature on the pronoun.

(2) Der^{MASC} Roman^{MASC} liegt auf der^{FEM} Couch^{FEM}. Er^{MASC} war teuer.
     'The book is on the couch. It (i.e. the book) was expensive.'

The two examples illustrate that the discourse semantic function of R-loci in DGS and gender in German seems to be the same: Both contribute to anaphoric disambiguation. Interestingly, the morphosyntactic realization of R-loci in DGS and gender in German also shows some similarities. On the one hand, determiners like *der* and the IX sign can be used as pronominal elements. On the other hand, both have a similar morphological structure (IX$_{IL}$ → IX + IL / IX$_{CL}$ → IX + CL; der → d + er / die → d + ie / das → d + as)). Note finally, that both, gender and R-loci can be shifted in discourse as illustrated in (3) for German. In the subsequent sentence, the neuter Antecedent *das Mädchen* cannot only be picked up with the corresponding neuter pronoun *es* but also with the feminine pronoun *sie* referring back to the 'natural' gender of *Mädchen*. In this example, the gender feature relevant in discourse shifts from the grammatical to the natural gender.

(3) Ein Mädchen$_1$ steht vor dem Tor.   Es   / Sie$_1$ ist müde.
      A^{NEUTR} girl   stands in-front-of the gate.   PRO^{NEUTR} / PRO^{FEM} is tired

I argue that an unified cross-modal analysis of both, gender and R-loci contributes to a better understanding of both phenomena and thereby of the (discourse) semantic function of R-loci and gender in general. In addition, the unified DRT analysis also accounts for cases of gender shift in German as illustrated in (3) and corresponding shifts of R-loci in DGS. I propose a general explanation for such shifts which uses the assumption that in certain contexts, DRs have a tendency to shift towards a slot of DRs under which the referent is most naturally stored in the mental representation of meaning at the given discourse state.

A sociolinguistic investigation into referential means in German using feminine epicene nouns in comparison with masculine generic nouns

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For role and profession nouns, both stereotypical socio-semantic content and grammatical gender category serve as cues for construction of socio-cultural genders of humans across languages. Epicenes are nouns that have only one grammatical form to refer to individuals of any socio-cultural gender (feminine, masculine, diverse), e.g. *chairperson* (instead of "chairman") or *firefighter* (instead of "fireman") in English. In German, many epicene nouns that denote social roles and professions have a feminine grammatical form (Gygax et al. 2008, Irmen and Roßberg 2004, Klein 2022), such as *die Rettungskraft* "the emergency worker (fem.)" and *die Kontaktperson* "the contact person (fem.)" providing a fascinating insight into a topic with high social relevance (Kotthoff and Nübling 2018, Löhr 2022, Motschenbacher 2010, Nübling 2020).

We conducted a sociolinguistic investigation into the referential means used with German epicene nouns denoting social roles and professions (e.g. *die Lehrkraft* "the teacher (fem.)") and compared them with so-called "generic" masculine terms for these occupations (e.g. *der Lehrer* "the teacher (masc.)". The stimulus sentences were constructed to elicit pronominal reference to the presented roles and professions, aiming to collect the means of reference chosen by the participants. The analysis of responses showed the effect of both grammatical gender and the noun's gender typicality. The survey was completed by 99 German-speaking participants aged 18-70 with various gender identities (feminine, masculine, diverse). The participants' gender identity, LGBT*QIA+ adjacency (belonging, close, distant to the community) and age (younger to older generations, with a mean age of 34) proved a significant factor influencing gender typicality ratings of social role and profession nouns.

The results showed that the use of referential means differs across grammatical genders and socio-cultural gender cues as well as across various demographics. Thus, grammatically masculine nouns were almost exclusively referred to with masculine pronouns. By contrast, grammatically feminine (epicene) nouns yielded a higher proportion of inclusive means of reference that could pertain to

referents of any socio-cultural gender. For example, the feminine epicene nouns ending in *-kraft*, *-person* and *-hilfe*, such as *die Lehrkraft* "the teacher (fem.)", *die Kontaktperson* "the contact person (fem.)" and *die Haushaltshilfe* "the household help (fem.)", better enhanced the visibility of women and people of diverse genders compared with their masculine counterparts, such as *der Lehrer* "the teacher (masc.)", *der Kontakt* "the contact (person) (masc.)" and *der Haushälter* "the housekeeper (masc.)".

We therefore conclude that grammatically feminine epicene nouns are more appropriate to use as gender-inclusive and by extension as gender-fair language forms in German, in contrast to their masculine counterparts traditionally termed "generic" in the language – but which are in fact language forms with inherent male biases, as this study illustrates, and thus to be avoided in German gender-equality policy making.

Key words: epicene nouns, gender bias, gender-fair language, gender-inclusive forms, generic masculine, grammatical gender, German, referential means, role and profession nouns, typicality ratings, language attitudes

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Gender in Kambaata (Cushitic)

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Kambaata, like most Cushitic languages, has two grammatical genders: masculine vs. feminine. I first present an overview of Kambaata's gender assignment principles and the formal realization of gender across different constituents of the clause. Then I focus on cases of gender mismatch in which agreeing/indexing elements mirror the semantic rather than the grammatical gender of a constituent.

Nouns denoting male referents (humans, higher animals) are generally assigned to the masculine gender and nouns denoting female referents to the feminine gender. The nouns *sa'-á* (M.ACC) 'cow' and *meent-ú* (M.ACC) 'women' are exceptions to this rule. Nouns denoting lower animals, plants, objects and abstract concepts are arbitrarily distributed across the two genders; see *goda'-á* (M.ACC) 'vertical poles (of house wall)' – *meeggar-úta* (F.ACC) 'horizontal poles (of house wall)'.

Nominal roots are bound, and nouns are minimally inflected for case and gender, which are co-expressed by portmanteau morphemes. Nouns fall into 12 masculine and 9 feminine declensions. The nominal gender system is, for the most part, overt, and feminine nouns generally end in -V(V)*ta* in their citation form. In a system of nine cases, feminine nouns systematically neutralize the distinction between the instrumental and locative case, while these are formally separate in all masculine declensions. The inherent gender of a nominal root can be overruled by derivational morphology with a fixed gender value, e.g. the associative and two (of three) plurative derivations are inherently feminine: *Handeebo-'-óota* (H.-ASSOC-F.ACC) 'Handeebo and others', *jaal-l-áta* (friend-PLV1-F.ACC) 'friends', *ann-aakk-áta* (father-PLV2-F.ACC) 'fathers'.

Agreement on nominal modifiers is strictly determined by the grammatical gender of the head and not impacted by its semantic gender: *tá oos-úta* (this.F.ACC children-F.ACC) 'these children', *tá boor-r-áta* (that.F.ACC bull-PLV1-F.ACC) 'these bulls', *ká meent-ú* (this.M.ACC women-M.ACC) 'these women'. Outside the NP, the rules are not as steadfast, as shown in the second part of the paper. Verbs obligatorily index person (1/2/3), (2nd/3rd person:) number, (3rd person:) gender and social status of the subject. In the third person, a masculine, a feminine and a (gender-independent) honorific form are distinguished:

Personal pronoun		Subject-indexing imperfective verb of *mar-* 'go'		
3M	*ís*	3M	*mar-áno*	'he goes'
3F	*íse*	3F=3PL	*mar-táa'u*	'she goes/they go'
3PL	*isso'óot*			
3HON	*íssa*	3HON	*mar-éenno*	's/he (honorific) goes'

A commonly observed gender mismatch concerns semantically plural but grammatically masculine nouns, e.g. *méent-u* (women-M.NOM) 'women' and *nubáab-u* (elders-M.NOM) 'elders'. As subjects, these nouns usually trigger a feminine rather than a masculine verb form. In Kambaata, there is a strong link between plurality and feminine gender, which is seen, among others, in the feminine verb form that the plural personal pronoun *isso'óot* (3PL.NOM) 'they' triggers and in the feminine gender value of the two most frequent plurative markers (see above). In a case study of *sa'-á* 'cow' (semantically feminine, grammatically masculine) and selected semantically plural but grammatically masculine nouns, I examine which possessor pronouns (M vs. F vs. PL), which verb forms (M vs. F) and which copulas (M vs. F) they trigger in a natural speech corpus.

Gender as a parasitic grammatical category type: evidence from person name marker gender languages

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This paper argues that the tension between grammatical and natural gender is due to the parasitic grammatical character of gender. Gender usually cumulates with other grammatical categories such as number, person, case and definiteness, and where it does not, gender marking is less obligatory (Wälchli & Di Garbo 2019: 307). Put differently, there is no such thing as grammatical gender systems. Where gender is grammatical, it is part of systems based on other grammatical category types.

Here I will pick up four cases of "non-canonical" gender which have in common that female and male person names are very important gender triggers ("person name marker gender"): (i) Itzá and Mopán Maya (Mayan), (ii) Amri Karbi (Sino-Tibetan), (ii) Kahua and Owa (Austronesian) and (iv) Nalca (Mek, perhaps Trans New Guinea). In these languages, gender agreement is also highly limited and local; gender agreement targets are usually immediately adjacent to the gender triggering word or phrase. In these four cases, the emergence of grammatical gender can also be reconstructed diachronically at least to some extent.

The Core Mayan morphemes *7aj= 'male' and *7ix= 'female' have two disconnected major functions: (i) person name marker and (ii) agentive nouns (also extending to some animal and plant names). They are well preserved only in few Mayan languages, but in Itzá and Mopán Maya they are partly integrated into the article system. *Aj* and *ix* continue to have agentive derivational function, but are now privileged by virtue of their integration into a grammatical system which enables them to mutate to rather opaque gender markers.

Many Tibeto-Burman languages have derivational suffixes with a wide range of uses related to the words for 'father', 'mother' and 'child'. This is also holds for Hills Karbi. In closely related Amri Karbi, however, the derivational suffixes have undergone degrammaticalization to definiteness markers placed at the end of noun phrases, and this is how grammatical gender emerges.

As many Oceanic (and other Austronesian) languages, Kahua and Owa (neighbors on the island of Makira) have proprial articles: person name markers integrated into the article system. Kahua and Owa develop a further distinction between male and female person name markers and further complications arise because the feminine marker is bound whereas the other articles are not.

In Nalca, gender is intimately connected to case. With few exceptions, case can only be expressed if gender is expressed as well. The only gender target is a postposition-like case marker word, and what is an invariant comitative postposition *ab* 'with' in other Mek languages, has turned into *be-b* masculine, *ge-b* feminine, *ne-b* short-word, *e-b* default noun, *a-b* default phrase and *da-b* coordination gender.

All case studies have in common that complexity increases as gender marking is integrated into some sort of preexisting grammatical system.

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Social gender and the structure of the French derivation system
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French feminine agent noun forming suffixes -euse (e.g. serveuse 'female server') and -rice (e.g. lectrice 'female reader') have been documented to differ in meaning, with -euse more readily conveying negative gender stereotypes. In this paper we investigate the extent to which this difference follows from a more general distinction valid across the morphological system between learnèd and nonlearnèd word formation. We use methods from distributional semantics to compare feminine agent nouns, masculine agent nouns, and action nouns, in terms of their formation type. On the one hand, a classification task shows that the distributional cues distinguishing learnèd and nonlearnèd formations are valid accross the three morphosemantic categories. On the other hand, a qualitative investigation of the distributional vector space shows that the distinction implements contrasting semantic differences, related to the interaction of axiological valence and gender stereotypes.