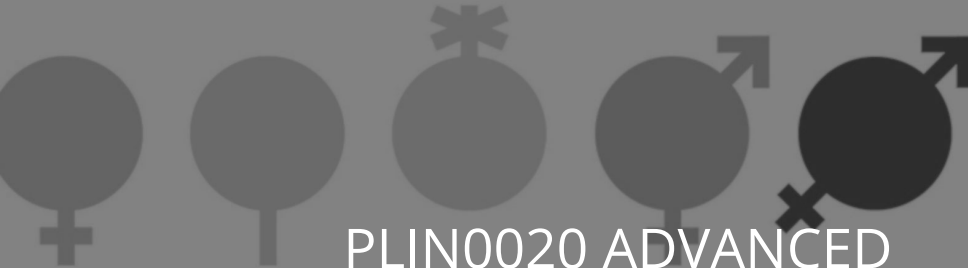# GENDER

PLIN0020 ADVANCED SEMANTIC THEORY

GENDER AGREEMENT

Modern Greek

o νεαρός άνδρας
o nearos andras
the.m young.m man
'the young man'

η νεαρή γυναίκα
i neari gineka
the.f young.f woman
'the young woman'

το νεαρό παιδί
to nearo pedhi
the.n young.n child
'the young child'

Russian

один новый дом
odin novyj dom
one.m new.m house
'one new house'

одна новая книга
odna novaja kniga
one.f new.f book
'one new book'

одно новое письмо
odno novoe pis'mo
one.n new.n letter
'one new letter'

GENDER AS AGREEMENT

> If different nouns require different forms of determiners, adjectives, predicates, etc. then they have different genders (controlling for number, definiteness, etc.)

Greek, Russian, German have three genders.

Dutch, Danish, French, and Italian have two genders.

Zande (Niger-Congo) has four genders.
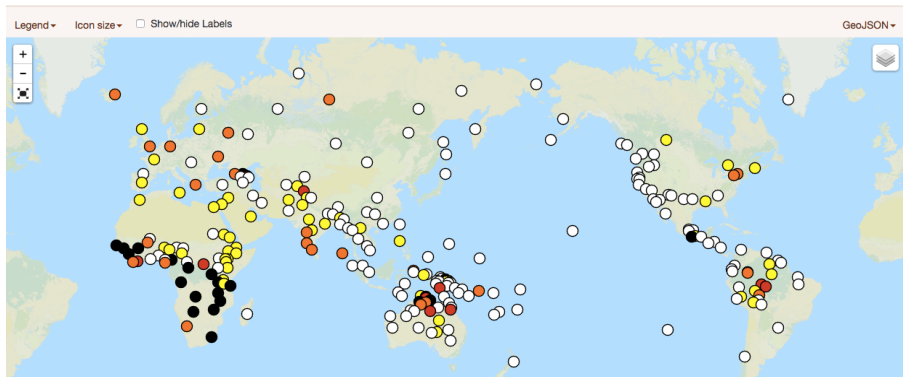
CROSS-LINGUISTIC VARIATION

his feature is described in the text of chapter 30 [Number of Genders] by Greville G. Corbett [cite]

ou may combine this feature with another one. Start typing the feature name or number in the field below.

× 30A: Number of Genders [Submit]

○	None	145
○	Two	50
●	Three	26
●	Four	12
●	Five or more	24

Legend ▾   Icon size ▾   ☐ Show/hide Labels   GeoJSON ▾

COMMON EXPONENTS

- ‣ Determiners/articles
- ‣ Adjectives
- ‣ Numerals
- ‣ Demonstratives
- ‣ Possessives
- ‣ Verbs
- ‣ Participles
- ‣ Relative pronouns

See Corbett (1991: Ch.5) for data

EX. RUSSIAN

a. **тот**   журнал   лежащ**ий** на столе
   tot   žurnal   ležašč**ij**   on table
   that.m magazine lying.m   on table
   'that magazine lying on the table'

b. **та**   книга лежащ**ая** на столе
   ta   kniga ležašč**aja** on table
   that.f book   lying.f   on table
   'that book lying on the table'

c. **то**   письмо лежащ**ее** на столе
   to   pis'mo ležašč**ee** on table
   that.n letter   lying.n   on table
   'that letter lying on the table'

MORE EXOTIC EXPONENTS OF GENDER

Adverbial Agr in Lak

k'i-**j**-a ars ša-**w**-a   ∅-ušar.
two.I son at.home.I I-be
'Two sons are at home.'

Postpositional Agr in Abkhaz

Àxra **yə**-zè
Axra 3sg.human.m-for
'for Axra'

C Agr in West Flemish

a. ... **dase** (zie) komt
      that (she) komt
b. ... **dat** (et) komt
      that (it) comes

(Corbett 1991:113)

WHAT IS NOT GENDER

If we include 'pronominal agreement' in the definition of gender, English will have multiple genders.

    a. Each **boy** painted *her/**his** room.
    b. Each **girl** painted **her**/*his room.

Corbett (1991:135) stresses that classifiers in Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, etc. are not gender agreement.

    hana   go   rin/*too/*hai
    flower five CL
    'five flowers'

GENDER VS. INFLECTION CLASSES

It is important to distinguish gender and **inflection/declension class**.

Inflection classes are defined by inflectional patterns of nouns. Gender is defined in terms of agreement.

Gender and inflection classes often show correlations, but usually there are (many) exceptions.

See Ralli (2002), Alexiadou (2004), Lowenstamm (2012), Fathi & Lowenstamm (2016)

EX. RUSSIAN

		I	II	III	IV
Sg.	Nominative	zakon	škola	kosť	vino
	Accusative	zakon	školu	kosť	vino
	Genitive	zakona	školy	kosti	vina
	Dative	zakonu	škole	kosti	vinu
	Instrumental	zakonom	školoj	kosťju	vinom
	Locative	zakone	škole	kosti	vine
Pl.	Nominative	zakony	školy	kosti	vina
	Accusative	zakony	školy	kosti	vina
	Genitive	zakonov	škol	kostej	vin
	Dative	zakonam	školam	kostjam	vinam
	Instrumental	zakonami	školami	kostjami	vinami
	Locative	zakonax	školax	kostjax	vinax
		'law'	'school'	'bone'	'wine'

EX. RUSSIAN (CONT.)

Correlations:

‣ Most nouns in Class I are masculine.
‣ Most nouns in Classes II and III are feminine.
‣ Most nouns in Class IV are neuter.

However, there are some discrepancies:

‣ *Дядя (djadja)* 'uncle' and *дедушка (deduška)* 'grandfather' are Class II nouns, but they are masculine.
‣ *Путь (put')* 'way' is a Class III noun but is masculine.
‣ *Врач (vrač)* 'doctor' is a Class I noun, but when it denotes a female doctor, its gender (optionally) becomes feminine.

DERIVATIONAL MORPHOLOGY AND GENDER

Some affixes in German determine gender (Corbett 1991:49f):

-ung, -heit, -erei, -schaft, -keit	→	feminine
diminutive suffixes *-lein, -chen*	→	neuter
collective prefix *ge-*	→	neuter

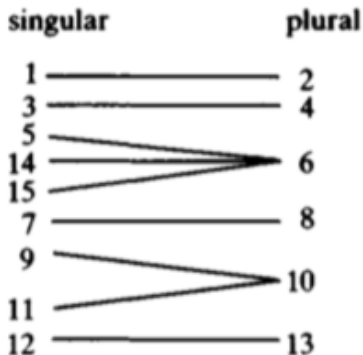e.g. *Strauch* 'bush' (masculine) → *Gesträuch* 'shrubbery' (neuter)

Greek derivational affixes that determine gender (Ralli 2002):

-tis, -mos	→	masculine
deverbal *-ia, -isa*	→	feminine
-ma, -aki	→	neuter

GENDER AND NUMBER: BANTU

The Bantu language family has 22 noun classes/genders across languages, but each of them has between 10-20.

Number is part of this system. E.g. Chibemba

(Corbett 1991: 156)

bărbatul e bun-∅.
man.the is good
'The man is good.'

bărbații sînt bun-**i**.
men.the are good
'The men are good.'

scaunul   e bun-∅.
chair.the is good
'The chair is good.'

scaunele sînt bun-**e**.
chairs.the are good
'The chairs are good.'

fata   e bun-**ă**
girl.the is good
'The girl is good.'

fetele   sînt bun-**e**
girls.the are good
'The girls are good.'

(Corbett 1991: 150f)

SEMANTICS OF GENDER

SEMANTIC TRANSPARENCY: TAMIL

▸ Nouns denoting male humans and gods are masculine.
▸ Nouns denoting female humans and gods are feminine.
▸ Other nouns (including animal nouns) are neuter.

Gender	Examples	
masculine	aaɲ	'man'
	civaɴ	'Shiva'
feminine	peɲ	'woman'
	kaaɭ	'Kali'
neuter	maram	'tree'
	viiʈu	'house'

(Corbett 1991:9)

Very few exceptions, and semantically systematic (e.g. heavenly bodies are masc.).

GRAMMATICAL GENDER

Some languages have nouns whose gender cannot be
predicted by the meaning (**grammatical gender**).

Russian (Corbett 1991:35)

Masculine		Feminine		Neuter	
žurnal	'magazine'	gazeta	'newspaper'	pis'mo	'letter'
dom	'house'	škola	'school'	zdanie	'building'
čaj	'tea'	voda	'water'	vino	'wine'
avtomobil'	'car'	mašina	'car'	taksi	'taxi'
večer	'evening'	noč'	'night'	utro	'morning'
flag	'flag'	emblema	'emblem'	znamja	'banner'
zakon	'law'	glastnost	'openness'	doverie	'trust'

French (Fathi & Lowenstamm 2016:(2))

Masculine		Feminine	
soleil	'sun'	lune	'moon'
toit	'roof'	porte	'door'
clou	'nail'	vis	'screw'
pied	'foot'	main	'hand'
sable	'sand'	terre	'dirt'
océan	'ocean'	mer	'sea'
jour	'day'	nuit	'night'
sang	'blood'	lymphe	'lymph'
fleuve	'stream'	rivière	'river'
jus	'juice'	sauce	'sauce'

ANIMATE NOUNS WITH GRAMM. GENDER

Languages have grammatical gender among human and animal denoting nouns too.

E.g.

French: *personne, victime, sentinelle*

Italian: *persona, vittima, sentinella, guardia*

Greek:

κορίτσι	koritsi	'girl'
αγόρι	agori	'boy'
παιδί	pedhi	'child'
μέλος	melos	'member'

See Spathas & Sudo (to appear) for animal nouns in Greek.

NATURAL VS. GRAMMATICAL GENDER

Every language with multiple genders has nouns with semantically interpreted gender (**natural gender**):

[A purely formal] system is not found in any natural language: gender always has a basis in semantics. Furthermore, when semantic and formal criteria are both involved in gender assignment, they always overlap to some extent.

(Corbett 1991:63)

TYPES OF NATURAL GENDER

‣ Independent masculine-feminine forms:
  e.g. *brother-sister*

‣ Related masculine-feminine forms:
  e.g. *αδερφός* adherfos (brother)-*αδερφή* adherfi (sister) in Greek, *waiter-waitress* in English

‣ One form that is compatible with multiple genders (**epicene nouns**):
  e.g. *врач vrač (doctor)* in Russian (for some speakers)
       γιατρός jiatros (doctor) in Greek

  (NB: Epicene nouns are different from gender-invariant nouns whose agreement is constant.)

MORPHOLOGICAL MARKEDNESS

In Indo-European languages, masculine is *less marked* relative to feminine.

Feminine forms are often morphologically more complex:

French

Masculine	Feminine	
/etydiã/	/etydiãt/	'student'
/ʒapɔnɛ/	/ʒapɔnɛz/	'Japanese'
/ša/	/šæt/	'cat'
/læpɛ̃/	/læpin/	'rabbit'
/ʁənæʁ/	/ʁənæʁd/	'fox'
/ljõ/	/ljɔn/	'lion'
/lu/	/luv/	'wolf'

German		(Bobaljik & Zocca 2003:163f)
Masculine	Feminine	
Elefant	Elefantin	'elephant'
Hund	Hündin	'dog'
Ungar	Ungarin	'Hungarian'
Ausländer	Ausländerin	'foreigner'
Österreicher	Österreicherin	'Austrian'
Pilot	Pilotin	'pilot'
Student	Studentin	'student'
Stadtrat	Stadträtin	'city councillor'
Rektor	Rektorin	'headmaster, headmistress'
Leiter	Leiterin	'principle'
Kunde	Kundin	'customer'
Prinz	Prinzessin	'prince, princess'
König	Königin	'king, queen'
Graf	Gräfin	'count, countess'
Baron	Baronin	'baron, baroness'
Enkel	Enkelin	'uncle, aunt'
Schwäger	Schwägerin	'brother-in-law, sister-in-law'

SEMANTIC MARKEDNESS

For many pairs, the masculine plural can describe
mixed-gendered groups, but the feminine plural form can
only describe female-only groups.

French pronouns
a. ils (they.m) ⇒ at least one male
b. elles (they.f) ⇒ all female

Greek
a. δάσκαλοι (dhaskali) 'teachers.m' ⇒ at least one male
b. δασκάλες (dhaskales) 'teachers.f' ⇒ all female

See Spathas & Sudo (to appear) for more discussion.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

See Corbett (1991:Ch.7) and Kramer (2015:Ch.5) for languages where feminine is unmarked.

French has masc. and fem. gender-invariant nouns:

Masculine		Feminine	
génie	'genius'	vigie	'lookout'
tyran	'tyrant'	sentinelle	'sentry'
individu	'individual	brute	'brute'
modèle	'model'	personne	'person'
pilote	'pilot'	sage-femme	'midwife'
capitaine	'captain'	vedette	'star'
kangourou	'kangaroo'	hyène	'hyena'
leopard	'leopard'	girafe	'giraffe'
serpent	'snake'	tortue	'turtle'
corbeau	'crow'	souris	'mouse'

(adapted from Fathi & Lowenstamm 2016: (8),(10))

PHONOLOGY AND GENDER ASSIGNMENT

PHONOLOGICALLY TRANSPARENT GENDER ASSIGNMENT

In some languages, the phonological form of the noun is a good predictor of its gender.

Corbett (1991:§3.2.1) discusses Qafar (Cushitic; Ethiopia, Djibouti), which has two genders, masculine and feminine.

‣ If the citation form of a noun ends in an accented vowel, the noun is feminine;

‣ If not, it is masculine.

Only few exceptions, e.g. *doònik* 'sailboat' is feminine, *abbà* 'father' is masculine.

QAFAR

Masculine		Feminine	
bàxa	'son'	baxà'	'daughter'
toobokòyta	'brother'	toobokoytà	'sister'
barisèyna	'male teacher'	bariseynà	'female teacher'
kùta	'dog'	kutà	'bitch'
cedèr	'supper time'	catò	'help'
gilàl	'winter'	karmà	'autumn'
tàmu	'taste'		
baànta	'trumpet'		

(Corbett 1991:51)

FRENCH

French has two genders, masculine and feminine.

One can identify morphological rules, e.g.

> Compound nouns formed with a verb are masculine.
> e.g. *porte-monnaie* 'purse' is masculine
> (although *monnaie* 'money' is feminine).

However, phonological rules alone account for the majority of cases in the case of French.

Tucker et al.'s (1977) rules classify 84.5% of the nouns in the *Petit Larousse* correctly, only from the phonological forms.

FINAL SEGMENTS AND GENDER IN FRENCH

Final C	# of nouns	%Masc	Final V	# of nouns	%Masc
/ʒ/	1453	94.2	/œ̃/	17	100
/m/	1406	91.9	/ɑ̃/	1963	99.3
/f/	301	89.0	/ɛ̃/	938	99.0
/r/	5175	76.8	/ø/	189	97.4
/g/	235	73.2	/o/	865	97.2
/k/	833	66.6	/ɛ/	625	90.2
/b/	129	65.1	/u/	171	87.7
/l/	1581	58.4	/a/	970	82.6
/t/	2269	51.2	/y/	201	71.6
/p/	214	48.6	/e/	2791	50.1
/ŋ/	69	39.0	/ɔ̃/	2665	29.8
/s/	1380	38.5	/i/	2336	24.6
/d/	714	38.1			
/ʃ/	290	34.0			
/j/	352	32.4			
/v/	143	31.5			
/n/	1135	31.5			
/z/	612	10.0	(Corbett 1991:59)		

NON-FINAL SEGMENTS

When non-final segments are included, the predictions become more reliable:

- 92.6% (924/997) of /te/ are feminine. 73.9% (1325/1794) of the rest of /e/ are masculine.
- 99.8% (1689/1693) of /sjɔ̃/ are feminine. This includes all the *-ation* nouns. Similarly, 98.4% (62/63) of /zjɔ̃/, 100% (5/5) of /ʒjɔ̃/, 76.5% (13/17) of /tjɔ̃/ are feminine. 92.9% (157/169) of the other /jɔ̃/ are masculine.
- 97.1% of /ɔ̃/ but not /zɔ̃/ or /jɔ̃/ are masculine.
- 80.9% (72/89) of /zɔ̃/ are feminine. Among /zɔ̃/, 98.5% (64/65) of /ɛzɔ̃/ are feminine, and 66.7% (16/24) of the rest are masculine.

FRENCH: SOME COMPLICATIONS

Lowenstamm (2012): most /ʒ/-final nouns (94.2% masculine) involve the productive suffix *-age*, which creates a masculine noun. If these cases are excluded, the gender is not so productive for /ʒ/-final nouns.

Phonology alone doesn't explain homophonous pairs (Fathi & Lowenstamm 2016: (1)):

	Masc	Fem		Masc	Fem
/vis/	'vice'	'screw'	/fil/	'thread'	'queue'
/fwa/	'liver'	'faith'	/sɛl/	'salt'	'saddle'
/sɔl/	'ground'	'sole (fish)'	/kɔl/	'collar'	'glue'
/tuʁ/	'turn'	'tower'	/livʁ/	'book'	'pound'
/bæʁ/	'pub'	'bar'	/bæl/	'dance'	'ball'

FRENCH: SOME COMPLICATIONS (CONT.)

Fathi & Lowenstamm (2016) list nouns for which many native speakers do not have clear intuitions:

tentacule	'tentacle'	hémisphère	'hemisphere'
pétale	'petal'	après-midi	'afternoon'
effluve	'exhalation'	balustre	'baluster'
câpre	'caper'	oasis	'oasis'
HLM	'council flat'	clope	'fag, ciggy'
taffe	'puff of cigarette'	tique	'tick'

They raise these as evidence for the irrelevance of phonology, they could be used as evidence for the relevance of phonology: Most of these lack phonological properties that correlate strongly with gender.

THE SYNTAX OF GENDER IN NOUNS

ISSUES

Where is the gender stored? It seems natural to assume that nouns are specified for gender in the lexicon.

However:

▸ Epicene nouns, e.g. *врач (vrač)* in Russian, *γιατρός (jatros)* in Greek, can agree in masculine or feminine, depending on the meaning. This suggests that gender is not simply lexically specified, at least for some nouns.

▸ For masculine-feminine pairs like *chat-chatte* (cat) in French and *αδερφός-αδερφή* (sibling) in Greek, it seems attractive to decompose them into a gender-less stem and some other component, encoding the gender.

GENDER IS IN GENDERP

PIcallo (1991): Gender has its own projection GenderP (in analogy with *v*P):
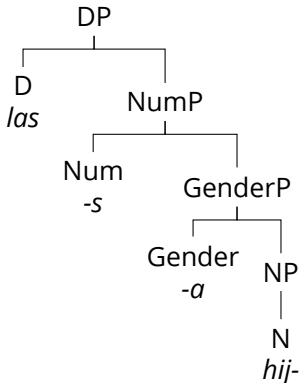
Ritter (1993), Alexiadou (2004) and Kramer (2015) criticize this approach. For example, Picallo is conflating gender and inflectional classes.

GENDER IS ON NUM

Ritter (1993) claims that gender is on Num in Romance languages and on N in Hebrew.

She observes that gender is a derivational suffix in Hebrew:

Masculine		Feminine	
magav	'wiper'	magev-et	'towel'
magav-im	'wipers'	magav-ot	'towels'
maxsan	'warehouse'	maxsan-it	'magazine'
maxsan-im	'warehouses'	maxsani-ot	'magazines'
amud	'page'	amud-a	'column'
amud-im	'pages'	amud-ot	'columns'

GENDER IS ON *N*

Kramer (2015) claims that gender is on *n*.

There are a number of masculine-feminine pairs that share the same root.

Amharic (Kramer 2015:32)
| hakim-u | doctor-def.m | 'the male doctor' |
| hakim-wa | doctor-def.f | 'the female doctor' |

Greek
| αδερφ-ός | adherfos | 'male sibling, brother' |
| αδερφ-ή | adherfi | 'female sibling, sister' |

GENDER IS ON *N* (CONT.)

Kramer's (2015) analysis of Amharic:

(1)   *Types of n in Amharic*
    a.   *n i*[+Fem]   natural feminine
    b.   *n i*[−Fem]   natural masculine
    c.   *n*   no natural gender
    d.   *n u*[+Fem]   grammatical feminine

- Natural gender: Kramer assumes that certain roots (e.g. $\sqrt{mist}$ 'wife', $\sqrt{bal}$ 'husband') are licensed only under (1a) and (1b), respectively. Roots like $\sqrt{tämari}$ 'student' are licensed under both (1a) and (1b).
- Grammatical gender: Masculine inanimates are those roots that are licensed under (1c). Feminine inanimates are those roots that are licensed under (1d).

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