

... We have seen that inanimates may become animates, and vice versa. We have also observed flexibility in animacy. Such patterns have also been observed with gender in Indo European and other languages (Salish languages (Gerdt's 2011 work on Halkomelem; Australian continent, Papua New Guinea).

What I take these switches to mean is that the value of an abstract nominal feature – gender, animacy, etc -may be divorced from its form. (Henceforth, I use gender as a cover term for all instantiations of nominal classification).

Once the feature gender is disassociated from its form, it is reasonable to expect that gender may surface elsewhere, i.e., it need not be inherent to a noun. This view deviates from the more traditional treatment of gender as merely a device for nominal classification or agreement.

Ritter (1991) has observed that the expression of gender varies cross-linguistically, e.g.: it is marked on noun roots in Hebrew, while it is marked on nominal number in Romance languages (see also Lowenstamm 2008; Kramer 2009, 2011; Armoskaite 2011). Mathieu (2012a, 2012b) shows that Ojibwe gender is sensitive to a shift in number: when a shift from mass to count occurs (money → bills/coins), gender shifts, too. This suggests that gender plays a role beyond a classification device inherent to nouns. Support for this view comes from recent analyses of gender according to which gender is not restricted to associating with the noun.

Steriopolo & Wiltschko (2010) argue that gender may be distributed: it may be found on nouns and/or articles, encoding referentiality, i.e., gender may participate in marking discourse prominence (cf. Teop data in Mosel & Spriggs, in prep.). Armoskaite & Wiltschko (2012) explore the cases of gender which encode a shift in speaker's perspective about the entity that a noun denotes (see also Gerdt's 2011). A shift in gender indicates a deviation from some established norm. Therefore gender may also be defined as nominal outer aspect. Outer aspect is a grammatical means dedicated to expressions of perspective, either about events (for verbs) or entities (for nouns).

In some languages gender may surface on morphemes that introduce clauses (similar to English complementizer morphemes such as *that*, *if*...). Complementizer domain intersects with discourse in various ways. For example, complementizers may encode veracity (truthfulness) of discourse participant statements. Placed within a complementizer, gender may signal veracity of the speaker statement (cf. Diercks 2010). In sum, cross-linguistic data from a range of sources show gender in distinct syntactic positions and with distinct interpretations. Note, however, that in the approaches reviewed above, the guises of gender appear fragmented, if not contradictory: sometimes gender is found in one domain (e.g., classification), sometimes in another (e.g., veracity), or spans across several domains (noun through determiner).

Key research question. What makes one feature appear in different syntactic positions, and why? I seek to explain the behavior of gender throughout syntax and propose a unifying account of all possible guises. Such an approach is desirable given that gender is one of the most? typologically common grammatical means of meeting our cognitive needs, be it classification or veracity.

My working hypothesis is: gender interpretations are determined by syntax. In other words, particular interpretations of gender are attained in particular syntactic domains:

(4) [_{CP} **Comp** ... [_{DP} **Det** [_{OuterAspP} **Asp** [_{NumP} **Num** [_{InnerAspP} [**Asp** [_{nP} **n**][√]]]]]]]



Veracity

Referentiality Perspective Number

C l a s s i f i c a t i o n