

GENDER CONCERNS IN THE GERMAN LANGUAGE

by

CAMERON JOHN VAN DEN HEUVEL

(Under the Direction of Renate Born)

ABSTRACT

A discussion of methods that language can interface with the concepts and notions of grammar as well as a discussion about the way grammar and discourse affect the societal placement of women, homosexuals, transgendered people, and genderqueer people within the German language. Cross linguistic analysis is added to show the difference between the interfaces of German and some languages.

INDEX WORDS: Gender, Sexuality, German language, Linguistics

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CAMERON JOHN VAN DEN HEUVEL

A.B., University of Georgia, 2009

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2013

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CAMERON JOHN VAN DEN HEUVEL

Major Professor: Renate Born

Committee: Marjanne Goozé
Vera Lee-Schoenfeld

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
August 2013

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this paper to all women, men, and everyone else.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the patience of my wife. She has dealt with the anxiety and stress of my graduate studies with love and compassion. I would also like to thank my professors present and past at the University of Georgia. You have spurred my intellectual pursuits of my past years.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	viii
CHAPTER	
1 GRAMMATICAL GENDER AND WOMEN'S LINGUISTICS	1
Purpose of thesis	1
Grammatical gender as a noun class.....	1
Types of gender	3
Evolution of women's linguistics	7
Goals of women's linguistics.....	10
2 HOW GERMAN INTERFACES WITH GENDER.....	13
Grammatical gender	13
Lexical gender	21
Social gender	23
Referential gender	24
3 DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN	30
How women speak and how it differs from men	30
How women are referenced.....	33
4 CONCLUDING REMARKS	34
Where women's linguistics stands	34

Author's opinion on the future of the field..... 34

REFERENCES..... 38

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 2.1: Grammatical Gender in the Nominative case.....	14
Table 2.2: Grammatical Gender in the Accusative case.....	14
Table 2.3: Grammatical Gender in the Dative case.....	15
Table 2.4: Grammatical Gender in the Genitive case.....	15
Table 2.5: Grammatical Gender of Words Derived Through Compounding	22
Table 2.6: List of Epicene Nouns by Gender.....	22
Table 3.1: Forms of Reference to Women Based on Stereotype Class	33

CHAPTER 1

GRAMMATICAL GENDER AND WOMEN'S LINGUISTICS

Purpose of Thesis

This thesis is written for the purpose of joining the ideas of the West German feminist movement and gender in the German language. The feminist movement in West Germany, which will be described later in this chapter, was a radical movement driven by the abolition of the patriarchy and a new focus on the matriarch. Men and women were to live in separate worlds and women would save West Germany from the destruction brought by men. Grammatical gender in German is a function of noun classes and declension. There are no biases in the language itself. The feminist movement in West Germany believed that the language was holding back women. This is intended to be an objective study based on the research of the radical feminists.

Grammatical gender as noun class

When talking about gender, it is important to first establish the intrinsic difference between the notions of gender and sex. Gender is an abstract idea which consists of a series of rules and concepts that govern the gender assignment of a given person or entity. These are social and mental criteria that are completely separated from the sex of the referent. The sex of the referent is the anatomical and genetic class to which the entity belongs. This means, in humans, whether the person was born with XX or XY chromosomes. This also refers to the genitalia the person developed during gestation. While the sex of the referent can be changed over the life of the person through means

of gender reassignment surgery, colloquially referred to as a sex change operation, the gender of the person is a psychological identity. The sex of a referent is generally considered to be a constant.

Grammatical gender is a system in which nouns and pronouns are divided into categories. It is not a universal in language. Many languages do not mark gender on nouns; however, gender may be marked on pronouns, such as in English. Gender is the division of nouns into categories based on semantic or grammatical considerations. Most languages divide nouns into two or three classes. These classes are often semantic distinctions. Most commonly, nouns are divided between “masculine,” “feminine,” or “gender-neutral.”

Additionally, there are languages in which objects are defined through their physical shape, for example Japanese and other East Asian languages. The classification of these nouns is seen when a quantifier is applied to the noun. The declension of the quantifier changes according to the class of noun to which it is being applied. The noun itself shows no marker of membership to a class of noun.

Gender languages, also known as languages with grammatical gender, are languages that divide their nouns into two or three “gender classes.” Indo-European languages fall into this category. Gender languages often do not carry any marker of membership morphologically on the noun itself. They do, however, show agreement with other types of word classes. Agreement is shown in phrases both within and outside of the nominal domain. This agreement is obligatory and required for grammatical utterances. Because there may be no membership markings on the noun itself, there is interaction between multiple lexemes, meaning interaction between the

noun itself and a satellite lexeme, such as a determiner or an adjective. Referential nouns and pronouns of this class show a relationship between the “masculine,” “feminine,” or “neuter” gender class membership and the lexical assignment of the nominal as male-specific, female-specific, or gender neutral-specific.

In languages in which the nouns are classified by means other than their shape, the class distinction is shown through membership in a semantic or morphological class. These languages are known as noun class languages. Noun class languages are languages that cause agreement within the nominal domain. This can be shown through markings on nouns themselves, determiners, and modifiers. According to Craig (1994), these languages can be divided into two subsets. These subsets are “noun class languages” and “gender languages.” These language types are divided based on grammatical and semantic distinctions (Craig 565).

Types of gender

When speaking of gender, there are several types of gender. Gender is linguistically deeper than whether or not the noun is linguistically masculine or feminine. There are four different types of gender that will be referenced. These forms are *grammatical gender*, *lexical gender*, *referential gender*, and *social gender*. While often the grammar of a noun will show convergence between genders, there will sometimes be variation between the four genders, which is known as syncretism.

Grammatical gender is the gender which is assigned to a noun by a language’s grammatical system. Grammatical gender is a characteristic on all nouns similar to case which controls agreement on all satellite elements. Prepositions, articles,

adjectives, and pronouns are controlled by the grammatical gender of the noun. Nouns will only have one grammatical gender which will be assigned by semantic properties.

Languages with grammatical gender assign nouns into noun classes which are given “gender-specific” names. Commonly, there are three classes: “masculine,” “feminine,” and “neuter.” Many languages, however, reduce the number of noun classes, for example modern Romance languages, which have lost the neuter gender. Other languages, such as English, exhibit no gender markings on nouns.

Lexical gender or natural gender refers to the biological maleness or femaleness of the referent of the noun. These features are extra-linguistic. Examples of lexical gender are the inherent maleness of the noun *Sohn* and inherent femaleness of the noun *Mutter* in German. Such nouns are “gender-specific,” meaning that they show the referential gender of the noun. There are also nouns which are “gender-indefinite” or “gender-neutral.” They show no inherent gender in the definition of the noun, such as the English examples of *citizen* or *patient*. In English, the nouns are gender-neutral. Lexical gender will require the speaker to know whether the person in reference is male or female when speaking, because the noun carries no inherent gender. Communication will require previous reference to the anatomical gender of the noun, as the speaker will need the gender to assign the proper anaphoric pronoun. The assignment of the pronoun will also vary, as there are cases in which the lexical gender of the noun will diverge from the grammatical gender of the referent of the noun. An example of this involves the German noun *Individuum* ‘individual.’ This noun is grammatically neuter; however, when the speaker refers to an individual, the speaker will need to know from reference which personal pronoun to assign to the individual.

Male and female are not the only genders which can be chosen. There are also languages which can assign additional genders. One example of this can be seen among Hindi speakers, who have a third gender consisting of boys who are raised as girls, including using the dress, mannerisms, and speech patterns of females. Lexical gender may be marked on the noun, such as in German which marks femaleness on some nouns with the addition of the suffix *-in* on nouns. There are also cases in which nouns may not show lexical gender, such as the English noun *surgeon*, which is gender-indefinite. Many languages use lexical gender terms which are “generic masculine,” meaning that the language will use the masculine form as the generic form of reference. An example of this can be seen in example 1.

- 1) *Apropos Navaratilova: Sie hat als bisher einziger (m) Tennisspieler (m) mehr als 10 Millionen Dollar an Preisgeldern eingenommen – egal ob weiblich oder männlich.*

‘Apropos Navaratilova: She is the only (m) tennis-player (m) –whether male or female – who has won more than 10 million dollars in prize money. (Hellinger “Engendering” 159)

In this example, Martina Navaratilova is referred to as a *Spieler* even though she is a female. Additional information is provided to show that she is the first person to win this amount, even though she is a woman.

Referential gender refers to the assignment to the gender of an expression which may show gender in ways which do not refer to the actual gender of the referent. This can be seen in items such as *der Popstar* ‘popstar.’ This word in German refers to both male and female pop singers. Another example of this phenomenon can be seen with

the phrase *Mädchen für alles*. This phrase, originally designating a household worker responsible for the daily chores, when directly translated means a 'maid for all work,' can also show references to men as well. However, when applied to men, this term is generally derogatory. When looking at these types, the speaker can decide the gender of the pronoun. This may cause the referential gender to override the grammatical or lexical gender.

Social gender is a complex system which involves social factors about masculinity and femininity. This shows the dichotomy of the masculine and feminine traits and character roles which control the use of certain nouns in a language. The association of social gender cannot be described through semantic or lexical terms, but through preconceived ideas in the given society which are not related to the word itself. Examples of this phenomenon can be seen with the assignment of gender to terms in which no gender has been given in previous conversation. English shows this by the choice of pronoun given to professions. Jobs which have traditionally been held by men, such as doctors, lawyers, and soldiers will often be referred to with the masculine pronoun *he*, whereas professions which were in the 20th century held by women will have the feminine pronoun *she*. The preference of the pronominal choice can also show social gender. English shows this through the use of the masculine pronoun *he* for all personal nouns which have not been assigned the social gender previously, for example "gender-indefinite" terms such as *citizens* or *consumer*.

Evolution of women's linguistics

Women's linguistics is a field of study that began during civil rights movement of the late 1960s in the United States. During this period, linguistic analysis began in many languages to determine the place which defines how a woman speaks and what factors determine the place of women in the lexicon and jargon of language. In the United States, one of the first linguists to analyze women's language was Robin Lakoff. Lakoff, in her 1973 work titled "Language and Woman's Place," analyzes the English language and determines the factors in which women are marginalized or repressed. Her findings show that women are instructed to use a speech which is predominately defined by an empathetic speech quality. These factors in turn reflect the general notion that women should behave in a manner which shows that they are ladies (Lakhoff 57-9.) This idea of being a proper lady is reflected in their language through the use of higher frequency of reference to the speaker. This means that the woman does not lead the conversation, but rather concedes the role of the conversation dominance to the other interlocutor, especially in the case of a man. The woman should be submissive and allow the masculine interlocutor to dominate the conversation. Lakoff also speculated about women using a specialized lexicon which reflects the higher class register of a proper lady, for example speaking with a greater number of positive descriptive adjectives(Lakhoff 55.) This means that women should avoid the confrontational language of working class men.

In Germany, the evolution of women's linguistics developed from the students' rights movement, known as the 1968 movement. The students wanted to gain a larger role in the decision-making process at universities in the new Federal Republic of Germany.

The membership of this movement consisted of both women and men, and they strove for the better treatment of students at German universities. The women in this movement, however, felt that they were being marginalized within their movement, as their roles were relegated to the desk work and general clerical tasks of the movement whereas the men were the leaders and prominent members of the movement (Pusch 23.) This led to the rise of a women's rights movement in West Germany during the early 1970's. While the goals of this movement were more concerned with the social and economic viability of women in the newly powerful West German economy, these women also focused on the linguistic representation of women in the German language (Pusch 35.)

Within these groups, women began to codify a set of rules which governed the dialogue that drove this movement. The main goals of this movement were to show a sense of camaraderie and unity among the women who were fighting for equal rights alongside their male counterparts and foster a generally equal rate of acceptance of the power of women in both the civil rights movement and in West German society at large. The dialogue of the women's movement in Germany was focused around a set of four rules. These guidelines were perpetuated by women's rights magazines and pamphlets during the early stages of the movement (Clyne 145.)

The first guideline was the avoidance of the formal form of reference in writing as well as in common speech among members (Clyne 145.) In German, this means the usage of the *du and ihr* forms of reference in all situations where the *Sie* form would be used. German social norms dictate that when speaking to someone who is considered your superior or when talking to a respectable person with whom you are not yet

acquainted, the *Sie* form should be used to show respect to the interlocutor. The usage of the informal forms of speech was used during the movement to foster a spirit of equality among members, as it showed there were no higher membership classes within the movement as well as showing that the thoughts of all members would be given equal treatment and acknowledgement.

Another focus of the movement was the polarization of the sexes through the use of terminology (Clyne 146.) The movement also wanted to demonstrate that the sexes are also two distinct groups and should still be treated as such. This acknowledged that the cultural and social needs of women are different than the status quo, which would be the needs of men. The common use of words such as *Männerwelt* 'men's world' and *Frauenprogramm* 'women's system' was a sign of the difference between the two sexes.

The third focus of the movement was the use of base language typical of working-class men (Clyne 146.) Women were seen as dignified people who were not supposed to use the vulgar language that typified male speech in areas such as barroom chatter and blue collar labor speech. The women in the movement began to use words such as *beschissen* 'rotten' not only in common speech among members but also in letters and documents to be published. This served not only to reclaim some of the vocabulary reserved normally for men, but also was counter to the socially advocated submissive nature of woman. Because of the vocal force and nature of vulgar language, the use of these words showed that women were not going to remain societally submissive.

The final guideline of the women's movement in Germany was the use of specialized vocabulary in speech and writing (Clyne 146.) This does not mean the replacement of

normal lexemes in everyday speech, but rather the use of recurring motifs and ideas. The use of these terms showed membership in the movement and identified the speech as being pro woman. The majority of these terms served to show the perceived second class nature of woman in West German society. Recurring terms such as *Diskriminierung* 'discrimination,' *Unterdrückung* 'repression,' and *Emanzipation* 'emancipation' showed that the women in the movement felt that they were repressed by the patriarchy in the society (Clyne 145.) One term which was used with great frequency was *der Abbau der Herrschaft* 'the abolition of domination.' The women believed that they could overcome the repression inherent in West German society.

Goals of women's linguistics

Women's linguistics pertains to the field of study that analyses a language for the factors where women are represented in the lexicon and grammatical system. Every language handles gender and representation differently, but in all languages the role of gender is important in semantic fields of a language. This can be achieved at different levels of the language.

The first goal of women's linguistics according to Hellinger is to analyze how women are represented in the lexicon (Hellinger "Gender" 15.) This can also refer to representation of females in morphology and syntax. Questions of social gender are addressed using this framework, for example which vocational fields are referenced with a feminine grammatical gender when compared to the lexical gender and sex of the referent. The forms of address used to refer to women when compared to their masculine counterpart are another important aspect. For example, women's linguistics

analyze the titles given to women socially and how they differ from the titles given to men, i.e. the historical distinction of *Frau* and *Fräulein* in German. These titles were for women of different social standings, in this case an older married woman and an unmarried or young woman. This can also refer to the way a language changes its lexicon when referring to women, such as the derivation of new lexemes through the use of morphology. This also refers to the terms which are used in conversation between men and women.

The second aspect of women's linguistics via Hellinger is the analysis of how women are portrayed in the society through the use of idiomatic expressions (Hellinger "Gender" 16.) Idiomatic expressions such as culturally specific sayings, proverbs, and idioms give the speaker an impression of how a given culture views women. The use of subtle language shows how women are viewed in the given society by applying qualities to a gender. One linguistic variant of this field can be seen in the lexicon of referential terms of a given gender, namely what words speakers use to refer to people of a given sex. This can largely be analyzed through analysis of derogatory language. Because derogatory terminology generally works on stereotyping, hyperbole, and overgeneralization, analysis of the slurs and insults which are used to describe a given sex can give an indication to the speaker of the culturally conditioned and societal expectations of a gender. For example, terms such as *Keife* 'nagger' demonstrate the stereotype of the nagging woman (Breiner 108.) Further examples may be found in chapter three.

The final aspect of women's linguistics is the analysis of the speech patterns used by women (Hellinger "Gender" 17.) Discourse analysis between the sexes is a contrastive

field, as the speech of women is analyzed in terms of its difference from the status quo, the language of educated males. This analysis looks not only at how women's language differs from men's, but also how it differs from the prescriptive standards set by grammarians. By analyzing the speech patterns which women use, the interlocutor can create a social judgment regarding the education and standing of the woman.

CHAPTER 2

HOW GERMAN INTERFACES WITH GENDER

Grammatical gender

The German language is a gender language, meaning that it uses a system of differentiating nouns into a series of classes. The German language retains the three noun class system Proto-Germanic inherited from Proto-Indo-European. This system is a threefold system in which nouns are divided into three classes: masculine, feminine, and neuter. German shares this three gender system with other Germanic languages, namely Frisian, Icelandic, and the written Norwegian language *Nynorsk* “New Norwegian.” The grouping of German with these other languages is important due to the reduction of genders which is seen in other Germanic languages, including other West Germanic languages. Other Germanic languages have shown shifts away from the classical Indo-European system, which includes changes in the number and properties of grammatical gender. English, a West Germanic language, has removed the grammatical gender system from its nouns completely, but retains gender marking on the pronouns. Other Germanic languages have gender, but the number of grammatical genders have been reduced to two. These languages, Danish, Dutch, Swedish, and Norwegian *Bokmål* “Book Language,” show two genders, in which the genders are neuter and the *genus commune*. The second gender, common gender, is used for both masculine and feminine (Hellinger “Engendering” 143.)

Table 2.1 Grammatical Gender in the Nominative case (Hellinger “Engendering” 144)

Gender	Indirect Article	Adjective	Noun	Pronoun
Masculine	Ein a.MASC	großer large.MASC	Mann man.MASC	er he.MASC
Feminine	Eine a.FEM	große large.FEM	Frau woman.FEM	sie she.FEM
Neuter	Ein a.NEUT	großes large.NEUT	Kind child.NEUT	es it.NEUT
Plural	Keine No.PL	großen large.PL	Menschen people.PL	sie they.PL

Table 2.2 Grammatical Gender in the Accusative case (Based on Hellinger “Engendering” 144)

Gender	Indirect Article	Adjective	Noun	Pronoun
Masculine	Einen a.MASC	großen large.MASC	Mann man.MASC	ihn he.MASC
Feminine	Eine a.FEM	große large.FEM	Frau woman.FEM	sie she.FEM
Neuter	Ein a.NEUT	großes large.NEUT	Kind child.NEUT	es it.NEUT
Plural	Keine No.PL	großen large.PL	Menschen people.PL	sie they.PL

Table 2.3 Grammatical Gender in the Dative case (Based on Hellinger “Engendering”

144)

Gender	Indirect Article	Adjective	Noun	Pronoun
Masculine	Einem a.MASC	großen large.MASC	Mann man.MASC	ihm he.MASC
Feminine	Einer a.FEM	großen large.FEM	Frau woman.FEM	ihr she.FEM
Neuter	Einem a.NEUT	großen large.NEUT	Kind child.NEUT	ihm it.NEUT
Plural	Keinen No.PL	großen large.PL	Menschen people.PL	ihnen they.PL

Table 2.4 Grammatical Gender in the Genitive case (Based on Hellinger “Engendering”

144)

Gender	Indirect Article	Adjective	Noun
Masculine	Eines a.MASC	großen large.MASC	Mannes man.MASC
Feminine	Einer a.FEM	großen large.FEM	Frau woman.FEM
Neuter	Eines a.NEUT	großen large.NEUT	Kindes child.NEUT
Plural	Keiner No.PL	großen large.PL	Menschen people.PL

Every noun in German is assigned one of the three gender classes. For most cases, German nouns are assigned only one noun class, which is assigned by the rules of standard Modern High German. The exceptions to this rule arise from regional variation, because dialects differ from standard High German in gender assignment. Examples of this phenomenon can be seen in Swabian German, as this dialect applies the masculine grammatical gender to butter, which is seen as *der Buttr*, as opposed to the Modern High German, which applies the feminine grammatical gender, *die Butter* (Willikonsky 44.) Regional variation of gender assignment is not always seen through the replacement of the feminine by the masculine. There are also examples in which the masculine and neuter forms may be interchangeable, for example *der Kamin* 'chimney' becoming *das Kamin* in Swabian (Willikonsky 44).

In German, nouns themselves show no gender marking. The gender in German is marked on elements which precede the noun. In German, the elements which show gender surrounding the noun include determiners and attributive adjectives. Pronouns also show the grammatical gender of the noun in their placement. The plural forms of all nouns are grammatically gender neutral, as all nouns take the same pronoun in the plural and the articles and adjectives for the nouns are declined in the same manner.

Gender assignment in German follows patterns, in which the speaker can predict the gender of the noun to some extent. The majority of monosyllabic nouns are masculine. Exceptions of this rule include colors, which are always neuter, for example *das Rot* 'red.' For polysyllabic words that do not show derivation, there are fewer patterns, which causes gender assignment to these nouns to be much more arbitrary. Examples of patterns of words which are not formed with affixes include most chemical elements

and metals being neuter with the exception of *der Phosphor* 'phosphorus' and *der Schwefel* 'sulfur.' Fractions are also usually neuter, for example *das Viertel* 'quarter;' however, the German word for half, *die Hälfte*, is feminine.

For words which are formed through derivation, there are many more patterns which are regular and salient. The derivational suffixes are regular and always assign the same grammatical gender to every derived noun. Each of the three grammatical genders has its own set of unique suffixes. Some examples of suffixes which assign the feminine case are: *-heit*, *-keit*, *-schaft*, and *-ung*. Another suffix which assigns the feminine grammatical gender is *-in*, the suffix used to create feminine nouns from male nouns. Many of the suffixes which assign the feminine grammatical gender are used to nominalize adjective or verbs to create conceptual nouns. The masculine gender uses many suffixes in order to create agentive nouns. A typical suffix which assigns the masculine grammatical gender is the deverbal nominalizing suffix *-er*. There are fewer neuter grammatical gender assigning suffixes than for the other two genders. The most common suffix which assigns the grammatical gender is the diminutive suffix, which in standard High German is *-chen*. This suffix is unique due to the highly productive nature of the diminutive, which can be applied to any noun to create a small version of the noun.

Gender assignment can be made through the combination of morphological information and lexical-semantic criteria. There are many exceptions to this rule. Examples of this phenomenon are seen in the names of days of the week, seasons, most minerals, and most mountains are all masculine. The generic noun for these items are also masculine. This can be seen in the examples *der Dienstag* 'Tuesday,'

der Mai 'May,' *der Sommer* 'Summer,' *der Quarz* 'Quartz,' and *der Mont Blanc*.

Examples of nouns which are usually feminine are numerals, ships, planes, many flowers, and tree, for example *die Zwei* 'two,' *die Boeing*, *die Rose* 'rose,' and *die Eiche* 'oak.' Colors, metals, towns, and countries are usually neuter, for example *das Deutschland* 'Germany' and *das Blei* 'tin.'

Cars are also usually masculine unless they have a woman's name as their name, for example *der Volkswagen* and *der BMW*. If the car has a woman's name as its model name, it will be referred to with the feminine grammatical gender; however, when the car's name is said with the make of the car in addition to the model name, then the car is referred to as masculine grammatically. In the case of Mercedes-Benz, whose name was derived from the name of the daughter of the founder of the company, their cars will always take the masculine gender. The rule governing the selection of masculine when referring to the make of the car overrides the rule that causes female named cars to receive the feminine grammatical gender.

When nouns are formed from adjectives or similarly from the present participles of verbs, the gender can only be determined from the peripheral elements. The form of the noun is the same for masculine and feminine nouns. This can be seen in the following example (2a) and (2b.)

(2a) Nouns derived from adjectives

<i>die Kranke (f)</i>	The sick woman
-----------------------	----------------

<i>der Kranke (m)</i>	The sick man
-----------------------	--------------

-derived from *krank* 'sick'

(2b) Nouns derived from present participles

<i>eine Reisende (f)</i>	The traveling woman
--------------------------	---------------------

<i>ein Reisender (m)</i>	The traveling man
--------------------------	-------------------

-derived from *reisen* 'to travel'

One must notice, however, that there are differences based on the choice of definite versus indefinite articles. When a speaker uses the definite article, the form which is used is identical for all genders, which is seen in example (2a). The nominal form of the adjective *krank* is identical when used for masculine and feminine. When an indefinite article is used, the noun must show inflection when used in the masculine grammatical gender as shown in the example of nouns derived from present participle verbs. This arises from the ambiguous nature of the indefinite article for the masculine and neuter grammatical gender, which in the nominative case is *ein* for both masculine and neuter genders. In each case with the exception of the accusative, which uses *einen* as the indefinite article, the masculine and neuter indefinite article forms are identical.

Grammatical gender also causes agreement between pronouns. This differs from English, as pronoun selection is determined by the lexical gender of the article, namely whether the referent of the noun is masculine or feminine, as well as if the referent of the noun is animate or inanimate. These criteria are not the case in German, as

pronoun selection is only governed by the grammatical gender. Pronoun selection based on grammatical gender is a common source of errors made by learners of German whose native language is English, as English speakers will use the grammatically neuter pronoun *it* instead of the gendered German pronoun. The reverse is also seen for German learners of English.

(3a) * *Mein Vater schenkt meiner Mutter einen Ring. Es ist schön.*

My father gave my mother a ring. It (n) is pretty.

(3b) *Mein Vater schenkt meiner Mutter einen Ring. Er ist schön.*

My father gave my mother a ring. It (m) is pretty.

(4) There's a fly in the the room. Kill her!

(5) *Es gibt eine Fliege in dem Zimmer. Töt sie!*

There is a fly (f) in the room. Kill it (f)

Pronoun selection also causes a problem when the speaker uses a word which has a grammatical gender that differs from its natural gender. An example of this phenomenon can be seen when the diminutive is applied to any noun. As previously stated, the diminutive suffix causes the noun to become grammatically neuter in all cases. Because of this, the pronoun which should be used for all diminutives is *es* 'it.' This causes confusion, as the speaker must have established previously in conversation what the diminutive actually is, as grammatically the neuter pronoun does not give the speaker information to the lexical gender. This issue has been addressed in an online article from *Duden*, a common dictionary and prescriptive grammar guide used in Germany. In the article, the editors state that while the neuter pronoun and its possessive articles are the proper standard German usage, it is acceptable in common speech to use the lexical gender when defining the pronouns and possessive articles in

speech (duden.de.) This leads to the following examples in which the first example is prescriptively correct, but the lexical gender is incorrect. The opposite case is true in the second example.

(6) a. *Das ist das Mädchen. Es ist schön.*

That is the girl-NEUT. It is pretty.

“That is the girl. She is pretty.”

b. *Das ist das Mädchen. Sie ist schön. **

That is the girl. She is pretty

Lexical Gender

The lexical gender in German, as previously stated, is a concept that is separate from the grammatical gender. In some cases, there is a direct correspondence between the grammatical gender of a noun and its lexical gender. Nouns of familial relation, professions, and most other personal nouns fall into this category. When a noun is derived from a term in which the grammatical gender and lexical gender coincide, the grammatical gender of the new term will correlate to the grammatical gender of the original term regardless of the lexical gender of the newly formed lexeme.

Table 2.5 Grammatical Gender of Words Derived Through Compounding (Hellinger “Engendering” 147)

Feminine Nouns	Meaning	Masculine Nouns	Meaning
<i>die Mutter</i>	mother	<i>der Vater</i>	father
<i>die Frau</i>	woman	<i>der Mann</i>	man
<i>die Stiefmutter</i>	stepmother	<i>der Stiefvater</i>	stepfather
<i>die Geschäftsfrau</i>	businesswoman	<i>der Geschäftsmann</i>	businessman
<i>die Putzfrau</i>	cleaning woman	<i>der Hausmann</i>	stay-at-home man

In each grammatical gender class, there are a set of nouns which are lexically gender neutral. Even though they grammatically gendered, these nouns can be used to describe people of all sexes. These nouns are referred to as epicene nouns. These nouns consist of both personal nouns, which are considered gender neutral, as well as collective nouns that in German are rendered as being grammatically singular.

Table 2.6 List of Epicene nouns by gender (Hellinger “Engendering”148)

Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
<i>der Mensch</i> ‘human’	<i>die Person</i> ‘person’	<i>das Individuum</i> ‘individual’
<i>der Säugling</i> ‘infant’	<i>die Kraft</i> ‘workforce’	<i>das Mitglied</i> ‘member’
	<i>die Leiche</i> ‘corpse’	<i>das Opfer</i> ‘victim’

Social gender

Social gender in German is used similarly to the manner in which English applies social gender. In English, the social gender is applied in selection of the anaphor. This implies that the speaker must select the masculine or feminine pronoun through extralinguistic means due to the lack of grammatical gender marking on the noun itself. Therefore, pronoun selection is only determined by social determining factors such as stereotypes or tendencies. The process in German is similar, but due to the addition of grammatical gender, the speaker must decide not only which noun should be used but which form of the noun should be used. In situations in which the noun or pronoun is grammatically gender generic, the German language will use the masculine form.

In German, the plural form of nouns is considered grammatically gender neutral. Therefore, when Germans use the plural form of the masculine noun, this will be seen as a group which may contain both men and women. When the feminine form of the plural is used, this means that the group consists only of female members. Social gender works in German on similar social norms. When a German speaker uses the phrase *jeder Arzt* 'every doctor,' the speaker implies that the group of doctors may contain both men and women, even though the noun is completely marked for the masculine gender(Hellinger 149.) The speaker will generally assume that the group is composed of men. The grammatical gender of the noun does not control this assumption, but rather by the antiquated social implication that doctors were historically typically men, even though the number of female doctors has risen greatly in recent years where now women are the majority in the field. The same can be seen when discussing groups of workers who are divided into different strata. Social gender will

dictate that the masculine form will be the dominant career in the group whereas the feminine noun will be the subordinate worker.

(4) *Der Chef und seine Sekretärin* 'The boss (m) and his secretary (f)'

This example shows that the speaker will automatically assume that the boss will be masculine and the secretary will be feminine, even though this may not be true (Hellinger 149.) This arises from the societal preconceived notions that secretaries are always female, whereas the boss will be a man. When the speaker uses the word *die Chefin*, the person in reference will always be a woman.

Referential gender

Due to the grammatical gender implications in German, there are instances in which grammatical gender and lexical gender do not correlate. In these instances, the referential gender may cause problems. One instance in which the referential gender plays an important role in German is with the application of the social gender to epicene nouns. As previously stated, epicene nouns are considered gender neutral which does not relate to the grammatical gender of the noun. However, there are instances in which the noun will have preconceived gender associations which mean that a speaker will assume that the noun will be a certain gender. Examples of this phenomenon are *das Vergewaltigungsoffer* 'the rape victim' and *das Oberhaupt der katholischen Kirche* 'the head of the Catholic church.' When the German speaker hears the term rape victim, they will assume that the victim is a female, because the majority of rape victims are female. German speakers will always assume that the head of the Catholic church

will be masculine, due to the laws which govern the ordination of priests in the church. Another form which is derived from the base form *-haupt* 'head' is *das Familienoberhaupt* 'the head of the family.' The head of the family may be male or female; however, the speaker will assume that the head of the family will be male due to the earlier status of families, in which the man was the primary money-earner and decision-maker in the family.

There are several means that German uses to avoid gender invisibility. One way German achieves gender visibility is through the use of adjectival modification of nouns. This can be seen through the application of the adjectives *männlich* 'masculine' or *weiblich* 'feminine' to nouns, for example *der weibliche Soldat* 'the female soldier.' This causes the grammatical gender and the lexical gender to not apply. German speakers can use this method to create nouns that can be of any gender. German will also compound nouns to create nouns which are seen in both genders. These are created through the application of *-mann* or *-frau* to a lexical item such as a noun, adjective, or a verbal stem, for example *der Geschäftsmann* and *die Geschäftsfrau* 'businessman and businesswoman.' The addition of *-mann* or *-frau* is a newer more productive form of noun creation. The previously used method of creating new forms was to add the female derivative morpheme *-in* to the masculine version of the verb. This led to forms such as *die Herrin* 'lady of the house,' which is derived from *der Herr* 'lord.'

The majority of the suffixes which are used to create nouns from adjectives or verbs give the newly created noun the masculine gender, for example *-er* as seen in *der Spieler* 'player.' The standard for this creation is the addition of the female suffix. There

are, however, several nouns which have their own female specific suffix. These nouns, which are largely imported from French, are can only be applied to the nouns which are also borrowed. Examples of these suffixes are *-ette*, *-euse*, *-iere*, *-ice*, and *-esse*. which shows the ungrammaticality of words created with the French derived suffixes. Masculine French suffixes are also present in German. These nouns may be seen as direct importations from French, as these morphemes are non-productive. This means that they cannot be applied to native German words to create German words with a French flair. A non-attested version of unproductive nature is the nonsense word **die Marienkäferette* 'the female lady-bug.' This can also be seen in the adoption of the English word *die Stewardess*. This word, much like its English counterpart, has fallen out of favor due to its sexist overtones. German has adopted the word *die Flugbegleiterin* 'flight attendant' via loan translation from English

The largest impact in which referential gender is seen is in the adoption of gender-indefinite expressions. After the women's movement in West Germany, linguists searched for ways to show female inclusivity in the common language. There were two strategies which linguists developed: the feminization of lexemes and the neutralization of gender in the language. Neutralization was a twofold process in German. The first form of the strategy was the avoidance of gendered noun in personal reference, mainly through the use of epicene nouns. However, epicene substitution is problematic, as all nouns in German carry gender, yet there is not a sufficient number of epicene nouns to convey all the lexical meaning needed in everyday conversation. The second strategy was the avoidance of agentive nouns. This was achieved through the use of nominalized adjectives as well as deverbal normalizations by using the present

participle form, such as the replacement of *die Studenten* 'the students' by *die Studierenden* 'those who are learning.' This was useful, because these forms are the same or similar for both the masculine and feminine forms that are purely gender neutral. The creation of nominalized adjectives is a highly productive process which is still frequently used in German speaking countries. A recent law which was passed in Germany uses these forms as a method of gender equality. In this law, street signs and other municipal signs have the agentive nouns replaced with participle nouns. This means that the signs having *Fußgängerzone* 'pedestrian area' containing the masculine agentive noun have been replaced with signs which say *zu Fuß gehende* 'those who go by foot' (Fleischhauer.) Signs such as these are an example of true gender neutral language, as all genders are represented by the language equally.

Feminization is the process of making the feminine members of the statement lexically salient in speech. Feminization is achieved through the addition of the female form alongside the masculine forms. This process shows the coordination between the lexically masculine-specific form with the lexically feminine-specific form. The nouns and/or pronouns will be joined by some form of linking item, either a conjunction or phrase. These linking items are commonly *und* 'and,' *oder* 'or,' or *beziehungsweise* 'respectively.' These forms are called either long splitting or pair forms (Hellinger "Engendering" 155.) Splitting may also be seen in the gender based adjectival modification of nouns which creates a double adjective construction.

(5) a. *Alle Lehrerinnen und Lehrer*

All teachers(f) and teachers (m)

b. *jeder Wähler oder jede Wählerin*

every voter(m) or every voter (f)

c. *jemand, der bzw. die*

someone, who (m or f)

d. *männliche und weibliche Abgeordnete*

male and female delegates

In addition, there are economy forms, *Sparformen*, which can be used to be more orthographically economical. These were created by various feminist organizations. There are several forms which were used. The first form was the addition of a slash in between the masculine plural and the feminine plural suffix *-innen*. The other form commonly used was the addition of a capital letter indicating the separation between the masculine and feminine forms. This could be used both with nouns as well as possessive articles, indefinite pronouns, and relative pronouns.

(6) a. *Lehrer/innen* 'Teachers'

b. *jedeR* 'everyone'

c. *LehrerInnen* 'teachers'

It is worth noting that these forms were not unique to the German language. The European Union and Switzerland have adopted these forms. This can be seen through the name of the Association of Swiss Students. The French version uses a large E on the noun to show the orthographic difference between male and female students.

(7) *Verband Schweizerischer StudentInnenschaften/ Union Nationale des EtudiantEs de Suisse*

These forms, while still seen today in German-speaking countries, were not quickly adopted and faced a backlash from the German community. While seen as a progressive movement in the language, linguists argued that these forms detracted from the orthographic continuity in the German language. Normally, the only instances of capitalization are at the beginning of sentences and on all nouns (Hellinger “Engendering” 155.) Another problem which can be seen is the impossibility to say these forms. Because these forms are orthographically indifferent to normally written feminine forms, these cannot be differentiated in speech. Proponents of the new economy form said, however, that these forms could be pronounced. The commonly proposed pronunciation of the economy form capital letter was to use a glottal stop before the pronunciation of the added suffix, for example *StudentInnen* ‘students’ would be pronounced [tu:dentʔinən]. Other members of feminist groups said, however, that the new form should not have any new pronunciation (Hellinger “Engendering” 156.) This was cast aside by grammarians due to the fact that the feminine plural form was reserved solely for women. The counterargument to this point was that the feminine plural could also become a gender neutral term. Regardless of the problems with the pronunciation and orthography of these forms, their use in German speaking countries continues to grow. While originally used only by progressives and feminists, these forms are commonly seen today in all written contexts.

CHAPTER 3

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN

How women speak and how it differs from men

When analyzing women's speech, it is important to note the different linguistic levels at which women's speech is different. In terms of pronunciation, there are no stark differences between the ways women speak when compared to men. The phonemes do not differ between the sexes. The major difference between men's and women's speech in German pertains to how they use syntax and the social role which women play in discourse. The lexicon used by women is also largely similar to the lexicon of men with small exceptions such as vulgarity.

The majority of research done on women's discourse relations was done in the 1970's during the genesis of the field. Senta Trömel-Plötz analyzed the speech of women as they participated in speech with both people who were subordinates as well as their equals. The findings in Germany were that women used a strongly different form of the language than was used by their male counterparts (Trömel-Plötz 312.) German women had the tendency of using a much more nuanced version of the language. This was quantified by the higher use of modal particles, hedges, and tag questions. These implications showed that women speaking German use a more discourse driven approach with a high reference to the speaker. They did not take a direct lead in the conversation or were not highly assertive in their speech. Women were also more likely to allow their male counterparts to cut them off in speech. The

female participants were more likely to give longer answers to questions which could be answered in fewer words. The higher use of modal particles shows a higher level of nuance and indirect nature of female speech. Modal particles have a special role in German, as it has been argued that they have no lexical meaning, but rather give an indirect relation to the sentence. When modal particles are used, the sentence is given an linguistic flavor that is not translatable or can only be seen in the realm of pragmatics.

(8) a. *Ich bin Hausfrau*

I am a housewife

b. *Ich bin eben nur eine Hausfrau.*

I am really only a housewife.

The difference between these two sentences are the use of the modal particles *eben*. This word has additional meanings when used in other contexts than being modal particles, when used as modal particles, this modal particle the function of providing the personal views of the speaker. The woman wants to let the addressee know that she is not higher than her interlocutor and that she is not special.

Modal particles are not the only reason that Trömel-Plötz believed that women used a nonassertive register of speech. This can also be seen by the higher use of direct references to the interlocutor by the speaker. By referencing the addressee, the woman shows that she is not above the interlocutor, but rather on the same societal level. This was seen in all manners of women's speech, including examples where the woman was in a position of authority higher of her male interlocutor.

The use of tag questions shows how it was believed that women would not give their own ideas. Tag questions are not questions in the terms of regular syntax, but rather indicative sentences which are tagged with question-like utterances.

(9) a. *Sind Sie Student?*

Are you a student?

b. *Sie sind Student, nicht wahr?*

You are a student, not true

'You are a student, right?'

The use of tag questions showed that women were not willing to state their own thoughts, but rather required the interlocutor to validate their statements. This also allowed the interlocutor to respond with a full sentence instead of a simple one-word answer (Clyne 141-2)

Recent research has taken the ideas from the 1970's and shown that they are not relevant in actual speech. While women may tend to use a more polite version of speech, there are really no major differences between the speech of women and men. In the analysis of speech by men and women from 1991, it was shown that women and men spoke the same ways, as both men and women showed the same speech patterns. The reason this change has occurred was the realization of a more gender neutral environment in the workforce and in society. The larger mitigating factor on speech was the social situation of the speaker. The speaker's socioeconomic place had a larger impact on the type of speech which will be produced. Gender was largely irrelevant in patterns of speech (Gräßel 12.)

How women are referenced

The way that German interfaces with women has changed over the last decades, but many things remain true. German has many of the same societal notions regarding women. While the use of the term *Fräulein* 'miss' has fallen out of favor, there are still many derogatory patterns that dominate how women are referenced in the language. Many terms that apply to women are based on three different criteria. The domains of words applying to women fall into the categories of old, bitchy, and promiscuous. These societal implications show that women are still seen as second-class citizens to men. These terms also show that women are only referred to by their sexual ability. The numerous nature of terms applied to women show that the vulgar nature of men's speech drives the creation of new insulting forms.

Table 3.1. Forms of Reference to Women Based on Stereotype Class (Breiner 108)

Old	Promiscuous	Bitchy
<i>alte Hexe</i> 'old witch'	<i>Flittchen</i> 'tramp'	<i>Keife</i> 'nagger'
<i>alte Schachtel</i> 'old bag'	<i>Schlampe</i> 'slut'	<i>Waschweib</i> 'washwoman'
<i>Schrapnell</i> 'shrapnel'	<i>geiler Feger</i> 'horny vixen'	<i>alte Giftspritze</i> 'old spitfire'

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Where women's linguistics stands

West German feminist linguists focused their research on how different men and women are and how women are referenced. While it is true that there are ways in which women are oppressed by the German language, such as the large amount of derogatory terminology referring to women, the ways that men and women speak are not as different as was thought. The researchers were misguided by their attempts to find differences between the sexes. The biological gender of the speaker is not the most important factor guiding their speech. Rather, it is the socioeconomic and geographic factors that determine the patterns of speech.

Author's opinion on the future of the field

The future of the field of gender in German linguistics will depend upon the societal changes. As the discourse turns away from the binary system of gender in discourse, the linguistic conversation will also move towards the acknowledgment of the status quo. The current system shows that the grammatical system only works for people who are cisgender, meaning that they are heterosexual people who identify themselves solely as the gender to which their sex has assigned them. There are people, however, who do not belong to the binary sexual system of solely male or solely female.

The binary gender system fails in our society due to the large number of people who find themselves outside of the gender hierarchy. People who are transgendered, meaning that they are at some point in the process of gender reassignment, feel

disenfranchised by the current two gender model. Another situation arises when persons are born with a medical anomaly that causes them to have their gender traits be changed in some manner. Many chromosomal anomalies may cause the expression of various secondary sexual characteristics which differ from their biological gender.

There are also people who are not transgendered but do not subscribe to the binary gender system. This phenomenon is called being genderqueer. This describes people who either are not comfortable identifying themselves as the gender which their sex has given them or find themselves torn between the genders. The comfort of a person's gender choice is largely a function of the social gender system in the psyche of the person. They may not find that their preferences fall within the social gender of their sex. The person's sexuality is also irrelevant, as there are heterosexuals who consider themselves to be genderqueer as well as homosexuals who are confident in their gender. The gender that a person considers themselves to be is a largely personal issue involving the social situation of the person.

These societal changes may cause the language to change; however, there is no academic research in the field of transgendered or genderqueer language. The classical approach to language analysis is a binary heteronormative point of view. As western society begins to reach out to the transgendered community, the linguistic field should also begin to reach out to this community as well. The linguistic field will want to know how transgendered people interface in a language which does mark strongly the gender on a specific lexeme. However, when a language does not provide an outlet for people who find themselves unaccommodated by the binary gender system, also known as intersex people, the language must create new forms to accommodate these people.

In English, when the referent is intersex, the tendency is for speakers to use the impersonalized third person plural pronoun *they*. The usage of the impersonal pronoun causes the expected change of verb agreement in English which only inflects between singular and plural. This change strips the individuality of the referent by causing the singular inflection showing that the referent is the only person performing an action. There have also been attempts in the English language to create a gender neutral pronoun. These attempts were propagated by the LGBT community to create a gender neutral singular pronoun. However, because these attempts were made by people who are not in the status quo, namely people espousing heteronormative values in largely heteronormative environments, these efforts were not adopted into the English language (MacKay 447.) My research has shown that there were no attempts in the German language to create such a pronoun. German already has a third person singular gender neutral pronoun, *man*; however, this could not incorporate any individuality. *Man* is used specifically to achieve the opposite effect, which is to take agency away from the referent to create an impersonal utterance. As previously stated, another problem is also that German speakers will use the gender neutral masculine when declining the impersonal pronoun. This does not incorporate intersex people, as they may not identify with the masculine declension.

Given the advances in human rights in recent years, language will continue to evolve with these changes. However, the larger question will remain, which is, how does the society change its views of gender? As issues such as marriage equality and abortion continue to stay relevant in the political landscape in the western world, the questions of the roles of women, gender, and homosexuality will also be asked. The only way in

which society can truly change the progression of roles assigned by gender is through the removal of the stereotypes and preconceived gender notions inherent in the minds of people. The reworking of the mind is a two way process, as the advancement towards gender equality is not only the removal of gender bias towards women in speech and their prescribed place in society, but also the acceptance of men in the roles which are traditionally held by women. This means not only that men who go into “typically female” fields receive the same respect and treatment societally as women, but also the tolerance and acceptance of men who show traditionally “feminine” qualities such as compassion and empathy. True equality regarding gender requires the removal of all preconceived notions which govern the way that people interact with each other.

It is the author’s opinion that the future of the field of gender studies and German linguistics will heavily involve studying the language of LBGT people. The issues regarding the vocabulary which will be used to describe the unions of these people as well as the terms of personal reference will be seen as these people and their daily issues are seen more prominently in media.

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