Sexless animates? Gender agreement with fixed gender nouns in German and French

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2. Sleeman & Ihnsane’s analysis for French
Sleeman & Ihnsane (2016) distinguish grammatical and semantic gender:

- **Encoded where?**
  - **Grammatical gender:** Mental lexicon (in principle)
  - **Semantic gender:** Functional projection Gender Phrase (GendP) only present for animate nouns

- **Interpretable?**
  - **No**
  - **With class B/C: yes**
  - **With class D: no**

- **Two-noun analysis of superpartitive partitives:**
  - Noun of inner DP (set) copied onto outer DP (subset)
  - Copied noun remains unpronounced
  - If present, gender value copied together with noun
  - Second Gender Phrase in outer DP

- **Result:**
  - Sleeman & Ihnsane: class B/C nouns unmarked for grammatical gender in lexicon; valuation through insertion of semantic gender value on GendP

(3) Class D: sentinelle
(4) Class B/C: ministre
(5) Class B/C: ministre

- **Failed Agree**

### 3. Research questions

Gender agreement in superpartitive constructions in French and German:

1. Do we observe the same patterns as Sleeman & Ihnsane (2016) in both German and French?
2. Can Sleeman & Ihnsane’s analysis also account for German?

### 5. Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Grammatical agreement</th>
<th>Semantic agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opfer</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>M/F/N</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person</td>
<td>M/F</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waife</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flüchtling</td>
<td>M/F</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class B/C</td>
<td>M/F</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personne</td>
<td>M/F</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sentinelle</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personnage</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>girène</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class B/C</td>
<td>M/F</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6. A slightly different approach

**Assumption:** all nouns are marked for grammatical gender, but not all to the same degree of specification

- **Class D nouns** marked for specific grammatical gender (M, F, (N)) in the lexicon
- **Class B/C nouns** marked for hybrid grammatical gender (M/F), not specified as either masculine or feminine yet

#### Comparison with Dutch gender system:

- **Originally three genders:** masculine & feminine & neuter
- **Conflation of masculine and feminine:** M + F = common
- **Now two genders:** common & neuter

### HYBRID GENDER = COMMON GENDER

Adapted from Hansen, Harley & Ritter (2002)

#### Gender feature hierarchy:

- **Gender**
  - **masculine**
  - **feminine**
  - **neuter**
  - **common**
  - **feminine**

### References


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