

# Grammatical gender and hermeneutical injustice

*Grammatical gender languages* (Stahlberg et al. 2007) mark gender on every noun and satellite elements such as adjectives, articles, and pronouns. While the gender of terms for inanimates is arbitrary, when the referent is human, the term's grammatical gender corresponds to its referent's gender. However, in grammatical gender languages, like Italian, French, and Spanish, that only have the masculine and the feminine for human referents, no grammatical gender corresponds to non-binary individuals. Hence, a discrepancy arises between the term and its referent's gender. Crucially, this discrepancy is not due to *misuse* by the speaker but rather to the *structural features* of the language, especially to the lack of grammatical gender for non-binary identities: it depends on a gap in linguistic resources. This gap makes non-binary people invisible, hindering the collective understanding of their gender identity, and originates from the entrenched prejudice that a person can only be male or female. For these reasons, I will argue that the lack of a grammatical gender corresponding to non-binary identities is an instance of *hermeneutical injustice* (Fricker 2007); it possesses all its hallmarks: it is structural, it hampers understanding, and it depends on prejudice.