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THE CONCEPT OF GRAMMATICAL GENDER FROM A CHINESE PERSPECTIVE

MA Thesis

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Abstract

Grammatical gender is one of the ways in which many languages classify nouns. It is not a universal category: for instance, it is absent in Chinese Mandarin, as well as in many other Asian languages. The aim of this research, focusing in particular on Chinese speakers, is to investigate to which extent speakers of genderless languages grasp the concept of grammatical gender. If they were asked to associate a noun with a gender, which strategies would they use? This thesis illustrates the results of the nominal classification made by Chinese respondents who were asked to select genders for forty nouns and to motivate their choice.

The findings of this study may be helpful in two ways. On the one hand, they may provide information on how the human mind classifies nouns. On the other hand, they may give a new perspective for future studies on second language (L2) acquisition.

The concept of Grammatical Gender from a Chinese perspective

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Glossary

Ch.	Chinese
F	Feminine (gender)
G	Gender
GL	Language with genders
GL1	First/native language with genders
GL2	Second language with genders
It.	Italian
L1	First/native language
L2	Second language
M	Masculine (gender)
N	Neuter (gender)
n	noun (referred to the list of nouns in section 3.2)
NGL	Genderless language
NGL1	First/native language without genders
NGL2	Second language without genders
pl.	plural
pr.	principle (referred to the list of principles in section 4.1)
s.	singular

1. Introduction

During the spring semester of 2014, I was one of four Italians participating in an Intermediate Chinese course at Beijing International Studies University along with 16 other international (mostly Asian) students. It is in such a stimulating environment, with the constant possibility to engage with others, that sometimes you start wondering about linguistic aspects neglected so far.

One day, during the break, a linguistic symposium started spontaneously sharing basic sentences of each language: we already knew how our languages sounded and looked different, but, for the first time, we started to investigate some morphological and syntactic characteristics. I still remember the puzzled look on the face of my Korean, Thai and Japanese classmates when I told them that, in Italian, nouns are divided into masculine (M) and feminine (F). They could accept that pronouns were distinguished according to gender, since at least the most basic distinction between "he" and "she" existed in their native languages as well, but they could not understand why this would also work for nouns. However absurd, this characteristic of Italian was most fascinating for them, and a long list of questions followed our explanation, all asking about the category of specific nouns and why. At a certain point, they were even trying to guess themselves whether a noun was M or F, basing themselves mainly on the semantic level or on the impression that the referent gave them.

This was only a brief moment of entertainment in the break during classes. However, it left a mark in my mind, and, since then, I have been curious to investigate more about grammatical gender and why some languages have it and others do not.

1.1. The research question

The main question of this research is: how do Chinese native speakers approach the concept of grammatical gender? Specifically, how well do they grasp the concept of gender? How well can they systematically apply it to a second language with genders (GL2)? Might they be able to apply the same concept to their own native language without genders (NGL1), if they were asked to?

In languages which do have genders, they are crystallized categories and nouns belong to these categories according to the different criteria of semantics and form that will be soon described in the next chapter. However, when students with an NGL1 approach a second language with genders (GL2), they do not always study these criteria. Rather, they find ways to learn genders by heart. But, which strategies do they use?

The aim of this research on native speakers of Chinese (from now on always referring to modern Mandarin if not specified otherwise) is to identify possible variables that could lead students to pick a gender over another one when learning a GL2. The findings of this study could not only lead to theoretical contributions regarding how the human mind classifies nouns. It could also have direct practical implications for future studies on acquisition of L2. If the results are satisfying in this sense, then knowing how speakers of NGL1 would tend to divide nouns into categories would help language teachers to anticipate their students' mistakes, suggesting alternative methods for learning new vocabulary (and, consequently, also the correspondent gender class for each noun).

1.2. Outline

Before concentrating on the investigation itself, some general knowledge about the theoretical background will be offered in chapter 2. In that chapter I will briefly explain how the languages of the world classify nouns, with a special focus on the gender system, and what mistakes learners tend to make the most when studying a GL2.

In the following chapter, I will illustrate the methodology used to conduct this research, which data needed to be collected to answer the research question and the ideal type of respondents to investigate. Chapter 3 will also introduce one of the most relevant aspects of this methodology, namely a list of nouns that the respondents were asked to classify giving justifications for their choice. The last part of chapter 3 will be dedicated to the process of decision making in selecting the channel of investigation, a written on-line questionnaire, and its preparation and dissemination.

The main core of this study can be found in chapter 4, whose first part is dedicated to the importance of the nouns used to collect the data and the principles that the respondents might adopt while associating nouns with genders. The second part shows the results of the survey and provides commentary on them.

Finally, chapter 5 presents some reflections on the limitations of this research and some of the problems encountered while conducting it, whereas the conclusions of chapter 6 offer a summary of the investigation, highlighting the importance of this type of study and giving suggestions for future research.

2. Theoretical background

This chapter offers the theoretical background necessary to set the context of this study. First, a general outline of how languages classify nouns will be illustrated, with a special focus on the gender system. This section will be followed by a brief list of examples of mistakes in language acquisition.

2.1. Noun classification in languages

Grammatical gender is only one of the categories used for nominal classification. Indeed, some languages of the world use different techniques to classify nouns, and others none at all. Languages can be divided into four categories according to their nominal classification techniques:

- Languages with genders. These divide their nouns in two categories, M/F, as in Romance languages, or three, M/F/N, as in e.g. German. Besides, further subdivisions can be found in the contraposition animate/inanimate, a sort of sub-gender reported in Slavic languages; proper/common nouns, as in Tagalog and Fijian; common/neuter gender, where common G groups together M and F nouns, like Hittite and Lithuanian (Ibrāhīm 1973:70-76). The discussion on gender will continue in section 2.2.

- Languages with noun-classes. The classification system based on noun classes is typical of some African languages, such as the Bantu languages (Ibrāhīm 1973:63-69). Noun-classes are not too different from genders: these two categories share so many similarities that some scholars use the two terms as synonyms. Indeed, noun-classes and genders are both expressed using bound morphemes whose relation with the noun creates a morphological unit. They are closed grammatical systems and manifest themselves in the agreement (see section 2.2). Yet, they still have some differences. First, noun classes are more numerous than genders, as can be seen from exceptional cases of languages with even ten or twelve different classes, even though usually there are not more than five. Moreover, the distinction of genders, in particular M/F, is considered as a further classification inside the noun-classes system (Dixon 2002: chapt. 10).

  An example of language based on the noun-classes system is the Dyirbal, an Australian language. Dyirbal has four noun-classes that categorize nouns according to semantics, as Dixon illustrates (1982:178-183), and they are summed up by Corbett (1991:16) as follows:

gender I (*bayi*)	male humans, non-human animates
gender II (*balan*)	female humans, water, fire, fighting
gender III (*balam*)	non-flesh food
gender IV (*bala*)	residue

- Languages with classifiers. The definition of classifiers may vary among scholars. Here, I will briefly hint at Bußmann's definition, describing classifiers as free or bound morphemes that accompany the nouns in certain linguistic contexts (Bußmann 2007:384). This classification system is typical of Chinese and other Asian languages. The example below illustrate the use of classifiers in Mandarin, where they anticipate the nouns when the nouns are associated to numerals or determiners:

这张照片 *zhè zhāng zhàopiàn*

This CLASS ("object with wide surface and limited thickness") picture

Classifier systems consist of a wide set of classifiers that categorize nouns on the basis of different criteria, such as the shape of the referent. The exact number of classifiers in a specific language is often debated, as scholars give different definitions for this grammatical category. In Chinese, for instance, even more than one hundred classifiers can be counted, if we also include the less frequent ones (Li 2013:21).

Classifiers and the above-mentioned genders and noun-classes are all used to classify nouns, but they work in very different ways. First, as Dixon points out, classifiers are mostly free morphemes, nouns that crystallized for this specific grammatical function, whereas noun-classes and genders are bound morphemes. This factor has the consequence that the classifier system is, in principle, more open than the other two systems, because potentially new nouns could take the role of classifiers, even though, of course, this would be a slow process. Moreover, the relation between classifiers and nouns create a syntactic unit and not a morphological one. The last difference I would like to point out is that in noun-classes/gender systems the greatest part of nouns only belongs to one category. Instead, in classifiers systems, nouns can be generally associated to more classifiers (Dixon 2002: chapt. 10). An example of this is illustrated in the table below (Becker 1975:113), showing how in Burmese the word *myiʔ* ("river") can be associated to different classifiers according to which features of the noun the speaker wants to emphasize.

myiʔ tə yaʔ	'river one place' (e.g., destination for a picnic)
myiʔ tə tan	'river one line' (e.g., on a map)
myiʔ tə hmwa	'river one section' (e.g., a fishing area)
myiʔ tə 'sin	'river one distant arc' (e.g., a path to the sea)
myiʔ tə θwɛ	'river one connection (e.g., tying two villages)
myiʔ tə 'pa	'river one sacred object' (e.g., in mythology)
myiʔ tə khu'	'river one conceptual unit' (e.g., in a discussion of rivers in general)
myiʔ tə myiʔ	'river one river' (the unmarked case)

- Languages without nominal classification. In the end, some languages do not classify nouns at all, such as English and Persian (Ibrāhīm 1973:70).

2.2. A deeper analysis of gender classification

Hockett defines genders as "classes of nouns reflected in the behaviour of associated words" (Hockett 1958:231). This behaviour can be seen in the so-called agreement, the linguistic morphosyntactic phenomenon according to which associated words share the same number, gender and case (for those languages that have them). The following utterance from Italian can exemplify what has been said so far:

_La_	_mia_	_bella_	_cuginetta_	_è andata_	_a scuola_
Det.	Poss.	Adj.	Noun s. F	Pred.	Loc.

My beautiful cousin has gone to school

In this example, the noun _cuginetta_ "cousin" has number s. and gender F and, due to agreement, these characteristics are shared with the other elements associated to the noun. In this case, we have the determiner _la_ "the", the possessive _mia_ "my", the adjective _bella_ "beautiful" and the past participle _andata_ "gone". According to Ibrāhīm (1973:28), agreement is what makes gender a "valuable tool of disambiguation", especially with the use of pronouns that clarify their referents in relative clauses.

A question about gender that naturally comes to mind is how nouns are actually divided into genders. There are some rules for this, but also many exceptions. Therefore, it is not easy to answer this question. However, we can say that there is a certain regularity in the classification into genders, and it can be summed up in the following way, as Corbett (1991) suggests:

- Semantics
- Form → morphology
          → phonology

The semantic system is probably the most intuitive since, in general, the grammatical gender corresponds to the sex or nature of the referent. An example of this can be seen in the Tamil language, belonging to the Dravidian family. This language maintained the tripartition of gender attested in some of the most ancient Indo-European languages, a classification that allows identifying the referents easily, excluding the exceptions:

M (masculine rational) = gods and men;

F (feminine rational) = goddesses and women;

N (neuter - irrational) = all the rest;

Moreover, from the formal point of view, the classification can either be morphological, when a suffix gives an automatic category (i.e. the suffix _-tore_ in Italian creates only M nouns), or phonological, when the position of the accent or the final sound of the noun gives the category (i.e.

in Italian the great part of nouns ending with *-a* are F). However, a last observation has to be made about both semantic and formal classifications: they are always language related, or, preferably, culture related. Indeed, languages have different morphological and phonological components, and one would expect semantics to be more universal than form, but it is not always like this. If semantics were universal, then we would not have to explain why "the Sun" is F in German (*die Sonne)* and M in Italian (*il sole*) and the other way around for "the Moon" (M in German *der Mond*, and F in Italian *la luna*). Nor would we ask why in ancient Greek and Latin the names of fruit-bearing plants were F and are M in Italian, as Agnello and Orlando (1998:80) and Corbeil (2015) explain. For further information about the anthropologic influence on language and gender, refer to Luraghi and Olita (2006).

The fact that the rules regarding gender assignment in languages are not universal implies that, when learning any GL2, it is not possible to simply transfer gender from the native language, in case it is a GL. Nor is it possible to associate genders with nouns based on instinct. Any of these interlingual gender transfers or instinctive gender assignments are likely to result in linguistic mistakes, as illustrated in the next section.

2.3. Common mistakes in gender selection of second languages with genders (GL2)

Greenberg's Universal 36 states: "If a language has the category of gender, it always has the category of number" (Greenberg 1978). This means that, compared to the number, gender is a marked grammatical category. Accordingly, one cannot be surprised that gender is one of the biggest struggles in the acquisition of GL2, especially when the learner is a native speaker of an NGL.

The following list is an example of mistakes produced by Chinese students of Italian L2, as reported by Valentini in her research (Valentini 1990):

- M or F nouns ending in *-e* are changed into *-o* (*mese* "month" → *meso; bicchiere* "glass"→ *bicchiero; tigre* "tiger"→*tigro*);
- The ending *-a*, typically F, is tendentially extended also to M nouns that should end in *-o* (*un corpo* "a body" → *una corpa; uno specchio* "a mirror" → *una specchia; pranzo* "lunch" → *pranza*);
- Overextension of the article M s. (*un* "a"), of the pronoun M instead of F, and the determiner F s. (*la* "the" [F]).

This topic cannot be elaborated any further in this thesis. It is only mentioned here to illustrate a personal reflection I made while formulating my research question.

3. Methodology

This chapter will be entirely dedicated to the methodology adopted to answer the research question of this study. In sections 3.1 and 3.2, I will first list what kind of data was necessary to collect and how to get them. Section 3.3 illustrates the typology and ideal number of respondents involved in the research. Section 3.4 explains how the form of questionnaire was chosen as medium for the investigation. Finally, in section 3.5 I will explain how the questionnaire was prepared and disseminated and what kind of tools were involved.

3.1. Data required

Two different types of data needed to be collected: personal information about the respondents and their reasoning about the classification of nouns.

Collecting personal information about the research subjects is relevant for determining possible explanations as to which factors might make NGL1 speakers tend to pick one gender over another. For example, this behaviour might be different between different generations of NGL1 speakers, or between NGL1 speakers of different educational backgrounds. At the beginning of my research, of course, I was not sure that anything like that might have been found, nor was I sure whether my study would have gone so deeply into statistical analysis. Nonetheless, I anticipated this possibility thinking about the following potential variables, here written following the same order as in the questionnaire:

1. Nationality: to distinguish between Chinese and non-Chinese, but also Mainland and Taiwan;
2. Sex;
3. Age: to divide seven age groups;
4. Native language;
5. Ability to speak any L2: to categorise the target of respondents, as in section 3.3;
6. Educational background: to distinguish the level of education according to high school diploma, Bachelor's degree, Master degree, PhD or other.
7. Study/work field: to distinguish between those who study/work with languages or linguistics from the rest.
8. Prior familiarity with gender categorization: to distinguish from those that might be facilitated to understand how grammatical gender works.

Two extra questions belonging to the section of the personal questions were asking whether or not the respondents were interested in this research and, in case they were, to leave their contact information. The contact information was important not only to give feedback to those respondents curious about the result of the study, but also to be able to contact them in case I wanted to investigate more about their answers.

The second type of data required are the classifications of nouns and the reasoning behind them. To collect this data, I decided to make a list of nouns and give the respondents the possibility to choose a gender for each noun, and to give the motivation for the choice.

At first, I considered the possibility to give four choices for genders: M, F, N and other. The relevance of the category "other" is that it would have given the respondents more freedom to use their imagination, even to create a new gender class, in case the respondent deemed it necessary. After all, we have seen in section 2.1 that in some languages there are more than the three genders M, F and N common in Indo-European languages, and for them the categorization into these three noun classes would not work, it would be limiting. In the same way, I did not want to put limits to the respondents. However, in the end, I decided to remove this option, because for respondents who were supposed to know nothing or little about the topic it might have been an easy way to avoid the choice between M, F and N. In other words, it would do more harm than good. Moreover, the results might have been too difficult to process.

3.2. List of nouns selected to collect the data

The final list of names used in for this research includes forty nouns selected from different semantic areas (refere to the table in the next page). As far as possible, I tried to maintain a balance between [+animate] versus [-animate] and [+concrete] versus [-concrete] in order to give a wide range of nouns to ponder on. The semantic categories were:

- Human beings;
- Animals;
- Celestial bodies;
- Elements of nature;
- Objects and tools;
- Food;
- Feelings;
- Abstract ideas (also labelled as "other [-concrete] [-animate] nouns").

1.	女人	*nǚrén*	"woman"		21.	花	*huā*	"flower"
2.	男人	*nánrén*	"man"		22.	水	*shuǐ*	"water"
3.	婴儿	*yīngér*	"toddler"		23.	火	*huǒ*	"fire"
4.	狮子	*shīzi*	"lion"		24.	桌子	*zhuōzi*	"desk"
5.	鸡	*jī*	"chicken"		25.	电脑	*diànnǎo*	"computer"
6.	鱼	*yú*	"fish"		26.	锤子	*chuízǐ*	"hammer"
7.	孔雀	*kǒngquè*	"peacock"		27.	床	*chuáng*	"bed"
8.	凤凰	*fènghuáng*	"phoenix"		28.	镜子	*jìngzi*	"mirror"
9.	龙	*lóng*	"dragon"		29.	玉米	*yùmǐ*	"sweet corn"
10.	狗	*gǒu*	"dog"		30.	面粉	*miànfěn*	"flour"
11.	牛	*niú*	"cattle"		31.	包子	*bāozi*	"stuffed bread"
12.	太阳	*tàiyáng*	"Sun"		32.	爱情	*àiqíng*	"love"
13.	月亮	*yuèliàng*	"moon"		33.	悲哀	*bēiāi*	"sorrow"
14.	地球	*dìqiú*	"the Earth"		34.	怒气	*nùqì*	"anger"
15.	大海	*dàhǎi*	"ocean"		35.	力量	*lìliáng*	"strength"
16.	河	*hé*	"river"		36.	看法	*kànfǎ*	"opinion"
17.	云	*yún*	"cloud"		37.	国家	*guójiā*	"country"
18.	雨	*yǔ*	"rain"		38.	社会主义	*shèhuì zhǔyì*	"socialism"
19.	树	*shù*	"tree"		39.	政治	*zhèngzhì*	"politics"
20.	水果	*shuǐguǒ*	"fruit"		40.	法律	*fǎlǜ*	"law"

The nouns above are listed in descending order from [+concrete] and [+animated] to [-concrete] and [-animated]. However, it is noteworthy to add that the order in which they were given was different: the nouns were randomized in order to avoid nouns of the same type in a row. The randomization was arranged manually and was the same for every respondent. The online platform that was used to prepare and publish the survey ("WJX", for further details go to section 3.5) provided an option of randomization of the questions, but it was accessible only for professional accounts. A systematic randomization would have prevented the last nouns in the questionnaire from receiving less attention of the respondents on average.

With regard to the relevance of the nouns selected, it was especially important to have the respondents feel at ease with such a new topic that they first needed to understand. Accordingly, it

was fundamental to have nouns common to their daily lives and also some examples easier to classify, such as those with a referent with a clear sex (女人 *nǚrén* "woman"; 男人 *nánrén* "man"), or those with a strong cultural connotation, easy to refer to the traditional dichotomy of *yīn* (which subsumes females) and *yáng* (males) (太阳 *tàiyáng* "sun"; 月亮 *yuèliàng* "moon"; 水 *shuǐ* "water"; 火 *huǒ* "fire"; 悲哀 *bēiāi* "sorrow"; 怒气 *nùqì* "anger"; 力量 *lìliáng* "strenght"; for further explanation see section 4.1).

In addition, other nouns are valuable for the role of their referents in history or in the traditional thought because of their symbolism. For instance, this is particularly true for animals: 鱼 *yú* "fish" is related to the idea of wealth because of its homophony with another word that means "abundance" (馀 *yú*); 牛 *niú* "cattle" reminds to the idea of strength but also the idea of wealth and possession; 鸡 *jī* "chicken", 龙 *lóng* "dragon" and 狗 *gǒu* "dog" are animals of the Chinese Zodiac, etc. As a last note about the selection of nouns, some of those listed might seem to have no specific importance, for instance objects, food or abstract ideas, all at the bottom of the table above. Actually, for this research it is important to see if there is any difference in the way of classifying nouns belonging to various categories, and, in particular, if there is a change in the reaction of the respondant according to degree of animacy or concreteness of the noun: a question related to this point might be, for instance, if all of the [-animated] and [-concrete] nouns will be treated in the same way. Accordingly, some [-animated] and [-concrete] nouns have been included and they include objects of daily life (nouns 24 to 28), food (nouns 29 to 31), feelings (nouns 32 to 34), general abstract nouns of common use (nouns 35 to 40).

Overall, all of the nouns are high-frequency nouns in Chinese.

3.3. Target

Part of my original research question was to identify possible variables that could lead students to pick a gender over another. The theoretically potential variables helped me to define the typology of ideal target for my research. In the end, I decided to concentrate my research on how Chinese native speakers approach the concept of grammatical gender. Nevertheless, initially I was tempted to question speakers of Korean, Thai and Japanese as well, to investigate whether Chinese would have replied in the same way as speakers of other NGL1s. In the meanwhile, I also asked myself: will there be any differences between monolingual respondents and speakers of a second language, specifically a GL2?

Accordingly, in the first stage of my study the following groups of research subjects had been selected as ideal respondents:

- Chinese monolingual speakers
- Chinese speakers with knowledge of other languages without genders
- Speakers of other languages without genders (NGL) who are studying Chinese (Chinese was chosen as the language to write the questionnaire)
- Chinese speakers and speakers of a NGL with knowledge of any GL2

As speakers of NGLs, apart from Chinese, I decided to focus on Korean, Thai and Japanese native speakers, since many such students could be found in Jinan (capital of Shandong province), where the research was to be conducted. I considered 20 respondents for each language a fair number to make comparisons between speakers of each language. Unfortunately, not enough non-Chinese respondents took part in the research; therefore, I dedicated my study exclusively to Chinese speakers. More information about the subjects actually surveyed can be found in section 4.3.

3.4. Research medium: questionnaire or interview?

Once the research question and the type of data needed had been defined, it was necessary to understand how to undertake the study itself. Two main possibilities were available, a questionnaire and an interview, both presenting positive and negative aspects. The doubt, indeed, was due to the nature of these two media: the former is indicated for quantitative research, for a big number of interviewees who have to answer the same set of questions, whereas the latter is more suitable for qualitative research, in case of studies focused on one or few interviewees.

At this point, it was paramount to be clear about what kind of research I wanted to do, understanding, first of all, if I wanted quantitative or qualitative research. In view of my research question, the data I needed consisted not only of the classification of certain nouns according to genders categories but also of the reasoning that was behind this choice. A mere proportion of how many respondents classified a noun into genders M, F and N would not have much value without knowing the process of thought that lead the interviewee to choose a particular category instead of another one. Accordingly, for this kind of study I needed both multiple-choice questions and open questions.

During the preparation of the questions to ask, at a certain stage I was opting for face-to-face interviews. Several considerations made me think about this option, first of all, the above-mentioned open questions. I needed to be sure that the respondents would answer all of my questions exhaustively, without skipping the reason of the choice and with an interview it is easier to take control of the responses, with the possibility to remind the interviewees to give motivations for their answer, or to go back and forth in order to make connections. Secondly, the face-to-face interview would have given me the chance to further clarify the concept of "gender", which is something that speakers of NGLs have never encountered before, unless they have previously studied a GL2 or general linguistics, or to make examples from other languages when needed. Thirdly, in case a reasoning behind the selection of gender for a certain noun was not clear (also because of the linguistic barrier) or was particularly interesting, the interview would allow me to ask for clarifications or further explanation immediately. On the contrary, with a questionnaire I could only analyse the answers once everything was already submitted, hope that the respondents left any contact information and hope that they remembered what they were thinking and trying to say.

Notwithstanding all the points listed above, in the end, the form of the questionnaire seemed to suit my investigation better for two reasons. Firstly, it would be more convenient in terms of time and logistics both for the respondents and me: once disseminated, the questionnaire could be filled in when and where it was more convenient for the respondent, without the necessity to make appointment to meet (I excluded the idea of having phone calling, since it adds extra barriers in understanding).

Secondly, conducting the research on paper makes the task less demanding for the researcher, avoiding the challenge of communicating in Chinese on a high level. I only had to prepare good questions in advance. Then, I would have all the time to repeatedly read the answers, without the stress or the fear of not understanding the respondent (sometimes even recordings might be obscure to non-native speakers), and to translate those words that I do not know. Moreover, having the respondents write the answers would make things much easier and faster when it came to process the information, especially in case of online questionnaires.

Consequently, I decided to opt for a questionnaire instead of an interview, and in particular an online form, in order to disseminate it more easily and further (in terms of location), and to collect the results more easily as well.

3.5. Preparation, publication and dissemination of the questionnaire

The questionnaire itself was divided into two parts: personal questions and the classification of nouns. A short text introduced the survey, its topic and its goals, also providing simple examples of nominal morphology in GLs to clarify the grammatical concept of gender. The whole survey was written in Chinese, and the text was checked in content and form by Chinese native speakers.

The decision to have only a Chinese monolingual version of the questionnaire, indeed, might have limited the dissemination among non-Chinese natives, reducing the potential number of respondents. However, this decision was due to the fact that, Chinese being a logographic language, the graphic component has a very different role from other language with alphabetical script. The nature of Chinese script itself might have somehow influenced the selection of gender, and I needed to be sure that all of the respondents were dealing with the same type of language (for further details see section 4.1).

As mentioned above, I decided to distribute and collect the questionnaire online. To do that, I needed a platform that could be accessible in China: this aspect was paramount, since it was already excluding Google Forms and some other similar resources banned in China. Moreover, considering the relatively high number of ideal respondents, I needed a website that could allow an unlimited number of respondents, and this was leading me even more to exclude websites popular in Western countries that only ensure a limited number of options and responses.

In the end, I used a website very popular in China and easily accessible abroad as well, 问卷星 *wènjuànxīng* (WJX).[1] The positive aspects of this website, apart from the accessibility in China and abroad and the unlimited number of respondents, are the numerous types of questions available, the survey can be easily spread through link or QRcode, the account is free and more than one questionnaire can be made per account. On the other hand, the negative aspect is that, like many other Chinese resources, this website is not very inviting to foreigners: indeed, to create an account the user must register through his phone number, which must be Chinese or Taiwanese, at least according to the options available when I registered in January 2018. Alternatively, it is also possible to access through QQ, another Chinese app.

The questionnaire was published on WJX in the middle of January and it was distributed among Chinese and non-Chinese native speakers through social networks. The entire questionnaire can still be seen online.[2] The whole questionnaire can also be seen in appendix 1.

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[1] Accessible at www.wjx.cn
[2] Accessible at www.wjx.cn/jq/19806888.aspx

4. Hypotheses and analysis of the results

This chapter constitutes the core of this research. In the next sections, I will illustrate the hypothetical principles that might influence the selection of genders. My considerations on the nouns selected for this study will follow: the nouns are divided into semantic groups and I will explain the importance of each noun or group of nouns referring to the principles listed in section 4.1. Before the real analysis of the results, a short section will be dedicated to the description of the respondents that joined this questionnaire and that have been considered for the final case study.

4.1. Hypothetical principles leading to gender selection

In section 3.2, it was explained that the choice of nouns was important due to their linguistic and cultural characteristics that might have influenced the respondents in their choice of gender. Here, these characteristics are listed in detail and addressed as hypothetical principles, since they have been identified as the hypothetical devices that the respondents might have used to answer the questionnaire.[3]

List of hypothetical principles:

A. <u>The noun has a clear referent in nature</u>. "Sex" is a biological category applied to human beings and animals, reason for which this principle is true for those nouns whose referents are humans and animal with clear sexual distinctions. For instance: "man" ↔ "woman" (It. *uomo* ↔ *donna*, Ch. 男人 *nánrén* ↔女人 *nǚrén*), "son" ↔ "daughter", "father" ↔ "mother", "rooster" ↔ "hen", "bull" ↔ "cow", "lion" ↔ "lioness". This principle can also be applied to legendary creatures: the "fairy", for instance, in the collective consciousness is mainly depicted with girly appearances, and the same can be said for a "nymph"; on the other hand, when we think about a "wizard", in our minds a manly figure appears. However, this principle also has some exceptions, since it is possible that the grammatical gender of the noun does not reflect the natural gender of its referent: for instance, in It. the nouns *la guardia* and *la sentinella*, both meaning "the guard", are F, even though the role of guard is mainly associated to men. According to this principle, a unanimous choice of "woman" as F and "man" as M is expected.

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[3] At this point, I would like to point out that, however hard I tried to think as the respondents would, I fear that many of my assumptions and expectations are somehow driven by my mother tongue. Being an Italian native speaker, the gender distinction in F and M has deep roots in my mindset, making it difficult for me to be completely objective. Moreover, many examples will involve English as well, even though it is an NGL.

Examples of pictures of legendary creatures found on Google Images for the respective labels

"Fairy"   "Nymph"   "Wizard"

B. <u>The referent of the noun is analyzed on the basis of the dichotomy of *yīn* and *yáng*.</u> According to the Taoist concept of *yīnyáng*, the world is a balance of opposites, and its components can be attributed to one of the two poles known as *yīn* and *yáng* (Cooper 1981:7-11). The *yīn* is passive, receptive, associated to the concepts of femininity and weakness, whereas the *yáng* is active, creative, and associated to masculinity and strength. However, many other concepts are attributed to the contraposition of *yáng* and *yīn*, such as positive and negative, physical and mental, intellectual and emotional, reason and intuition, positive and negative, light and shade, the Sun and the Moon. Indeed, all of the elements of the universe are subject to this association to *yīn* and *yáng*: for instance, air and fire represent the active, and water and earth represent the passive. This factor had a great influence on all of the aspects of ancient Chinese culture, such as religion, alchemy and medicine, and, to a certain extent, it still has impact on the contemporary view of the world. An example of this is the popularity of *fēngshuǐ* (风水), whose goal is to determine the best siting and arrangement (in terms of positive energy) of a house, its garden and its components (Bennett 1978:1-26).

With regard to the grammatical gender, in Chinese the word for "masculine" (M) is 阳性 *yángxìng* and the word for "feminine" (F) is 阴性 *yīnxìng*, respectively containing the characters 阳 *yáng* and 阴 *yīn* (the term for "neuter" N in Chinese is 中性 *zhōngxìng*, literally "the gender that stays in the middle"). Yet "masculine" and "feminine", in terms of grammar, are unknown to Chinese speakers, considering the nature of their language. As a consequence, I would not be too surprised to see that the referents classified in *yīn* and *yáng* have their respective nouns classified in 阴性 *yīnxìng* F and 阳性 *yángxìng* M. For instance, because of this, it is likely that the Sun, traditionally associated to the *yáng*, will be considered M.

C. <u>The referent is associated to *yīn* or *yáng* indirectly.</u> Sometimes the distinction between *yīn* and *yáng* might be not as immediate as in principle B, at least for those who have not conducted in-depth studies on Taoism. Therefore, even though this traditional view of the world still has influence on contemporary society, it is possible that common people's knowledge is somehow limited. Therefore, other factors might push the respondents to select the gender, like the other principles listed below. Nevertheless, it is still possible that the gender is conveyed by the association with other elements characterised by a clearer relation with one of the two poles. For instance, according to this principle, fish might be associated with F, because it lives in water, and water is *yīnxìng* for principle B, or it might be considered M because of the vivacity of its movements, characteristically attributed to the *yángxìng* (M).

D. <u>The visual components of the characters that make a noun might convey the grammatical gender.</u> Chinese is written with a logographic script, which is a script in which each symbol corresponds to a morpheme (Colman 2008). Words can be made of one or more characters and characters are made of radicals, which in turn are made of strokes. The visual effect of a radical in a Chinese character or a word has a bigger impact than letters have in words written in alphabetic scripts, because radicals carry semantic information (that are not necessarily transferred to the whole character). For instance, the character 女 *nǚ* "woman" can be used as a radical to write other characters, such as 婚姻 *hūnyīn* "marriage", where 女 *nǚ* can be seen on the left-hand side of both of the characters that constitute this word. If, for instance, according to principle A, 女 *nǚ* is F, it is my hypothesis that, in case principle D is applied, consequently 婚姻 *hūnyīn* is also considered F because of the radical involved to write it.

The fact that the investigation was conducted in written form might have triggered the respondents to actually consider this principle for classifying nouns[4].

E. <u>Use of the associated pronoun: 他 *tā* "he", 她 *tā* "she" and 它 *tā* "it".</u> In the written language, the personal pronoun is the only example of gender distinction, even though it is not really possible to consider it a case of grammatical gender since there is no agreement with the words related. Moreover, this distinction is a relatively recent linguistic evolution that happened in the early 20th century because of the influence from European languages

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[4] However, it has to be said that the questionnaire was written in simplified Chinese, and, consequently some of the characters used for the research present a lower number of strokes and radical than those written in traditional Chinese. This aspect leaves me with the question: would there be any difference if the survey was written in traditional characters? Unfortunately, this question cannot be answered.

(Wiedenhof 2015:376). Nor can we talk about genders in the juxtapositions of words such as 公鸡 *gōngjī* "rooster" and 母鸡 *mǔjī* "hen", where 公 *gōng* is the character for male, and 母 *mǔ* the character for female entities. According to the Chinese pronouns 他 *tā* "he", 她 *tā* "she" and 它 *tā* "it", and their usage as clitics, nouns are divided in:

- 他 *tā* "he": [+ human][+male] nouns
- 她 *tā* "she": [+ human][- male] nouns
- 它 *tā* "it": [- human] nouns

In traditional script, there is a further distinction between 它 *tā* "it" and 牠 *tā* "it (for animals)". However, I do not expect that this aspect can have a great influence on gender selection, firstly because 牠 *tā* does not express anything in terms of biological sex, and, secondly, because only a small percentage of respondents actively use traditional characters (see section 4.3). According to this principle, nouns can be divided into M, F or N according to the pronoun to which they are associated in written language (他 *tā* "he" → M; 她 *tā* "she" → F; 它 *tā* "it" → N). This principle differs from principle A in terms of type of analysis. On the one hand, pr. A offers a semantic analysis, according to which all of the [+animate] nouns are divided into M and F because they have a sex. On the other hand, pr. E gives a grammatical analysis, with the consequence that all of the [-human] nouns are automatically associated with 它 *tā* "it" (N), no matter whether they are [+animate] or not. For example, a "hen" can be considered F according to pr. A, because it is a living creature of feminine sex, but it can be considered N according to pr. E, because it is not a human being.

F. <u>Linguistic male chauvinism</u>. This principle is inspired directly from Italian, where there is no sexual distinction between Male and Female in animals or people in case of plurality, and masculine becomes predominant. For instance, in case a group of teachers consist of both women and men, it does not matter whether the women outnumber the men, the grammatical gender will still be M (it. *i professori* "the teachers"). Is it possible that something similar happens for Chinese native speakers as well? In case of animals, for instance, 狼 *láng* is the word for "wolf" not specifying the sex. The sex is expressed by 公狼 *gōngláng* "male-wolf" and 母狼 *mǔláng* "she-wolf" as described in principle E. However, since the monosyllabic form 狼 *láng* is commonly used, I wonder if it is possible to see a general tendency in associating the animal with the male sex and, consequently with the gender M.

The principles listed here will be used as a reference in the next section, in order to illustrate the hypothetical expectations of the results of the questionnaire.

4.2. Considerations on the nouns selected

The nouns chosen for this investigation are not monads but interrelated elements that share semantic characteristics. Consequently, a hypothesis of this study is that the respondent would not look at the single noun, but analyse it comparing it with other nouns. In this section, some considerations on the nouns of this questionnaire will be given according to semantic groups. These nouns have been chosen for the way in which they might be classified and interpreted, in relation to the principles listed above. Indeed, some nouns are expected to be classified more unanimously, whereas others are more controversial and could be analysed from several points of view.

In the column "considerations", you will find the motivations for which nouns are likely to be considered M, F or N. When references are made between nouns, the nouns are indicated as "nX", where "X" is the number corresponding to the noun in the table seen in section 3.2.

4.2.1. Human beings

	NOUN	CONSIDERATIONS
1.	女人 *nǚrén* "woman"	**F:** the referent has female sex, associated to gender F (pr. A)
2.	男人 *nánrén* "man"	**M:** the referent has male sex, associated to gender M (pr. A)
3.	婴儿 *yīngér* "toddler"	**M**: possibly influenced by my native language, I imagine a boy; moreover, the character 儿 *ér* itself means "son"/"male". (pr. F/D) **F**: at this stage, babies are very fragile and weak (pr. B/C). Moreover, in the character 婴 *yīng* there is the radical 女 *nǚ* "woman" (pr. D), that reminds the Taoist concept of *yīn* F (pr. B). **N**: babies are all very similar at such a young age, they cannot be distinguished. (pr. A)

4.2.2. Animals

4.	狮子 *shīzi* "lion"	**M**: its referent is male, and its physical distinction with lioness is clear (pr. A). However, it is possible that this noun is used to indicate "lion" as a species, thus including both of the sexes, indicated as 雄狮 *xióngshī* "lion" and both 母狮 *mǔshī* and 雌狮 *císhī* "lioness", but it generally indicates male referents. Moreover, the fact that the Leo constellation and star sign, always represented as a male lion, are both called 狮子 *shīzi*, make me hypothesize a possible linguistic male chauvinism (pr. F).
5.	鸡 *jī* "chicken"	**M**: as in the case on n4, this noun can be used generically to indicate both roosters and hens, but considering the importance of the rooster in rural life, Chinese culture and Chinese Zodiac, I expect pr. F to prevail. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that in the contemporary use of the Chinese language the word 鸡 *jī* became part of the slang with the meaning of "penis", thus reminding male sex. **F:** the correlation with the hen might still be strong enough to select gender F, especially because of 鸡蛋 *jīdàn* "(hen's) egg". (pr. A) **N:** part of the respondents might consider 鸡 *jī* only as chicken (neither hen nor rooster), since during the first stage of its life, the sex cannot be visibly determined. (pr. A)
6.	鱼 *yú* "fish"	**N**: the fish is another important animal in Chinese culture, object of many paintings, drawings, and other pieces of art. However, the sex cannot be easily distinguished, nor is it particularly relevant element in daily life situations.
7.	孔雀 *kǒngquè* "peacock"	**F**: in the contemporary use of the language it represents women who are born in the city and that know nothing about rural life (孔雀女 *kǒngquè nǚ* "peacock woman"), in opposition to the "phoenix man" (see n8). **M**: it is known for the beautiful plumage, which is typical of the male birds.

8.	凤凰 *fènghuáng* "phoenix"	**M:** In common use of the language it represents men coming from villages that decide to move to urban areas in order to achieve professional success (凤凰男 *fènghuáng nán* "phoenix man"). They are put into comparison with the peacock women, usually to discuss whether it is possible to have stable relationships between partners coming from such a different social and economic background. **F:** it has always been the typical decoration of wedding dresses for women.
9.	龙 *lóng* "dragon"	**M:** The dragon is one of the most representative creatures in Chinese art and symbolism. It represents the emperor and, accordingly, is always associated to male figures. Moreover, it is symbol of great strength and power (pr. B).
10.	狗 *gǒu* "dog"	No special consideration has been made about this noun. The "dog" was chosen since it is an animal of the Chinese Zodiac, and one of the few animals in this list that can be related to daily life. It would be interesting to see if there is a difference of consideration between animals that are more or less common.
11.	牛 *niú* "cattle"	**M**: also animal of the Chinese zodiac, the ox always played a paramount role in rural life and it is symbol of strength, since it is used as a tool in agriculture. Moreover, the ox might be seen as M if compared to the water buffalo (ch. 水牛 *shuǐniú*) that, being related with water is more likely to be classified as F (pr. C). **F:** part of the respondents might consider 牛 *niú* as "cow" and think about the production of milk (ch. 牛奶 *niúnǎi*).

4.2.3. Celestial bodies

12.	太阳 *tàiyáng* "Sun"	**M:** the Sun is considered *yángxìng* (pr. B). In terms of gender division, all the celestial bodies are very interesting elements to analyse in every culture. The Sun seems to have always opposite gender to the Moon.

13.	月亮 *yuèliàng* "moon"	**F:** see pr. B and n12.
14.	地球　*dìqiú* "the Earth"	I have no specific expectation about the Earth, apart from the following: **M:** it is very big (pr. B/C) **N**: it is not animated However, the selection of gender might also be influenced by the comparison with other celestial bodies, even those not mentioned in this list. Is it possible, for instance, that it will be seen in contraposition to the ocean?

4.2.4. Elements of nature

15.	大海　*dàhǎi* "ocean"	**M**: it is big and powerful (pr. B/C); **F**: it is made of water (pr. C)
16.	河　*hé* "river"	**F**: it is made of water and it is not straight (pr. B and C);
17.	云　*yún* "cloud"	**F**: it is made of water and brings water (pr. B/C); **N**: it has no life. (pr. A/E)
18.	雨 *yǔ* "rain"	**F**: it is related to water (pr. B/C); **N**: it can give life, but it can also destroy. It has no life.
19. 20. 21.	树 *shù* "tree" 水果 *shuǐguǒ* "fruit" 花 *huā* "flower"	The elements of nature expressed by n19, n20 and n21 are all related to themselves: fruits come from flowers that are at the top of trees. Can this influence the choice of gender, as it used to happen in ancient Greece (see section 2.2)? My expectations are related to the combination of the three nouns as follows. n19 = **M**: trees support both flowers and fruits (pr. C) n20 = **N**. n21= **F**: flowers give birth to fruits, so they are associated to femininity.

22.	水 *shuǐ* "water"	**F:** See pr. B Water traditionally belongs to *yīn*; will this be confirmed? Moreover, will the other nouns related to water for their meaning (or containing the radical of water) be treated all in the same way as water?
23.	火 *huǒ* "fire"	**M:** see pr. B Fire traditionally belongs to *yáng*, in opposition to water (see n22).

4.2.5. Objects and tools

The following names are objects and tools of common use. In making hypotheses about their gender, I asked myself how they are considered in relation to "more valuable" nouns that have a more relevant traditional importance. Moreover, some of these objects have more "life" or are more "active" than others are, such as the computer or the hammer. Also for this group, my considerations come from the comparison with other nouns, in particular with [+animate] nouns.

24.	桌子 *zhuōzi* "desk"	**N:** it has no life and is very passive. (pr. E)
25.	电脑 *diànnǎo* "computer"	**N:** it has no life. (pr. E) **M:** it is "active", in the sense that it can run programs and solve problems. (pr. C)
26.	锤子 *chuízǐ* "hammer"	**M:** it is strong, it is made of metal and contains the radical 钅 *jīn* "gold", used in all of the words related to metals. (pr. C)
27.	床 *chuáng* "bed"	**N:** it has no life and is very passive. (pr. E)
28.	镜子 *jìngzi* "mirror"	**N**: it is passive (pr. E), it reflects according to what is in front of it.

4.2.6. Food

29.	玉米 *yùmǐ* "sweet corn"	**N:** see n20
30.	面粉 *miànfěn* "flour"	**N:** it has no life (pr. E), it is man-made
31.	包子 *bāozi* "stuffed bread"	**N**: see n30 But there might also be a difference in comparison with the bread, one is stuffed, the other is not

4.2.7. Feelings

It is my hypothesis that the respondents might have some struggle while classifying this group of nouns. Indeed, feelings are abstract concepts, but they are "alive", if compared to simple objects, because they have an influence on people and their behaviors.

32.	爱情 *àiqíng* "love"	According to the point of view, love can be seen in different ways. **M:** it is strong and moves people together. It is usually seen as positive (*yáng*) (pr.B/C). **F:** it is romantic, characteristic usually attributed to women (pr. B/C). **N**: it is a [-concrete] [-animate] noun. It has no life itself. (pr. E)
33.	悲哀 *bēiāi* "sorrow"	**F**: "sorrow" is a negative feeling (pr. B/C). **N**: see n32.
34.	怒气 *nùqì* "anger"	**F**: "anger" is a negative feeling (pr. B/C). Moreover, it contains the radical of 女 *nǚ* "woman" (pr.D). **N**: see n32.

4.2.8. Other [-concrete] [-animate] nouns

35.	力量 *lìliáng* "strength"	**M**: "strength" is always connected to the concept of *yáng*. (pr. B) **N**: see n32
36.	看法 *kànfǎ* "opinion"	**F**: it contains the radical of water 氵 **N**: see n32
37.	国家 *guójiā* "country"	**N**: see n32
38.	社会主义 *shèhuì zhǔyì* "socialism"	**M**: the political idea of "socialism" comes from a man (pr. C/A) **N**: see n32
39.	政治 *zhèngzhì* "politics"	**M**: the concept of "politics", in its traditional context, is bound to masculinity, since governments were and are still mainly composed of men. (pr. C/A) **N**: see n32
40.	法律 *fǎlǜ* "law"	**F**: the word for "law" contains the radical of water 氵 (pr. D). Moreover, the concept of law in western culture is also represented as a woman, when represented in visual art. **N**: see n32

4.3. Respondents

With regard to the respondents, 30 Chinese native speakers were ultimately considered for this study. Of these, 4 were from Taiwan, whereas the rest were all from Mainland China. Female respondents widely outnumbered the male counterpart, occupying the 90% of the total number. Different age groups can be tracked, showing that almost 2/3 of the interviewees were between 18 and 25 years old; overall, 2 were below 18 and above 50, whereas 3 were between 26 and 30, and 6 between 31 and 40 years old. For all of them, Mandarin was their native language, but 3 of them also stated to speak Cantonese, Taiwanese and the Teochew dialect respectively. Great variety can be seen in the L2 studied (all of them stated to be able to speak at least one foreign language): the languages mentioned are English, French, German, Japanese, Thai, Korean, Spanish, Russian, Italian and Hebrew; the levels vary from elementary and advanced.

Half of the interviewees were undergraduate students, whereas the others are graduate students or PhD candidates. Only one attended a professional training college.

With regard to their field of study or work, they mention teaching Chinese L2 (almost half of them), office work, financial affairs, design, physics, chemistry, foreign languages and linguistics.

Finally, 60% of the respondents stated that they were familiar with, or had heard of, the concept of grammatical gender. On the one hand, this high percentage is not a surprise, considering that more than half of the foreign languages studied are GLs; on the other hand, in view of the total absence of gender in Chinese and the relatively new openness of China to foreign languages and cultures, this value still seems to be unexpectedly high. For details, see appendix 2.

4.4. Results of the questionnaire

The results of this research are presented in tables arranged according to semantic areas, as in section 4.2. In the tables, the first column shows the nouns and the percentages of the genders chosen. The second column presents samples of motivations in English translation taken from the answers given by the respondents: these samples are grouped together according to the gender they represent; when the motivation is followed by numbers in parentheses, the numbers represent the respondents, allowing to go back to the original answer in Chinese in the detailed results in appendix 2. Finally, a short comment about whether the hypothetical principles in section 4.1 were actually adopted will follow.

4.4.1. Human beings

	NOUN & PERCENTAGE	MOTIVATIONS GIVEN
1.	女人 *nǔrén* "woman" M 0 0% F 30 100% N 0 0%	**F:** *yīnyáng* culture (3); female sex corresponds to *yīnxìng* ("feminine") (6); sexual distinction (12); women have the characteristic to be gentle and beautiful (10); in the Book of Changes […] women belong to *yīnxìng* (14);
2.	男人 *nánrén* "man" M 30 100% F 0 0% N 0 0%	**M:** *yīnyáng* culture (3); the male sex has masculine energy, attitude to be robust […] (10); sexual distinction (12); [use of the character] 他 *tā* "he" (18); he has strength (22); in French the male sex belongs to *yángxìng* ("masculine") (31);
3.	婴儿 *yīngér* "toddler" M 4 13.33% F 5 16.67% N 21 70%	**M:** if it is used in a general sense, then it is commonly *yángxìng* (25); M if it is a he and F if it is a she […] (18); **F:** influence of French (13, 31); babies are small, weak and need protection (14, 22, 40); **N:** there are both male and female (3); babies do not have sexual awareness yet (5); they are not adult yet (4); when just born, there is no sexual distinction (17); German influence (41);

As far as n1 and n2 are concerned, with little surprise my hypotheses found confirmation in the answers of the respondents. It is interesting to notice that the Book of Change, the oldest of the Chinese classics, has been mentioned more than once and by more than one respondent, showing how strong traditional values are still nowadays. However, my consideration about n3 proved to be erroneous: only one person proved to apply the principle of male chauvinism, while the greatest part of the respondents selected N, focusing mainly on the lack of sexual distinction at this early stage of life and on the possibility to have both male and female babies.

4.4.2. Animals

4.	狮子 *shīzi* "lion"			M: [lions] are robust/ characterised by strength (4, 5, 8, 11, 12); associated with the male lion (6, 9); king of the beasts/ of the forest (14, 21); German influence (41);
	M	25	83.33%	
	F	0	0%	N: [use of the character] 它 *tā* "it" (18); it is an animal (20); there are both male and female (27);
	N	5	16.67%	
5.	鸡 *jī* "chicken"			M: associated with the rooster (6, 9); it cries at the sunrise and likes the Sun/ announces the beginning of the new day (7, 14); French influence (13); chicken meat is dry and hot, can cause inflammation easily (21);
	M	10	33.33%	
	F	7	23.33%	F: [it means and sounds like the word] prostitute (3); small and weak (11); Russian influence (19); plump and cute, women like it (40);
	N	13	43.33%	N: [use of the character] 它 *tā* "it" (16, 18); it is an animal (20); there are both male and female (8, 23); it is simply common food (10);
6.	鱼 *yú* "fish"			M: French influence (13); German influence (41);
	M	3	10%	F: it lives in water (the greatest part of respondents); it is gloomy and cold (12); it is quick-witted (5); can give birth to many [other fishes] (26);
	F	18	60%	
	N	9	30%	N: it does not remind particularly nor male nor female sex (8); [use of the character] 它 *tā* "it" (16, 18); it is an animal (21); there are both male and female (27, 31);
7.	孔雀 *kǒngquè* "peacock"			M: the male ones spread their tail (3, 9, 14, 18, 24, 40); I associate it with the male peacock (6, 8,); it is a Southern bird, the South is closer to the Sun (7);
	M	17	56.67%	
	F	10	33.33%	F: it is gentle and beautiful; it is oviparous (45);
	N	3	10%	N: it is an animal (20); there are both male and female (27);
8.	凤凰 *fènghuáng* "phoenix"			M: it has connection with fire (10, 19) and the Sun (3, 7); Phoenix Nirvana in Buddhism (22);
	M	9	30%	F: it is represented as a woman (18, 23); it represents the empress (13, 21) and women in general;
	F	15	50%	
	N	6	20%	N: the word 凤凰 is made of [the two words] 凤 and 凰 (17), of which 凤 represents the male and 凰 the female (40); it is imaginary (45);

9.	龙 *lóng* "dragon" M 26 86.67% F 1 3.33% N 3 10%	**M:** cultural influence (3, 6,); it represented the emperor (7, 18, 21, 40) and men in general (8, 9, 13, 27); it is strong and mighty (4, 5, 23); **F:** intuition (15); **N:** in theory it is an animal without sex (24, 45);
10.	狗 *gǒu* "dog" M 15 50% F 1 3.33% N 14 46.67%	**M:** *yīnyáng* culture (3); valiant animal (4); they are men' fellows (22); they protect their owners from villains (10); Russian, German and Italian influence; viviparous (45); more intimate than cats (23); **F:** intuition (15); **N:** it is an animal (6, 20, 21); there are both male and female (27, 31);
11.	牛 *niú* "cattle" M 25 83.33% F 2 6.67% N 3 10%	**M:** they are strong and robust (4, 8, 9, 11); they are compared with men (3, 13, 31); **F:** [connected with] milk (6, 23); **N:** it is an animal (20); there are both male and female (27);

Some of my expectations have been confirmed, such as those related to n4, n9 and n11: in all of them, more than the 80% agreed with the "masculine" nature of these nouns and their referents. The reason of this choice is due to the analysis of semantics, as they are all seen as strong and mighty, and to the influence of cultural aspects, such as the way in which dragons are depicted and the value they have in symbolism.

An interesting feature, is the answer about the spontaneous association with the referent of the male sex seen in n4, n5 and n7. Whether this form of male chauvinism is linguistic or psychologic, meaning the way in which human beings classify the rest of the world and process it in their mind, cannot be determined here.

Among the nouns that happened to be analysed differently from what was expected, there are n5, n6 and n7. In the case of fish, in particular, although I was aware of the influence that the element of water might have had, nevertheless, I did not expect such a high percentage of F. From what can be noticed from the answer related to this noun, the cultural aspect plays the most important role.

4.4.3. Celestial Bodies

12.	太阳 *tàiyáng* "Sun"	**M:** *yīnyáng* culture (3, 5); the noun 太阳 *tàiyáng* "Sun" already proves [that it belongs to *yángxìng* because they are written with the same character 阳 *yáng*] (17, 19); it produces light and warmth (9, 10, 12, 14, 22, 23, 40); Apollo is the God of the Sun and he is male (4); **F:** German influence (41); **N:** [use of the character] 它 *tā* "it" (18); it is a non-living entity and it has no relation with gender distinction (25); the sunshine treats everything in equal way (46);
	M 26 86.67%	
	F 1 3.33%	
	N 3 10%	
13.	月亮 *yuèliàng* "moon"	**M:** German influence (41); **F:** in Chinese [we] say "the moonlight is like water" (4); it appears in the night (7, 17, 23, 27, 40); it opposes to the Sun (4, 8, 14, 16, 19, 21, 31); it symbolizes and has to do with women (6, 12, 13); Chinese lunar calendar (阴历 *yīnlì,* written with the same 阴 *yīn* as *yīnxìng*) is based on the moon (14); it is beautiful and gentle (9, 20, 24, 26); **N:** [use of the character] 它 *tā* "it" (18); it is a non-living entity and it has no relation with gender distinction (25);
	M 1 3.33%	
	F 27 90%	
	N 2 6.67%	
14.	地球 *dìqiú* "the Earth"	**M:** it has life (9); it has to do with soil (5); the Earth forgives everything (4); it bears the weight of many things (20); it provides the environment where we live (23); **F:** [it is our] mother (6, 10, 12, 27); **N:** object (7, 8); celestial body (14); [use of the character] 它 *tā* "it" (18); impossible to classify (22, 40); this noun does not have a specific depiction (31);
	M 7 23.33%	
	F 7 23.33%	
	N 16 53.33%	

The hypothetical tendency in classification of the celestial bodies in M for "the Sun", F for "moon" and N for the Earth based on the *yīnyáng* culture has been confirmed (pr. B). In particular, for n12 and n13 it can be seen that the influence of *yīn* and *yáng* is very strong, as the constant references to light and warmth versus night and women prove. Moreover, even though in the questionnaire these nouns were put distant from each other, yet, many of the respondents considered the relation that these nouns have, such as the contraposition of the Moon to the Sun. As far as n14 is concerned, instead, the respondents gave several reasons for M and F that I had not anticipated, among which the depiction of the Earth as a mother is the most relevant.

4.4.4. Elements of nature

15.	大海 *dàhǎi* "ocean" M 15 50% F 7 23.33% N 8 26.67%	**M:** it is wide (4, 5, 11, 12, 17, 22, 31); it is depicted as a roaring sea (10); [it has] strength (26); **F:** the ocean is a mother (3); it is related to water (9,19,40); it is a place that produces life (27); **N:** object (8); [use of the character] 它 *tā* "it" (18); this noun does not have a specific mental association (46); it has no sexual distinction (24, 25);
16.	河 *hé* "river" M 5 16.67% F 16 53.33% N 9 30%	**M:** it flows continuously (11); it contains the three dots of water 氵, which is considered positive water (14); French, German influence (13, 41); **F:** Mother river (3, 12, 15, 26, 46); it has to do with water (10,19 40); it is a place that produces life (27); women are gentle as water (4); **N:** [use of the character] 它 *tā* "it" (16, 18); [part of the] natural world (21); it has no sexual distinction (8, 31);
17.	云 *yún* "cloud" M 1 3.33% F 22 73.33% N 7 23.33%	**M:** it stays near the Sun (27); **F:** it is soft / gentle/ beautiful/ pure and white (3, 11, 12, 22, 24), it moves constantly and has myriads of shapes (5); associated with "cloudy sky" (阴天 *yīntiān*, written with the same 阴 *yīn* as *yīnxìng*) (7, 23); proper nouns for girls often contain the character 云 (*yún* "cloud") (13); it is connected with rain and water (14, 19, 20, 46); **N:** [use of the character] 它 *tā* "it" (16, 18); no life (8, 26);
18.	雨 *yǔ* "rain" M 0 0% F 24 80% N 6 20%	**F:** bad mood (3, 31); it is related to water (5, 9, 19, 40); it is depicted as soft and gentle (4, 10, 12, 26, 46); it is continuous (7); associated with "cloudy sky" (阴天 *yīntiān*, written with the same 阴 *yīn* as *yīnxìng*) (23, 27); **N:** it has no sexual distinction (24, 25); [part of the] natural world (45);

19.	树 *shù* "tree"	**M:** it is tall and sturdy (4, 10, 31); it takes roots in the soil (5, 10); it provides shelter (11); it needs the sunlight (7, 12, 20, 21, 27) it has life (9, 22, 45);
	M 18 60%	**F:** terms such as "shade of a tree" (树荫 *shùyìn*) remind of cold (14);
	F 1 3.33%	**N:** [use of the character] 它 *tā* "it" (18); mild organism (23); no sexual distinction (24, 25);
	N 11 36.67%	
20.	水果 *shuǐguǒ* "fruit"	**M:** it is a good result (20); its acidity can make batteries (23);
	M 3 10%	**F:** according to traditional Chinese medicine, fruits are cold (14); garish colours (26); [fruits] are made of water (40);
	F 4 13.33%	**N:** there are many types (6, 10, 22, 27); meant as a category (9, 15, 17, 19, 21); no sexual distinction (8, 13); food/ object of daily life (3, 7, 46);
	N 23 76.67%	
21.	花 *huā* "flower"	**M:** it needs the sunlight (7, 12, 20) it has life (14, 45);
	M 8 26.67%	**F:** it represents women (3, 9, 17,); it is beautiful and gentle (4, 5, 10, 11, 19);
	F 15 50%	**N:** vegetation/ object (8, 18, 25, 46); there are many types (22, 27);
	N 7 23.33%	
22.	水 *shuǐ* "water"	**M:** in general meaning, it belongs to positive water (14);
	M 1 3.33%	**F:** it is associated to women (3, 6, 11, 12, 13, 19); it flows (5, 10); it is the opposite of fire (8); it is soft and gentle (7, 20, 21, 31);
	F 22 73.33%	**N:** pure water is neutral (23); transparent (46); no sexual distinction (25,27);
	N 7 23.33%	
23.	火 *huǒ* "fire"	**M:** it has destructive force (5); it is connected with light and warmth (7, 8, 9, 10, 11…); it is the opposite of water (13);
	M 23 76.67%	**F:** it is bright-coloured (26);
	F 1 3.33%	**N:** it has no sexual distinction (4, 24, 25); [part of the] natural world (45);
	N 6 20%	

With regard to the elements of nature, my considerations were only partially confirmed. In terms of percentage, for all of the nouns there is always a gender that prevails considerably on the others, making me think that, on a certain aspect, I could anticipate the classification of a great part of the respondents. What surprises me, though, is the reasoning behind some of the choices: in n15 and

especially in n16, for instance, many of the reasons for F are due to the association with "mother" (pr. A), an aspect that I had neglected in favour of the analysis of the different "shape" and behaviour of oceans and rivers.

In the same way, n17 and n 18 show an extremely high percentage in gender F, but the respondents focused more on the "gentle and beauty" aspect, rather than the undeniable connection with water (pr. B and C). Moreover, among the other answers, the one mentioning that the character 云 (*yún* "cloud") can be easily found in proper names for girls shows a peculiarity of Chinese language and naming system and how they influence each other.

Another aspect that attracted my attention is that n19, n20 and n21 were not compared among themselves as it happened in the case of "the Sun" and "the Moon" (section 4.4.3) and for "water" and "fire". Furthermore, in the case of "tree" and "flower" many responses for gender M say that the choice is due to the strong bound and dependence from the Sun (pr. C), another aspect that was not considered relevant as a potential motivation for selecting gender M.

Overall, there was an unexpected lack of explicit answers like "due to *yīnyáng* culture". Elements of nature such as those listed in this questionnaire, or at least a good part of them, are quite transparent in their nature and some of them even define the concepts of *yīn* and *yáng*. Accordingly, especially in the cases of "water" and "fire", I would have expected to read something like "fire is *yáng* by definition" (pr. B). Instead, respondents preferred describing the characteristics of the referents (pr. C), and only rarely they mention *yīn* and *yáng* indirectly using cultural references, as in n20 (see respondent 14).

4.4.5. Objects and tools

24.	桌子 *zhuōzi* "desk"			**M:** compared to "chair", "table" stays above, and "above" is *yángxìng* (4); it is solid/regular (10, 20, 22, 27); **F:** Spanish/ French influence (13, 15, 31); **N:** it is a tool/object (3, 7, 9, 14, 16, 21); it is man-made (45); it has no life (24, 26);
	M	7	23.33%	
	F	3	10%	
	N	20	66.67%	
25.	电脑 *diànnǎo* "computer"			**M:** it is solid (6, 27); invention of the mankind (20); German/French influence (13, 17, 41); topic of conversation for boys (40); **F:** intuition (15); **N:** it is a tool/object (3, 4, 7, 9, 14, 31); it is a modern term, it should not have *yīnyáng* classification (19); it is man-made (45);
	M	7	23.33%	
	F	1	3.33%	
	N	22	73.33%	
26.	锤子 *chuízǐ* "hammer"			**M:** [it is related to] strength (5, 8, 9, 17, 22, 26, 40, 41); in China there is a company [with this name] and its founder is a man (6); it is a tool used by men (13, 31); it is solid (20, 27); it is cold (12); **N:** it is a tool/object (4, 7, 10, 14, 23); it is man-made (45);
	M	16	53.33%	
	F	0	0%	
	N	14	46.67%	
27.	床 *chuáng* "bed"			**M:** it is solid (20); **F:** it is connected with the "night" (6,17); place where to rest quietly (4, 27); **N:** it is a tool/object (3, 7, 10, 14, 23); it has no sexual distinction (8, 9)
	M	3	10%	
	F	5	16.67%	
	N	22	73.33%	
28.	镜子 *jìngzi* "mirror"			**F:** women love to look at their reflection (4, 5, 17, 31, 41); [it has to do with] beauty (26); in China many ghost stories involve mirrors, and ghosts are *yīnxìng* (7, 10, 21); it is fragile (22); **N:** it is a tool/object (3, 8, 12, 14, 16, 24); it has no sexual distinction (9); it reflects other things (23, 27);
	M	0	0%	
	F	13	43.33%	
	N	17	56.67%	

As can be seen in the table, for this list of nouns the highest percentage of choice is occupied by gender N: in all of the cases, reasons concerning the type of object and its lack of life and sexual distinction are constantly repeated by the biggest part of the respondents (pr. A). However, a few exceptions catch the eye: "hammer" is the only case where more than half of the participants selected a gender other than N. The most quoted reason is the connection with "strength", which leads to the selection of M (pr. C). Another interesting noun is "mirror", that for almost half of the respondents is considered F: about the 20% of them associated it with women and beauty, and the 10% with ghosts, connection that was not anticipated. Overall, the predominant choice of gender N of this category is in contrast with the more heterogeneous groups of nouns listed previously.

29.	玉米 *yùmǐ* "sweet corn" M 10 33.33% F 5 16.67% N 15 50%	**M:** it needs the Sun (5, 20); yellow/ warm colour (27, 41); French influence (13); it can be used in many different dishes (22); **F:** it is sweet (21); [it reminds] fertility and multitude (23, 26); **N:** no sexual distinction (12, 24, 25); food/ plant /object of daily life (3, 7, 8, 14, 19, 46);
30.	面粉 *miànfěn* "flour" M 4 13.33% F 3 10% N 23 76.67%	**M:** it can be used to do many different dishes (22); it is white (20); **F:** if mixed with water it can make dough (23); women use it more (26); **N:** no sexual distinction (4, 12, 24, 25); food/ object of daily life (3, 7, 8, 14, 46); it is uncountable (6); it has no life (25); it is processed by men (45);
31.	包子 *bāozi* "stuffed bread" M 6 20% F 1 3.33% N 23 76.67%	**M:** hot and steaming (20, 21); main dish (22); when you eat it, it gives you energy (21, 27); **F:** women cook it (26); **N:** no sexual distinction (4, 9, 24, 25); food/ object of daily life (3, 7, 8, 14, 31, 45, 46);

Gender N occupies the highest percentage for all of the nouns of this list. The few answers for M and F are mainly related to the concepts of *yīn* and *yáng*, although not in a direct way (pr. C). For instance, reasons given for M are due to the fact that the referent needs the Sun, it is warm-coloured or white, or provides energy. Other interesting responses concern the association of food with women, that transferred their femininity also to n30 and n31, and the impossibility to count the referent, reason that justifies the selection of gender N for n30.

4.4.7. Feelings

32.	爱情 *àiqíng* "love" M 6 20% F 8 26.67% N 16 53.33%	**M:** it is a positive emotion (23); it is beautiful (3, 10); it is warm (12, 21); **F:** it is gentle (6); topic for girls (40); psychologic (11); association with women (9); German influence (41); **N:** it is abstract (4, 7); it can have positive or negative influence (14); it can be intense or delicate (31); no sexual distinction (24, 25, 26);

33.	悲 哀 *bēiāi* "sorrow"	**F:** it is a negative feeling (3, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 20, 23, 41); feeling that often women have (4, 5);
	M 0 0%	**N:** it is a feeling (45); no sexual distinction (24);
	F 25 83.33%	
	N 5 16.67%	
34.	怒气 *nùqì* "anger"	**M:** men usually get mad (4, 40); it is intense/ strong (5, 9, 17, 22, 41); it burns like fire (21, 46);
	M 19 63.33%	**F:** it is a negative feeling (8, 13, 14, 20)
	F 6 20%	**N:** it is a feeling (45); no sexual distinction (24);
	N 5 16.67%	

The three nouns listed above refer to very contrasting feelings, therefore, it is not a surprise that they are treated in such a different way. Especially in n33 and n34, the influence of the *yīnyáng* culture can be noticed: the former is mainly considered a negative feeling, referring to the y*īnxìng* (pr. B), whereas, the latter is considered intense and strong, referring to the *yángxìng*. Instead, n32 is considered more neutral, as the choice of gender N made by more than half of the respondents shows.

4.4.8. Other [-concrete] [-animate] nouns

35.	力量 *lìliáng* "strength"	**M:** *yīnyáng* culture (3, 5); it is a characteristic of men (8, 9, 13, 14, 17, 19, 21);
	M 25 83.33%	**N:** both men and women have it (6); it can be positive or negative (27); intangible (45);
	F 0 0%	
	N 5 16.67%	
36.	看法 *kànfǎ* "opinion"	**F:** [I] follow the habit of European languages, according to which abstract nouns are F (27);
	M 0 0%	**N:** neutral point of view (3); abstract noun (7, 9, 17); no sexual distinction (20, 24);
	F 3 10%	
	N 27 90%	
37.	国家 *guójiā* "country"	**M:** society [based] on men' power (3, 26, 40); it reminds strength and power (9, 12, 20); it reminds dignity (21); cohesion (22);
	M 14 46.67%	**F:** in Chinese [we] compare the homeland with a mother (4); In Chinese [we] can use the pronoun 她 *tā* "she" to feel it closer (19);
	F 3 10%	**N:** abstract noun (7); [use of the character] 它 *tā* "it" (16, 18); no sexual distinction (24);
	N 13 43.33%	

38.	社会主义 *shèhuì zhǔyì* "socialism" M 13 43.33% F 1 3.33% N 16 53.33%	**M:** transparently positive (3), it is idealised (6); since [I was a] child I sing a song "Socialism is like the Sun" (7); in our education socialism is depicted with light (9); [it is] energy (12, 22); it is the dream of Chinese people (23); Marx [and] the Chinese president are men (26); every "-ism" is M (41); **F:** abstract noun (27); **N:** abstract noun (4, 17); no sexual distinction (24); it does not have a specific connotation (10); [use of the character] 它 *tā* "it" (16, 18);
39.	政治 *zhèngzhì* "politics" M 10 33.33% F 2 6.67% N 18 60%	**M:** it reminds strength and power (5, 9, 20); topic of conversation for boys (40); usually politician are all men (22); **F:** abstract noun (27); politics is complicated (41); **N:** no sexual distinction (13, 24, 46); abstract noun (4, 17); it does not have a specific connotation (31);
40.	法律 *fǎlǜ* "law" M 12 40% F 1 3.33% N 17 56.67%	**M:** it is an enforcement/regulation (6, 8, 9, 12, 22, 41); it is upright and plainspoken (20); **F:** abstract noun (27); **N:** no sexual distinction (13, 24); abstract noun (4, 17); it does not have a specific connotation (31); [use of the character] 它 *tā* "it" (16, 18); it is man-made (45);

With regard to the nouns listed in the table above, the greatest part of them are associated to gender M by about 50% of the respondents. The motivations given are mainly related to the *yīnyáng* culture through the concepts of power and strength, and because of the association to men, as in n35, n37, n38 and n39.

Overall, it is interesting to notice that all these nouns are [-concrete] since they represent ideas, and, apart from n36, their percentage of a gender other than N is much higher than in some [+concrete] nouns, such as, those in sections 3.4.5 and 3.4.6. It seems, indeed, that the lack of concreteness is not a variable necessarily leading to selecting gender N.

4.5. Summary

The previous sections illustrated in detail the analysis of the nouns used for this research, providing examples of the most recurrent and relevant explanations from the respondents. At this point, a few extra comments will be given about the general features of the results collected. In particular, let us concentrate on what are the most important reasons for Chinese speakers to choose one gender or another, in relation to the principles listed in section 4.1.

From the high recurrence of answers more or less explicitly related to the *yīnyáng* culture, it is evident that the traditional view of the dichotomy of the world is one of the most influential factors in the minds of Chinese native speakers. As illustrated in principle B, part of the world can be easily attributed to either *yīn* or *yáng*, mainly associated to the opposition F *versus* M, because of their predominant characteristics, such as 太阳 *tàiyáng* "Sun" and 月亮 *yuèliàng* "moon". However, even more nouns, whose nature can be analysed from a subjective point of view, are related to the *yīnyáng* culture: for instance, 花 *huā* "flower" has been indicated both as M, because "it needs the Sun" and "the Sun" is M, and F, because "it represents women" and "woman" is F (pr. C).

Animacy is another feature that plays a paramount role in the selection of gender. Apart from human beings and animals, the rest of the nouns, which is the greatest part of the nouns investigated, are [- animate]: these nouns usually present a higher percentage of gender N compared to the [+ animate] counterpart, even though some exceptions can be found, as the case of 婴儿 *yīngér* "toddler" illustrates. Indeed, as the reader may have noticed, in every noun discussed from section 4.4.3. to 4.4.8. at least one respondent motivated his choice of gender N as "it has no life" or "it has no sexual distinction".

Due to their rare occurrence, principles D and F proved to be not as relevant as the others were. The influence of the visual components of the characters constituting the nouns has been mentioned mainly about the radical of water, which led some of the respondents to consider nouns with this radical F like water. With regard to linguistic male chauvinism, the few examples are referred to human beings and animals.

A last comment concerns the influence of foreign languages: as can be seen in the tables above, this aspect is mentioned several times. However, only a very small number of respondents use it as a motivation, and some of them even decided to simply write the lemma in the foreign language to justify the choice.

5. Discussion: evaluation of methodology and results

The results of this questionnaire highlighted the factors that influence Chinese native speakers the most in associating nouns to grammatical genders, if they are asked to. I am generally satisfied about how the research was conducted and the quality of its outcome. However, I acknowledge that some problems were encountered during the research and that new questions arose after the first results started to be collected, with the consequence that they remained unanswered. In this section, I will briefly illustrate a few of these aspects.

First, with regard to the methodology, while spreading the questionnaire, it was immediately clear that I had to abandon the original plan of comparing the results of Chinese native speakers with speakers of other NGLs, in particular Korean, Thai and Japanese, as illustrated above. Too few of such respondents were willing to fill out the questionnaire to provide any significant results. On the one hand, this was due to my restricted network of acquaintances coming from the countries where the above-mentioned NGLs are spoken; on the other hand, it was because the potential respondents' level of Chinese was not high enough to take part in the survey. Consequently, I decided to focus this research exclusively on Chinese speakers. Another consideration about the type of respondents that is worth mentioning is that, for future studies on this topic, English native speakers might also be considered as respondents for this kind of questionnaire. It is possible to suppose that the English language has had more contact with grammatical gender than the NGLs mentioned above ever had, because of its proximity, in terms of distance and contact, to other European languages that do have gender classification. However, with regard to Modern English, we can definitely state that it belongs to the category of NGLs, and, as such, it would be interesting to see what differences can be seen in comparison with Asian languages without genders.

Secondly, it is nearly impossible to cover all of the areas of research, and, consequently, some aspects potentially relevant for this study might have been involuntarily neglected. One of this is phonology: as seen in section 2.2, the formal criteria, morphology and phonology, are the ones that play the most important role in the assignation of gender in languages like Italian. Is it possible that the sounds of Chinese, namely consonants, vowels and tones, might influence the respondents in making their choice? For example, is it possible that the nouns ending with a consonant sound are mainly considered M and those ending with a vowel are considered F, similarly to what happens in the phonological assignment in Afar, an Afro-Asiatic language (Corbett 1991:51)? Some words have a softer sound, whereas others sound harsher: can the quality of the sounds transmit anything to the

listener? Or is this unlikely because of the numerous cases of homophones existing in Chinese?[5] How would onomatopoeic words be treated? In GLs, nouns are crystallised in their gender, but in Chinese, and other NGLs, is it possible that the quality of sound influences the answer in this questionnaire? If yes, consonants, vowels and tones might all play a role. As can be seen, the analysis of the phonologic aspect gives rise to many new questions. Unfortunately, the explanations of the respondents cannot help us to answer these questions, since phonology has never been mentioned as an element influencing the selection of gender. However, this does not mean that phonology does not play any role at all: it is still possible that it has a subconscious relevance, and the fact that the survey was in the form of a written questionnaire, rather than an oral interview, might have distracted the respondents from analysing this formal aspect. For future studies, phonology is indeed an interesting aspect to research.

Moreover, another aspect that was not analysed as originally planned concerns the type of target involved in the investigation: in the first stage of this research, it was my intention to identify characteristics of the respondents that might have been considered significant variables, such as sex, age group, and the native language mentioned above. Identifying these variables proved to be difficult for two main reasons. On the one hand these groups of targets were not balanced in terms of number: for instance, among the 30 respondents, only 3 were men, with the consequence that the sample of men was impossible to compare to the much bigger counterpart of women. On the other hand, the fact that this study is focused more on the quality of the answers makes difficult to make statistics, that are usually created through quantitative analysis.

Finally, the last comment concerns the results of the questionnaire, and in particular the frequent choice of gender N. I acknowledge that this comment might exist in part because my native language does not have gender N, reason for which I might have unconsciously hoped for a wider selection of the poles M and F. However, I also feel that the possibility of choosing gender N might have made some respondents a bit "lazy". In principle, this topic was very difficult for them to fully understand and discuss, and some of them reported to have problems in understanding the purpose of the questions, even saying in private correspondence that, since Chinese does not have genders, they were not able to answer. Moreover, other respondents said that associating a list of forty nouns to such a complex topic was a bit too tiring. For these reasons, however convinced I am that the greatest part of the respondents gave thorough, precise and coherent motivations for their selection of genders, I also think that a few of the choices of gender, especially N, and motivations such as "intuition", might have been a bit random, or not fully thought through.

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[5] Tan and Perfetti (1988, 168) report that on average 11 characters share the same pronunciation, disregarding tone.

Considering the aspects just mentioned above, indeed, it is possible to think that a different approach might have led to different results. With these comments, not only I wanted to illustrate some points that might improve this study making it more complete, but also wanted to make the reader aware of what aspects did not play a role in this research. Indeed, there is no doubt that these aspects can be taken into consideration for future studies, such as analysing if there are different answers for speakers of different NGLs.

6. Conclusions and prospects

As the title of this thesis anticipated, the aim of this study was to research what perception Chinese speakers have of the grammatical category of gender. Indeed, chapter 2 has been dedicated to the theoretical background related to how languages classify nouns. The languages of the world use different devices to classify nouns: some use genders, usually M, F and, in some cases, N. Others possess a more sophisticated system of noun classes, that works similarly to genders, with the difference that they involve a higher number of categories. Other languages lack the noun inflection due to genders or noun classes, and, instead, have an articulated set of classifiers, like Chinese, or simply nothing, like English. The different ways in which each language behaves, has been illustrated through some examples of authentic mistakes reported in the production of Italian L2 by Chinese native speakers: the results of the study reported in the same section show the evident struggle of Chinese speakers in associating nouns with their correct gender.

In chapter 3, I described the methodology used to answer the research question. Once it was clear what data were needed, what strategies could be used to collect them and what kind of target would be suitable for this research, it was necessary to choose an appropriate research medium. Both questionnaire and interview presented very good advantages but, in the end, the form of a questionnaire proved to be the most efficient channel, since it allowed to go back and forth from a question to another, making references between the nouns that were being investigated.

With regard to chapter 4, it first emphasized the relevance of the nouns chosen to conduct this research. They belong to different semantic categories, and they could all be analysed according to the several principles listed in the specific section, with the aim of stimulating to the maximum extent the capacity of adaptation and imagination of the respondents. Secondly, it illustrated the results of the study, showing the percentages with which each noun was allocated to each gender and giving examples of the motivations for the choice of the respondents. The constant reference to the principles mentioned above shows the hypothetical systematicity that can be outlined from the answers of the respondents.

Finally, chapter 5 was dedicated to the difficulties encountered in conducting this research and the limits of this type of study and the methodology associated.

Indeed, as it happens for any kind of investigation, there is always a chance to make the study more complete and more precise, in other words, to improve it. Of course, only further research can help to achieve scientific progress. In my opinion, as I anticipated at the very beginning of this thesis, this subject is particularly worthy of further investigation because of the potential help that the

results could provide to the making of study material suitable for speakers of NGL learning a GL2, especially for what concerns lexicon. For instance, let us imagine a series of short animation movies or comics in Italian where objects of daily life become alive and have name and sex corresponding to the noun and its gender. Genders M and F, would be automatically associated to the male and female sex through drawings that emphasize male or female characteristics, such as more developed muscles for males, and long eyelashes and make-up for females.

Something similar to what just described above has actually been done for "Les Babalous", a French-Canadian animated series from the 90s, where the main characters were objects becoming alive during the night, each one with a clear sex, usually corresponding to the gender in French language (see picture beside). As far as this cartoon is concerned, no information could be found whether it has ever been used for didactic purposes. However, I am deeply convinced that a source like this might be a great help for speakers of an NGL studying French language, or any GL distinguishing only M and F, especially for beginners.

A picture from "Les Babalous"

Now, going back to the results of my study, as could be seen in the previous chapters, it was possible to identify elements that played a paramount role in associating genders to noun, such as the principle of the *yīnyáng* culture. Indeed, investigating how Chinese speakers tend to think and pick genders can provide information that might help scholars to anticipate their potential mistakes in a specific language. With regard to this point, I want to underline again that it is true that this study was focused exclusively on Chinese speakers, but, of course, it can be theoretically applied also to speakers of other NGL.

In conclusion, in a wider perspective, this kind of research might lead to the design of study material made on purpose for speakers of any NGL studying any GL2 to reduce the risk or errors and facilitate the learning process of lexicon with the correct association of gender while studying a GL2. Indeed, it is my hope that future research might continue in this direction as well, with the aim of providing new appropriate tools that language students might rely on.

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Appendix 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

<center>您觉得名词应该怎样分类？</center>

　　您好，我是莱顿大学的中文学习者。为了写我的论文，我决定调查汉语母语者与孤立语者怎么给名词分类。中国学生（与说别的孤立语的学生）在第二语言学习的过程中，因为其本身的母语没有"性"的区别，因此在名词的分类问题上会受到一些因素的影响。我的论文的目标是帮助外语学生，所以恳请各位与我合作。

　　虽然我的调查与"性"（语法）有关，但请读者不要担心，为了参加这个调查受访者对语言学不需要有什么背景。此外，我可以简单地介绍这个话题：

　　您知道不知道很多语言（例如意大利语，西班牙语，法语，等等）没有量词，但是有性别？最基本的性别是阳性、阴性与中性。比如说德语：der Student 大学生（阳性），die Studentin 女大学生（阴性），das Auto 汽车（中性）。看到这三个词，读者会以为性别分类比较固定（男的属于阳性，女的属于阴性，其他属于中性），其实不是这样，有时候好像名词性别分类并没有什么逻辑（为什么德语 das Mädchen 小女孩属于中性？）。之所以出现这种情况是因为语言有许多方法给名词分类，而且每个语言有自己的分类，比如大海这个名词在意大利语中属于阳性，在法语中属于阴性。此外，一些语言有更多的性别，比如按照一个东西有没有生命，与身体是否有关，等等来区分。

　　作为汉语母语者（或者孤立语者），学习外语的时候您可能遇到一些困难，而且您对性别应该不太熟悉。此问卷想得到您的以下信息：

<center>**你觉得名词应该怎样分类？**</center>

　　首先，有一些关于您基本信息的问题；其后，我想请您给一些名词进行分类。一共有 40 个名词。问卷里面有三个类型：阳性、阴性与中性，您必须选择一个。

　　应该怎么选择？您可以自由地选择，无论是按照您自然的感觉，按照您思考的原因，或者您受到过别的语言或者自己文化的影响，都可以。你们可以随便用自己的想象力归属名词，重要的事情是你们说明为什么。选择的时候，请把您的逻辑写出来（你选择这个性别的原因是什么）。

　　参加这个调查是自愿的，所有的回答都是佚名的。请尽量仔细地回答，并描述您的逻辑。十分感谢您的合作！

Translation

How do you think nouns should be classified?

Hello, I am a student of Chinese from Leiden University. For my thesis I decided to investigate how Chinese native speakers and speakers of isolating languages[6] classify nouns. In the process of L2 acquisition, Chinese students (and students speaking other isolating languages) can have problems in nominal classification, and this is due to the lack of grammatical gender in their native languages. The aim of my thesis is to help students of foreign languages; therefore, I kindly request your collaboration.

Even though the topic of this questionnaire is related to grammar, the reader should not be worried: no background in linguistics is required to participate in the survey. Moreover, I will first give a short introduction of the topic.

Did you know that many languages, like Italian, Spanish, French and others, do not have classifiers, but have grammatical gender instead? The basic genders are masculine, feminine and neuter. In German, for instance, *der Student* "the (male) student" is masculine, *die Studentin* "the (female) student" is feminine, and *das Auto* "the car" is neuter. Considering these three words, you might think that grammatical gender is quite regular (that male belongs to masculine, female to feminine and the rest to neuter). Actually, it is not that regular, and sometimes it might look like gender assignation is completely illogic (why would *das Mädchen* "girl" be neuter in German?). The reason behind it is that languages use many strategies to classify nouns, and each language has its own classification. For instance, the noun "sea" is masculine in Italian but feminine in French. Moreover, some languages have even more genders[7], such as distinguishing if the referents of nouns are animate or not, if the nouns indicate parts of the (human) body, and so on.

As native speakers of Chinese (or other isolating languages), when learning foreign languages, you might struggle even more because of your unfamiliarity with the concept of gender. With this questionnaire, I would like to collect the following information:

How do you think nouns should be classified?

First, there are some questions about your personal details; afterwards, you will be asked to classify a total of 40 nouns. Three genders will be included in the questionnaire, masculine, feminine and neuter, and you will have to choose one.

How to choose? Feel free to choose according to your natural instinct, your deep thoughts, the influence you might have received from other languages you studied, or anything else. You can freely use your imagination to classify nouns, everything is fine, but it is important that you explain why. When you choose a gender, please write down the logic behind your decision.

The participation in this survey is voluntary; all of your answers will be anonymous. Please make your answers as detailed as possible when writing your logic. Thanks for participating!

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[6] When the questionnaire was published, I was still considering to investigate native speakers of Japanese, Thai and Korean as well.

[7] No distinction between genders and noun classes was made in this context.

Part 1 (personal information)

Original 请您写一下您基本的信息	Translation Please write your personal information
1. 您的国籍 _____	1. Your nationality_____

2. 您的性别：
  o 男
  o 女
	2. Your sex:
	  o Male
	  o Female

3. 您的年龄段：
  o 18 岁以下
  o 18~25
  o 26~30
  o 31~40
  o 41~50
  o 51~60
  o 60 以上
	3. Your age group:
	  o Below 18
	  o 18~25
	  o 26~30
	  o 31~40
	  o 41~50
	  o 51~60
	  o Over 60

4. 您的母语 _____	4. Your native language_____

5. 您会不会说其他语言？
  o 不会
  o 会
会的话请说明：1）哪些语言。2）学习大概多久。3）您的水平
例如：英语，一年，初级
	5. Can you speak any other language?
	  o No
	  o Yes
	If yes, please specify: 1) which languages; 2) for how long you studied it; 3) your level.
	For example: Englis, 1 year, beginner.

6. 学历 *
  o 高中
  o 本科
  o 硕士
  o 博士
  o 其他
	6. Educational background:
	  o High school
	  o Bachelor's
	  o Master
	  o PhD
	  o Other

7. 你的专业或者职业是什么？	7. What is your major/job?

8. 你以前遇到过或者学过性别这一部分语法？
  o 有
  o 没有
	8. Have you come across or studied grammatical gender before?
	  o Yes
	  o No

9. 您对这个研究的结果有没有兴趣？
  o 没有
  o 有
有的话，请您填写联系信息。论文写完以后，我将发给您总结报告
	9. Are you interested in this research?
	  o No
	  o Yes
	If yes, please write your contact information, so that I can share with you the results.

10. 您的联系信息 请注意，这些信息不是必须的。如果需要再一次采访或者得到更详细的回答，我可以与您联系	10. Contact information This information is not compulsory; I will use it to contact you in case I need to investigate more.

Part 2 (nominal classification)

The second part includes question 11 to 50: one question for each of the 40 nouns investigated. These questions were asked as follows:

Original	Translation
这个名词应该怎么分类？为什么？ "孔雀" ○　阳性 _____ ○　阴性 _____ ○　中性 _____	**How would you classify this noun? Why?** **"Peacock"** ○　M _____ ○　F _____ ○　N _____

The following table shows the order in which the nouns appeared. For each noun, the number of the respective question is specified.

11.	孔雀	*kǒngquè*	"peacock"	31.	悲哀	*bēiāi*	"sorrow"
12.	牛	*niú*	"cattle"	32.	大海	*dàhǎi*	"ocean"
13.	云	*yún*	"cloud"	33.	鸡	*jī*	"chicken"
14.	水果	*shuǐguǒ*	"fruit"	34.	电脑	*diànnǎo*	"computer"
15.	桌子	*zhuōzi*	"desk"	35.	雨	*yǔ*	"rain"
16.	女人	*nǚrén*	"woman"	36.	社会主义	*shèhuì zhǔyì*	"socialism"
17.	力量	*lìliáng*	"strength"	37.	包子	*bāozi*	"stuffed bread"
18.	河	*hé*	"river"	38.	怒气	*nùqì*	"anger"
19.	狗	*gǒu*	"dog"	39.	月亮	*yuèliàng*	"moon"
20.	床	*chuáng*	"bed"	40.	水	*shuǐ*	"water"
21.	国家	*guójiā*	"country"	41.	政治	*zhèngzhì*	"politics"
22.	鱼	*yú*	"fish"	42.	树	*shù*	"tree"
23.	花	*huā*	"flower"	43.	男人	*nánrén*	"man"
24.	看法	*kànfǎ*	"opinion"	44.	地球	*dìqiú*	"the Earth"
25.	面粉	*miànfěn*	"flour"	45.	龙	*lóng*	"dragon"
26.	太阳	*tàiyáng*	"Sun"	46.	镜子	*jìngzi*	"mirror"
27.	婴儿	*yīngér*	"toddler"	47.	爱情	*àiqíng*	"love"
28.	法律	*fǎlǜ*	"law"	48.	狮子	*shīzi*	"lion"
29.	凤凰	*fènghuáng*	"phoenix"	49.	火	*huǒ*	"fire"
30.	玉米	*yùmǐ*	"sweet corn"	50.	锤子	*chuízǐ*	"hammer"

Appendix 2: RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Resp.	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
3	中国	女	31~40	汉语	会〖英语高级〗
4	中国	女	51~60	汉语	会〖英语，学过很多年，水平一般〗
5	中国	女	26~30	汉语	会〖英语，学习 10 年，中高级〗
6	中国	女	31~40	汉语	会〖日语，十年以上，高级；英语，四年，中高级；法语，一年，初级；泰语，半年，初级，〗
7	中国	女	31~40	汉语	会〖日语，三年，高级〗
8	中国	女	26~30	汉语	会〖英语 CET6 级；韩语，初级〗
9	中国	女	31~40	汉语	会〖英语、7 年、六级〗
10	中国	女	18~25	汉语	会〖英语 9 年 中级〗
11	中国	女	18 岁以下	中文	会〖英语 10 年 初级〗
12	中国	女	18~25	汉语	会〖英语 九年 中级〗
13	中国	女	26~30	汉语	会〖英语，多年，高级；法语，一年，初级；西班牙语，两年，初级〗
14	中国	女	31~40	汉语	会〖英语，12 年，中级〗
15	中国	女	18~25	粤语，普通话	会〖英语，16 年，流畅〗
16	中国	女	31~40	汉语	会〖英语 俄语熟练 希伯莱语略知〗
17	中国	女	18~25	汉语	会〖英语，十四年，中高级；德语，三年，初级〗
18	台湾	男	18~25	中文	会〖英语 10 年 高级〗
19	中国	男	18~25	汉语	会〖英语，十五年，高级；俄语，一年，初级；日语，半年，初级；韩语，半年，初级〗
20	中国	女	18~25	汉语	会〖英语〗
21	中国	女	18~25	潮汕语/普通话	会〖英语，12 年，初级〗
22	中国	男	18~25	汉语	会〖英语，七年，四级〗
23	中国	女	18~25	汉语	会〖英语，10 年左右，初级〗
24	中国	女	18~25	汉语	会〖英语〗
25	中国	女	18~25	中文	会〖意大利语 6 年 C1，西班牙语半年 A2，法语 A2〗
26	中国	女	18~25	中文	会〖英语 8 年 高级 意大利语 5 年 高级〗
27	臺灣	女	18~25	中文（小時候說台語 Taiwanese、上學以後說 Mandarin）	会〖(1)英語，12 年，中高級 (2) 西班牙語，3 年，中級 (3) 日語，3 年，初級〗
31	台灣	女	18~25	中文	会〖法文 三年 中級〗
40	臺灣	女	18~25	中文	会〖英文，十五年，高级〗
41	中国	女	18~25	汉语	会〖英语，10 年，大学英语六级；日语，一年，初级；德语，一年半，B1〗
45	中国	女	18~25	中文	会〖英语，10 年以上，中级；老挝语，3 点半；初级。〗
46	中国	女	18~25	中文	会〖德语，四年，C1 英语，十年, C1〗

Resp.	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10 [8]
3	博士	教师	没有	有	
4	博士	教师	有	有	
5	硕士	对外汉语教师	有	有	
6	博士	对外汉语教师	有	有	
7	硕士	教师	没有	有	
8	硕士	汉语国际教育，对外汉语老师	没有	有	
9	博士	教师	没有	没有	
10	本科	汉语国际教育	没有	有	
11	本科	汉语国际教育	没有	没有	
12	本科	学生	没有	有	
13	硕士	汉语教师	有	有	
14	博士	大学管理人员	有	有	
15	本科	汉语言文学	有	有	
16	博士	职员	有	有	
17	本科	汉语言文学	有	有	
18	本科	财务金融	有	没有	
19	本科	物理专业的学生	有	有	
20	本科	汉语言文学	没有	没有	
21	其他(大专)	景观设计	没有	有	
22	本科	物理学	没有	没有	
23	本科	化学	没有	没有	
24	本科	学生	有	有	
25	硕士	学生	有	有	
26	硕士	语言学	有	有	
27	本科	學生	有	有	
31	本科	學生	有	有	
40	本科	大學生	有	有	
41	本科	德语	有	有	
45	本科	学生	没有	有	
46	硕士	语言学	有	有	

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[8] The contact details of the respondents have been removed

R.	Q11 孔雀 *kǒngquè* "peacock"	Q12 牛 *niú* "cattle"
3	阳性〖雄孔雀开屏〗	阴性〖柔美的〗
4	阴性〖孔雀很美丽，应该是阴性。但我还是认为凡是动物，都应该有阴性和阳性。当然，我理解的"性别"和语言中的性别不同。〗	阴性〖我们常说女人是水做的〗
5	阴性〖同羽毛，美相关，感觉是阴性的〗	阴性〖飘忽不定，形态万千，阴性〗
6	阳性〖头脑里的图像是公孔雀〗	阴性〖流动的，女性气质〗
7	阳性〖孔雀是南方的鸟，南方距离太阳近，所以觉得是阳性。〗	阴性〖容易跟阴天下雨联系起来〗
8	阳性〖因为，我们看到的孔雀一般是公的，而且在说到母孔雀的时候，会加一个母字〗	中性〖客观事物，没有男女之分〗
9	阳性〖想到孔雀开屏〗	阴性〖感觉和水、气有关，水属阴性〗
10	阴性〖孔雀在中国文化中有柔美的含义，所以我认为是阴性〗	阴性〖云常常出现在中国诗词中，以浮云的意像出现居多，具有轻柔、飘摇流转的特点〗
11	阴性〖美〗	阴性〖柔软〗
12	阴性〖长得漂亮〗	阴性〖纯白，柔软〗
13	阴性〖感觉比较女性化〗	阴性〖中国文化中，女性的名字经常用"云"这个字〗
14	阳性〖有个词叫"孔雀开屏"，张开翅膀开屏漂亮的是雄孔雀〗	阴性〖云多了会下雨，从汉字起名阴阳来说，雨为阴水〗
15	阳性〖雄性〗	阴性〖优雅〗
16	中性〖它是动物。我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它来表示动物无生命物体〗	中性〖我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它表示动物无生命物体〗
17	阳性〖德语里鸟这个词是阳性，所以孔雀也可能是阳性〗	阴性〖云给人虚无缥缈的感觉……而且女性的名字里多用这个字〗
18	阳性〖孔雀在印象中孔雀开屏是为了吸引异性，所以为雄性展现特征吸引异性的象征，故该题我答雄性〗	中性〖答到第三题我回想到中文代名词特征，在中文母语者，中文是不具词性的，为让你了解我用代名词做为解释，他 她 它 我觉得这接近妳想表达的性的意，所以一般我们形容没有生命的问题我们用它故中性〗
19	阴性〖孔雀是一种非常漂亮的鸟类〗	阴性〖云在汉语意象中通常与女性联系起来，同时云也因其潮湿，而与汉语中"水"这个典型的阴性事物相联系起来〗
20	中性〖动物〗	阴性〖雨〗
21	阴性〖美丽的羽毛代表女性，孔雀公主〗	中性〖人人向往〗
22	阳性〖能联想到华丽的色彩〗	阴性〖感到轻柔〗
23	阳性〖比较英气〗	阴性〖云会带来阴天？〗
24	阳性〖孔雀开屏，所以是公孔雀〗	阴性〖云有阴柔之美〗
25	阳性〖根据我学意大利语的经验，动物一般是阳性名词〗	中性〖非生物名词没有性别之分〗
26	阳性〖公孔雀处于主导地位〗	中性〖无生命的物体〗
27	中性〖有公母之分〗	阳性〖在靠近太陽的地方〗
31	阴性〖孔雀是美麗的 形象較為陰柔〗	中性〖對於雲的形象 並沒有特別陰柔或陽剛的感覺〗
40	阳性〖會開屏的孔雀是公的〗	阴性〖很悠哉自在〗
41	阳性〖德语 der Vogel〗	阴性〖die Wolke〗
45	阴性〖鸟类，卵生动物〗	阴性〖自然无生命物质〗
46	阳性〖固有联想〗	阴性〖和水有关〗

Resp.	Q13 云 *yún* "cloud"	Q14 水果 *shuǐguǒ* "fruit"
3	阴性〚柔美的〛	中性〚生活用品〛
4	阴性〚我们常说女人是水做的〛	中性〚水果无所谓性别吧〛
5	阴性〚飘忽不定，形态万千，阴性〛	中性〚很难划分，那么中性吧〛
6	阴性〚流动的，女性气质〛	中性〚各种各样〛
7	阴性〚容易跟阴天下雨联系起来〛	中性〚食物，中性吧〛
8	中性〚客观事物，没有男女之分〛	中性〚是物品，没有男女〛
9	阴性〚感觉和水、气有关，水属阴性〛	中性〚类属概念〛
10	阴性〚云常常出现在中国诗词中，以浮云的意像出现居多，具有轻柔、飘摇流转的特点〛	中性〚水果有很多种类，具体功效都不同，所以归为中性〛
11	阴性〚柔软〛	中性〚无意义〛
12	阴性〚纯白，柔软〛	中性〚没有什么特征〛
13	阴性〚中国文化中，女性的名字经常用"云"这个字〛	中性〚感觉跟性别没有太大关系〛
14	阴性〚云多了会下雨，从汉字起名阴阳来说，雨为阴水〛	阴性〚按中医的理论，多数水果属寒凉性〛
15	阴性〚优雅〛	中性〚分类词〛
16	中性〚我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它来表示动物无生命物体〛	中性〚中性表示动物，无生命物体〛
17	阴性〚云给人虚无缥缈的感觉……而且女性的名字里多用这个字〛	中性〚水果是一类事物，中性比较有概括性〛
18	中性〚答到第三题我回想到中文代名词特征，在中文母语者，中文是不具词性的，为让你了解我用代名词做为解释，他 她 它 我觉得这接近妳想表达的性的意，所以一般我们形容没有生命的问题我们用它故中性〛	中性〚它 同上〛
19	阴性〚云在汉语意象中通常与女性联系起来，同时云也因其潮湿，而与汉语中"水"这个典型的阴性事物相联系起来〛	中性〚虽然水果同样富含水分，但是在中医学中，不同水果也是有不同的阴阳各异的用处的。所以作为整体的一个类名词，水果应该是中性的〛
20	阴性〚雨〛	阳性〚很好的效果〛
21	中性〚人人向往〛	中性〚大分类，无性别〛
22	阴性〚感到轻柔〛	中性〚每种水果特性不同，不宜区分〛
23	阴性〚云会带来阴天？〛	阳性〚可以做成酸性电池〛
24	阴性〚云有阴柔之美〛	中性〚直觉〛
25	中性〚非生物名词没有性别之分〛	中性〚理由同上〛
26	中性〚无生命的物体〛	阴性〚色彩艳丽 受意大利语影响〛
27	阳性〚在靠近太阳的地方〛	中性〚有很多不同種類的水果〛
31	中性〚對於雲的形象 並沒有特別陰柔或陽剛的感覺〛	阳性〚過去學習法文時 印象中水果為陽性〛
40	阴性〚很悠哉自在〛	阴性〚通常都很有水〛
41	阴性〚die Wolke〛	中性〚das Obst〛
45	阴性〚自然无生命物质〛	阴性〚无生命〛
46	阴性〚和水有关〛	中性〚食物〛

Resp.	Q15 桌子 *zhuōzi* "desk"	Q16 女人 *nǚrén* "woman"
3	中性〖生活用品〗	阴性〖阴阳文化〗
4	阳性〖没有理由。和椅子比起来，桌子在上面。汉语觉得阳性为"上"〗	阴性〖当然，女人必须是阴性〗
5	阳性〖木头的，笨拙的，阳性〗	阴性〖阴阳，和中国文化相关〗
6	中性〖各种各样〗	阴性〖女性与阴性对应〗
7	中性〖实物，中性吧〗	阴性〖男为阳，女为阴〗
8	中性〖同上〗	阴性〖在中国，男为阳，女为阴〗
9	中性〖物品没有性别〗	阴性〖女属阴柔〗
10	阳性〖坚固端正平整〗	阴性〖在中国文化里，有以阴代指女的记述，而且女人有柔美的特点〗
11	中性〖无意义〗	阴性〖女人是阴性〗
12	中性〖单纯的工具〗	阴性〖性别〗
13	阴性〖西班牙语中是阴性〗	阴性〖中国文化中，女人属阴〗
14	中性〖没有生命的物体〗	阴性〖周易文化中，男人属阳，女人属阴〗
15	阴性〖西班牙语里面是阴性(学过一段时间的西班牙语)〗	阴性〖雌性〗
16	中性〖中性表示动物，无生命物体〗	阴性〖女人的自然属性是男的阳性的反面〗
17	中性〖人造物，它的性别不是自然的〗	阴性〖中国人的逻辑里，女性为阴，男性为阳〗
18	中性〖它〗	阴性〖女人为她 故阴性〗
19	中性〖对东方人来说桌子在阴阳性上是没有特别的区分的〗	阴性〖就经验而谈，不论是在汉语还是西方的语言中女性都多作为阴性词汇存在〗
20	阳性〖坚硬〗	阴性〖阴柔美〗
21	中性〖实用物品〗	阴性〖在中国，女为阴〗
22	阳性〖感觉坚固〗	阴性〖女为阴〗
23	中性〖感觉很古板无味〗	阴性〖女性为阴〗
24	中性〖本身无生命〗	阴性〖女性〗
25	中性〖理由同上〗	阴性〖很典型的阴性词〗
26	中性〖无生命力〗	阴性〖毫无疑问〗
27	阳性〖通常很硬〗	阴性〖女人分陰性比較直覺〗
31	阴性〖同樣受法文學習的影響〗	阴性〖法文中 男性為陽性 女性為陰性〗
40	中性〖沒什麼特別的〗	阴性〖因為是女生〗
41	阳性〖der Schreibtisch〗	阴性〖女性是阴性〗
45	中性〖人造〗	阴性〖性别属性〗
46	中性〖没有特别联想〗	阴性〖固有联想〗

Resp.	Q17 力量 *lìliáng* "strength"	Q18 河 *hé* "river"
3	阳性〖阴阳文化〗	阴性〖母亲河〗
4	阳性〖力量的感觉应该属于阳性，还是跟人的性别有关〗	阴性〖上面说过，女性是水做的，女人的"阴柔"像水〗
5	阳性〖如前所述，阳性比阴性更有力量吧〗	中性〖起初认为水应该是阴性的，但是河不确定〗
6	中性〖男女均有〗	阴性〖流动的〗
7	阳性〖刚强，阳刚的感觉〗	阴性〖水比较阴柔〗
8	阳性〖一般会想到男性〗	中性〖物品，无男女〗
9	阳性〖男性代表力量，男性属阳性〗	阴性〖含水均属阴〗
10	阳性〖力量，蓬勃向上，非常积极正面〗	阴性〖水聚成河，水是流动的，凉的〗
11	阳性〖强硬〗	阳性〖滔滔不绝〗
12	阳性〖代表强壮〗	阴性〖"母亲河"〗
13	阳性〖比较男性化〗	阳性〖法语中是阳性〗
14	阳性〖男性更有力量，男人属阳性〗	阳性〖汉字划分阴阳的话，带三点水的字是阳水，雨字头的是阴水〗
15	阳性〖雄性〗	阴性〖母亲〗
16	中性〖中性表示动物，无生命物体〗	中性〖我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它来表示动物无生命物体〗
17	阳性〖男性是力量的代表，阳性一般以男性为代表〗	阴性[9]〖水属阴，河为水〗
18	中性〖力量一般不代替〗	中性〖它〗
19	阳性〖如果是物理中"力"的概念则应该是中性；但力量这个词则让人联想到阳刚的男子气，所以应该是阳性〗	阴性〖同"云"一样，因为与"水"有很大的关联因此归为阴性〗
20	阳性〖刚硬〗	阴性〖水〗
21	阳性〖阳刚之气，象征男性〗	中性〖自然界〗
22	阳性〖一般指男人有力量，〗	阳性〖联系到黄河〗
23	阳性〖值得骄傲〗	中性〖无论时间如何变迁，依然流淌〗
24	阳性〖男性代表力量〗	中性〖无生命〗
25	阳性〖人们常常把力量和男性联系起来〗	中性〖地理名词属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗
26	阳性〖男性力量更大〗	阴性〖河通常是母亲的意象(symbol) 养育人民〗
27	中性〖可陰可陽〗	阴性〖孕育文明的地方〗
31	阳性〖力量讓人聯想到男性〗	中性〖沒有特色陽剛或陰柔的形象〗
40	阳性〖男生比女生有力〗	阴性〖與水有關〗
41	阳性〖阳性的力量之美〗	阳性〖der Fluss〗
45	中性〖无形〗	阴性〖自然无生命物质〗
46	阳性〖固有联想〗	阴性〖像母亲〗

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[9] This noun was originally indicated as N. Nevertheless, as the motivation clearly states that it belongs to F, the answer in the appendix and in the percentage in section 4.4.4 has been changed into F.

Resp.	Q19 狗 *gǒu* "dog"	Q20 床 *chuáng* "bed"
3	阳性〚阴阳文化〛	中性〚生活用品〛
4	阳性〚前面说过，动物都应有阴阳之分。整体上看，狗比较强悍，应该属于阳性〛	阴性〚床给人的感觉是休息的地方，温柔之乡〛
5	阳性〚说不上为什么〛	中性〚说不上为什么〛
6	中性〚两种性别都有〛	阴性〚属于夜晚〛
7	中性〚动物，中性吧〛	中性〚实物，中性吧〛
8	中性〚不会特别说公狗母狗〛	中性〚物品，无男女〛
9	阳性〚感觉而已，说不清〛	中性〚物品没有性别〛
10	阳性〚狗是人类伙伴，看家护院，保护主人，驱赶坏人坏事〛	中性〚床并没有什么特殊含义〛
11	中性〚无意义〛	中性〚无意义〛
12	阳性〚比较凶猛的、强壮的动物〛	中性〚只作为工具而已〛
13	中性〚法语影响〛	阴性〚受西语影响〛
14	中性〚狗的品种很多，有大的也有小的，有凶猛的也有温顺的，不容易确定〛	中性〚没有生命力的物体〛
15	阴性〚直觉……〛	阳性〚直觉……〛
16	中性〚我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它来表示动物无生命物体〛	中性〚我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它来表示动物无生命物体〛
17	阳性〚根据德语〛	阴性〚床供睡觉用，睡眠是在夜间，所以是阴性（毫无逻辑〛
18	中性〚动物亦用它〛	中性〚它〛
19	阳性〚因为在俄语中"狗"是阳性；但是我不知道"母狗"该是阴性还是阳性〛	中性〚同"桌子"，因为没有特定的所代表的具体意向所以是中性〛
20	中性〚动物〛	阳性〚坚硬〛
21	中性〚一种动物〛	中性〚家居〛
22	阳性〚曾作为人类打猎的助手〛	中性〚无法区分〛
23	阳性〚相对于猫更加容易亲近〛	中性〚物品而已〛
24	中性〚狗本身有性别〛	中性〚无生命〛
25	阳性〚理由和"牛"一样〛	中性〚属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〛
26	阳性〚受意大利语影响 而且感觉公狗更 aggressive〛	阳性〚无生命力〛
27	中性〚有公母之分〛	阴性〚安静休息的地方〛
31	中性〚狗有母的也有公的〛	中性〚無分性別或無特別形象的物件 統一歸類為中性〛
40	阳性〚活潑好動〛	中性〚沒什麼特別的〛
41	阳性〚der Hund〛	中性〚das Bett〛
45	阳性〚胎生〛	中性〚人造〛
46	中性〚没有特别联想〛	中性〚没有特别联想〛

Resp.	Q21 国家 *guójiā* "country"	Q22 鱼 *yú* "fish"
3	阳性〖男权社会〗	阴性〖水，阴性〗
4	阴性〖汉语常把祖国比喻为母亲〗	阴性〖鱼应该有阳性和阴性之分，整体上看它是水里的动物，应该是阴性〗
5	阳性〖可能是吧〗	阴性〖灵动〗
6	阳性〖男性气质〗	阴性〖生活在水里〗
7	中性〖抽象名词，中性吧〗	阴性〖鱼长于水中，为阴性吧〗
8	中性〖国家，不分阴阳〗	中性〖不会特别提到公母〗
9	阳性〖想到力量，力量属阳性〗	阴性〖在水里〗
10	中性〖政治概念〗	阴性〖鱼性凉，大部分生活在温度较低的水里〗
11	中性〖无意义〗	中性〖无意义〗
12	阳性〖强大的〗	阴性〖感觉是阴冷的〗
13	中性〖感觉〗	阳性〖受法语影响〗
14	中性〖区分不同地理位置的符号〗	阴性〖生活在水里〗
15	阳性〖直觉……〗	阴性〖直觉……〗
16	中性〖我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它来表示动物无生命物体〗	中性〖我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它来表示动物无生命物体〗
17	阳性〖德语里许多国家结尾是 land，陆地为阳性〗	阴性〖鱼在水中，体阴〗
18	中性〖它〗	中性〖它〗
19	阴性〖汉语中指代国家多用"她"表示亲昵，所以国家应该属阴性〗	阴性〖鱼与"水"有关，汉语中就有"如鱼得水"的表达〗
20	阳性〖力量的象征〗	阴性〖水中的动物〗
21	阳性〖有国家威严之感〗	中性〖一个物种〗
22	阳性〖感觉上非常有凝聚力〗	阴性〖生活在水里〗
23	阳性〖让人充满荣誉感〗	阴性〖好吃~〗
24	中性〖无性别〗	中性〖本身有性别〗
25	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗	阳性〖同"牛"一样〗
26	阳性〖从古至今 男性主导〗	阴性〖生育功能强大〗
27	阳性〖要强盛一點〗	中性〖有公母之分〗
31	阴性〖受學習法文影響〗	中性〖魚有母的也有公的〗
40	阳性〖跟政治有關，比較像男人的話題〗	阴性〖跟水有關〗
41	中性〖das Land〗	阳性〖der Fisch〗
45	中性〖人为划分〗	阴性〖卵生〗
46	中性〖没有特别联想〗	中性〖没有特别联想〗

Resp.	Q23 花 *huā* "flower"	Q24 看法 *kànfǎ* "opinion"
3	阴性〖女人花〗	中性〖中立观点〗
4	阴性〖花很美丽，像女人〗	中性〖这种抽象的名词只能归入中性〗
5	阴性〖女人像花一样〗	中性〖说不上为什么〗
6	阳性〖类似孔雀〗	中性〖两者均有〗
7	阳性〖花喜欢太阳，为阳性吧〗	中性〖抽象名词，为中性吧〗
8	中性〖植物〗	中性〖什么样的看法都有〗
9	阴性〖联想到女性〗	中性〖抽象概念，没有性别〗
10	阴性〖花与美总相关，花是柔弱的，易收到摧残的〗	中性〖嗯，就是中性〗
11	阴性〖美〗	中性〖无意义〗
12	阳性〖与阳光有关〗	中性〖没有什么实际意义〗
13	阴性〖比较女性化〗	中性〖感觉跟性别无关〗
14	阳性〖有生命力，给人生机活力之感〗	中性〖人们表达的观点〗
15	阴性〖直觉……〗	中性〖直觉〗
16	中性〖我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它来表示动物无生命物体〗	中性〖我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它来表示动物无生命物体〗
17	阴性〖人们经常把女人比作花朵，根据思维逻辑，为阴性〗	中性〖抽象名词，不能确定，但感觉是中性〗
18	中性〖植物亦用它〗	中性〖看法不具代名词代替的意义〗
19	阴性〖在汉语中"花"是与女性、柔美相联系的〗	中性〖一个人的思想自然是无法区分其阴阳性差异的了〗
20	阳性〖向阳〗	中性〖没有别的想法〗
21	阴性〖女孩爱花爱美〗	中性〖充满理性〗
22	中性〖花有多种，无法直接归类〗	中性〖感觉〗
23	阳性〖开放的时候非常美丽〗	阴性〖主观性较强〗
24	阴性〖女生爱花〗	中性〖无性别〗
25	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗
26	阴性〖柔美的代表〗	中性〖就算是男性主导 每个个体也都有自己的想法〗
27	中性〖有很大的花也有很小的花〗	阴性〖遵循部分歐語習慣，抽象名詞為陰性〗
31	阳性〖受法文學習影響〗	中性〖此為無特定形象的名詞〗
40	阴性〖美麗的事物〗	中性〖沒什麼特別的〗
41	阴性〖感觉花是女性喜欢的东西〗	阴性〖看法总是多种多样〗
45	阳性〖有生命〗	中性〖无形〗
46	中性〖植物〗	中性〖没有特别联想〗

Resp.	Q25 面粉 *miànfěn* "flour"	Q26 太阳 *tàiyáng* "Sun"
3	中性〖生活用品〗	阳性〖阴阳文化〗
4	中性〖没有性别的感觉〗	阳性〖太阳当然属于热烈、强壮的阳性。太阳之神阿波罗也是男性〗
5	阳性〖基础的食物〗	阳性〖和中国阴阳文化相关〗
6	中性〖不可数名词〗	阳性〖男性的〗
7	中性〖食物，为中性吧〗	阳性〖充满阳光，刚性〗
8	中性〖物品，难判断阴阳〗	阳性〖光，明亮，本身在中国文化里是阳〗
9	中性〖物品没有性别〗	阳性〖联想到光和热〗
10	中性〖不具有阴和阳的特性〗	阳性〖火热，发光，而且有阳字〗
11	中性〖无意义〗	阳性〖光〗
12	中性〖没有感觉〗	阳性〖阳光的〗
13	中性〖感觉跟性别无关〗	阳性〖中国文化中，常跟男人有关〗
14	中性〖食物，温性〗	阳性〖发光和热〗
15	阳性〖粮食〗	阳性〖正能量〗
16	中性〖我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它来表示动物无生命物体〗	阳性〖白天出现的光明之物，与夜晚的月亮相对。〗
17	阴性〖感觉像是，不能确定…〗	阳性〖"太阳"这个名字就是十足的证据了〗
18	中性〖物品用 它〗	中性〖它〗
19	中性〖面粉〗	阳性〖"太阳"在汉语中的意思就是"至热极阳"，所以代表阳性；相反月亮则应该是阴性〗
20	阳性〖白色的〗	阳性〖代表着光明〗
21	中性〖一种食物〗	阳性〖温暖，充满阳性〗
22	阳性〖用面粉能做多种主食〗	阳性〖光和热〗
23	阴性〖与水相溶后会变成面团〗	阳性〖发光发热，带来温暖〗
24	中性〖无性别〗	阳性〖阳刚〗
25	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗
26	阴性〖女性使用得更多〗	阳性〖代表力量〗
27	中性〖可以做成很多食物〗	阳性〖直覺〗
31	中性〖無特定形象的物件〗	阳性〖受法文學習影響〗
40	中性〖沒什麼特別的〗	阳性〖散發光與熱〗
41	中性〖das Mehl〗	阴性〖die Sonne〗
45	中性〖人为加工〗	阳性〖感觉应该是〗
46	中性〖食物〗	中性〖阳光对一切都很平等〗

Resp.	Q27 婴儿 yīngér "toddler"	Q28 法律 fǎlǜ "law"
3	中性〖有男有女〗	中性〖中立〗
4	中性〖婴儿也应有阳性阴性之分，但小孩子还没成人，可以忽略性别〗	中性〖这种抽象的名词应该属于中性吧〗
5	中性〖没有性别，孩子就是没有性别意识的〗	阳性〖有力量，所以认为是阳性〗
6	中性〖两者均有〗	阳性〖规制的〗
7	中性〖不确定男女，为中性吧〗	中性〖普通名词，为中性吧〗
8	中性〖婴儿是阴阳的结合体〗	阳性〖代表力量权威〗
9	中性〖还没有性别〗	阳性〖力量〗
10	中性〖就像英语里用 it 代指，不分男女，我觉得婴儿也是〗	中性〖没有特殊的文化含义〗
11	中性〖无意义〗	中性〖无意义〗
12	阳性〖阳光的〗	阳性〖是强制性的〗
13	阴性〖法语影响〗	中性〖感觉跟性别无关〗
14	阴性〖小、弱，需要被保护〗	中性〖社会规则〗
15	中性〖直觉〗	阳性〖直觉〗
16	中性〖没有指出性别时表示中性〗	中性〖我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它来表示动物无生命物体〗
17	中性〖婴儿刚出生，不能划分男女，所以阴性合适〗	阳性〖某种规则，具有强制性。感觉上应该是阳性〗
18	阳性〖若男婴用男性他女婴用女性她这是具有性别分类的词〗	中性〖它〗
19	中性〖男婴儿应该是阳性，女婴儿是阴性；婴儿作为两者的合集如果没有对性别的特殊限定那么应该只是中性的词汇〗	中性〖法律应该是公正无私不偏不倚的，所以是中性〗
20	中性〖没有性别〗	阳性〖刚正不阿〗
21	中性〖婴儿在儿童时期似乎可以忽视性别，只要是婴儿都让人喜欢〗	阳性〖充满理性〗
22	阴性〖脆弱需要呵护〗	阳性〖强制性〗
23	中性〖婴儿时代是比较懵懂一些〗	中性〖法律面前人人平等〗
24	中性〖无性别〗	中性〖无性别〗
25	阳性〖泛指的话一般用阳性〗	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗
26	中性〖可是任何一种性别〗	中性〖代表了一种公正 不偏向任何一种性别〗
27	中性〖婴兒看不出性别〗	阴性〖抽象名詞〗
31	阴性〖受法文學習影響〗	中性〖無特别形象的名詞〗
40	阴性〖脆弱〗	阳性〖男性話題〗
41	中性〖das Baby〗	阳性〖具有约束力强制力〗
45	阳性〖生命体〗	中性〖人造〗
46	中性〖性别观念不强〗	中性〖社会概念〗

Resp.	Q29 凤凰 *fènghuáng* "phoenix"	Q30 玉米 *yùmǐ* "sweet corn"
3	阳性〖太阳鸟〗	中性〖生活用品〗
4	阴性〖凤凰其实是中国人想象的动物，它很美丽，可以看作阴性〗	阳性〖植物也是有性别的，感觉玉米应该属于阳性〗
5	阴性〖女性的形象〗	阳性〖玉米的生长感觉离不开太阳〗
6	阴性〖在中国一般代表女性〗	阳性〖是一种种子和果实〗
7	阳性〖凤凰为南方的鸟，向阳，为阳性吧〗	中性〖食物，为中性吧〗
8	阴性〖凤凰是女性的〗	中性〖植物〗
9	阴性〖属女〗	阳性〖感觉而已〗
10	阳性〖中国神话，凤凰涅槃，得以重生，凤凰火是天下至纯至热之火，永不熄灭〗	中性〖就是吃的〗
11	阴性〖女性〗	中性〖无意义〗
12	中性〖凤与凰一男一女〗	中性〖感觉没有性别〗
13	阴性〖中国文化中，用来指皇后〗	阳性〖法语影响〗
14	阳性〖充满灵性的神话动物〗	中性〖食物，温性〗
15	阳性〖直觉〗	阴性〖直觉〗
16	中性〖我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它来表示动物无生命物体〗	中性〖我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它来表示动物无生命物体〗
17	中性〖凤凰是凤和凰两种动物的统称〗	阳性〖感觉像〗
18	阴性〖凤凰具有人格为古代女性象征〗	中性〖它〗
19	阳性〖凤凰在西方故事中代表火，如《哈利波特》里的"凤凰社，"所以应该为阳性；但是在中国凤凰又是女性的代表，有"龙凤呈祥""龙凤胎"这样的表达，所以在汉语中"凤凰"一词正好相反，是阴性的〗	中性〖玉米应该是中性〗
20	阴性〖古代的象征〗	阳性〖向阳〗
21	阴性〖中国女为凤凰，皇后的衣服绣着凤凰，龙凤胎的凤是女孩〗	阴性〖甜甜的〗
22	阳性〖凤凰涅槃〗	阳性〖也能做多种主食〗
23	阴性〖在小说里一般是女性角色〗	阴性〖自我具有生育能力〗
24	阴性〖代表女性〗	中性〖无性别〗
25	阳性〖同"牛"一样〗	中性〖属于无性别区分名词，与阴阳性无关〗
26	阴性〖中国文化中 龙代表男性 凤凰代表女性〗	阴性〖数量多 儿孙满堂的画面感〗
27	阴性〖传统上好像比较是女性象徵〗	阳性〖暖色系的〗
31	阳性〖鳳凰給人吉祥 正向的感覺〗	中性〖無特定形象的物件〗
40	中性〖鳳是公的，凰是母的〗	中性〖沒什麼特別的〗
41	阴性〖凤凰在汉语里偏向形容女性〗	阳性〖感觉玉米是黄色的 应该是阳性〗
45	中性〖虚幻的〗	阴性〖果实〗
46	中性〖固有印象〗	中性〖食物〗

Resp.	Q31 悲哀 *bēiāi* "sorrow"	Q32 大海 *dàhǎi* "ocean"
3	阴性〖负面情绪〗	阴性〖大海是妈妈〗
4	阴性〖悲哀是女人最常有的情绪吧，是内心的感觉〗	阳性〖大海的宽阔给人男性的感觉〗
5	阴性〖和性格，女性忧郁的性格有关系〗	阳性〖广阔，认为应该是阳性〗
6	阴性〖情感上的阴性〗	阳性〖固定而非流动的〗
7	阴性〖不好的情绪，为阴性吧〗	阳性〖大海很包容，感觉是阳性〗
8	阴性〖具有消极色彩〗	中性〖客观事物〗
9	阴性〖阴郁的气质〗	阴性〖水〗
10	阴性〖悲哀，联想到悲痛，悲凉，有颓废的感觉〗	阳性〖广阔无边，中国文化里常描写海波涛汹涌的样子〗
11	中性〖无意义〗	阳性〖广阔〗
12	阴性〖比较伤感〗	阳性〖广阔的，男性的象征〗
13	阴性〖负面词汇〗	阴性〖法语影响〗
14	阴性〖给人负面影响〗	阳性〖三点水的汉字〗
15	阴性〖直觉〗	阳性〖直觉〗
16	阴性〖光明快乐的反面〗	中性〖我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它来表示动物无生命物体〗
17	阴性〖暗淡的情绪，应该是阴性〗	阳性〖大海给人一种广阔壮观的感觉〗
18	中性〖悲哀为形容词一般中文不会用形容词在做形容 如悲伤很悲伤 不具意义 唯一理解就是悲伤被拟人化 但若是拟人化的悲伤就可用他 或她所要以为两者皆可〗	中性〖它〗
19	阴性〖悲哀是一种负面的情绪，在汉语中负面又是"阴"的一种解释〗	阴性〖与水有关，所以是阴性〗
20	阴性〖不好的情绪〗	阳性〖广阔无垠〗
21	阴性〖充满冷冷的感觉〗	阳性〖海纳百川〗
22	阴性〖低落的情绪〗	阳性〖宽广〗
23	阴性〖是悲观一面的体现〗	中性〖海水奔腾〗
24	中性〖无性别〗	中性〖无性别〗
25	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗
26	阴性〖感觉女性的命运悲哀比较多〗	阳性〖力量〗
27	阴性〖抽象名詞〗	阴性〖孕育生命的地方〗
31	阴性〖悲傷的情緒感覺屬於比較負面 陰柔的氣質〗	阳性〖大海很開闊 正向的成分居多〗
40	阴性〖直覺〗	阴性〖與水有關〗
41	阴性〖悲伤的与阴性有关〗	中性〖das Meer〗
45	中性〖感情〗	阴性〖无生命〗
46	阴性〖想到一个人心里在下雨〗	中性〖没有特别联想〗

Resp.	Q33 鸡 jī "chicken"	Q34 电脑 diànnǎo "computer"
3	阴性〖妓女〗	中性〖生活用品〗
4	阴性〖还是动物的问题，应该既有阴性也有阳性〗	中性〖这种无生命的东西应该属于中性〗
5	中性〖说不清楚〗	中性〖不明白，说不上为什么〗
6	阳性〖一般联想的是公鸡〗	阳性〖刚性的，不易改变的〗
7	阳性〖太阳出，鸡就会叫，也是喜欢太阳的，为阳性吧〗	中性〖实物，中性吧〗
8	中性〖有母鸡，公鸡，不会用鸡来特指一个词〗	中性〖物品〗
9	阳性〖联想到公鸡〗	中性〖物品没有性别〗
10	中性〖我不知道怎么回答，就是普通食品而已〗	中性〖就是日常用品〗
11	阴性〖弱小〗	中性〖无意义〗
12	阳性〖叫声明亮〗	中性〖没有性别〗
13	阳性〖法语影响〗	阳性〖法语影响〗
14	阳性〖鸡鸣预示着天亮，开始新的一天。传统文化中雄鸡有镇宅的作用〗	中性〖物品〗
15	阴性〖直觉〗	阴性〖直觉〗
16	中性〖我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它来表示动物无生命物体〗	中性〖我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它来表示动物无生命物体〗
17	中性〖这个真不知道〗	阳性〖根据德语，是阳性〗
18	中性〖它〗	中性〖它〗
19	阴性〖俄语中"鸡"是阴性〗	中性〖现代词汇应该没有阴阳性之分〗
20	中性〖没有〗	阳性〖人类的发明〗
21	阳性〖公鸡，鸡肉属于燥热型，吃了容易上火〗	中性〖理性〗
22	阳性〖公鸡打鸣〗	中性〖无法归类〗
23	中性〖公鸡母鸡各有所用〗	中性〖实用〗
24	中性〖无性别〗	中性〖无性别〗
25	阳性〖同"牛"一样〗	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗
26	阳性〖公鸡更厉害〗	中性〖无生命〗
27	中性〖有公母之分〗	阳性〖硬梆梆的〗
31	中性〖雞有母的也有公的〗	中性〖無特定形象的物件〗
40	阴性〖胖胖的很可愛，女生很喜歡〗	阳性〖男生話題〗
41	中性〖das Huhn〗	阳性〖der Computer〗
45	阴性〖卵生〗	中性〖人造〗
46	中性〖没有特别联想〗	中性〖没有特别联想〗

Resp.	Q35 雨 *yǔ* "rain"	Q36 社会主义 *shèhuì zhǔyì* "socialism"
3	阴性〖心情不好〗	阳性〖阳光积极〗
4	阴性〖汉语说"阴雨绵绵"，雨的感觉是阴柔的〗	中性〖抽象名词〗
5	阴性〖和水有关系〗	中性〖说不上为什么〗
6	阴性〖流动的〗	阳性〖理想化的〗
7	阴性〖阴雨连绵的感觉，为阴性吧〗	阳性〖从小就唱的歌："社会主义像太阳"，所以有阳性的感觉，哈哈〗
8	中性〖客观事物〗	中性〖社会制度〗
9	阴性〖水〗	阳性〖我们的教育里社会主义代表了光明〗
10	阴性〖雨，凉，雨特别是春雨，绵柔细密，润物无声〗	中性〖政治概念，无特殊含义〗
11	阴性〖滋润〗	中性〖无意义〗
12	阴性〖细雨绵绵，女性的象征〗	阳性〖正能量〗
13	阴性〖法语影响〗	中性〖感觉跟性别无关〗
14	阴性〖雨字头〗	中性〖人类社会的一个阶段〗
15	阴性〖直觉〗	阳性〖直觉〗
16	中性〖1〗	中性〖我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它来表示动物无生命物体〗
17	阴性〖阴晴相对，晴为阳，雨为阴〗	中性〖抽象名词，我觉得无法定位成阴阳性〗
18	中性〖它〗	中性〖它 这很明显用这个〗
19	阴性〖与水有关，和"云"一样属阴性〗	中性〖思想应该是中性的词汇〗
20	阴性〖阴冷〗	阳性〖象征着力量〗
21	阴性〖凉，雨天情绪忧郁〗	阳性〖国家问题〗
22	阴性〖一般带来降温，湿润〗	阳性〖感觉积极〗
23	阴性〖阴天下雨〗	阳性〖中国人的梦想〗
24	中性〖无性别〗	中性〖无性别〗
25	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗
26	阴性〖阴柔〗	阳性〖马克思 中国领导人男性〗
27	阴性〖天氣很陰〗	阴性〖抽象名詞〗
31	阴性〖下雨連結到悲傷 陰鬱的情緒〗	中性〖無特定形象的名詞〗
40	阴性〖跟水有關〗	阳性〖男性話題〗
41	阴性〖雨很多〗	阳性〖什么主义都是阳性〗
45	中性〖自然界生成〗	中性〖人为思想〗
46	阴性〖阴雨连绵，比较阴柔〗	中性〖社会概念〗

Resp.	Q37 包子 *bāozi* "stuffed bread"	Q38 怒气 *nùqì* "anger"
3	中性〖生活用品〗	阳性〖阳〗
4	中性〖面粉做的东西无所谓性别〗	阳性〖发怒更容易让人想到男性〗
5	阳性〖基本的食物吧〗	阳性〖和力量相关〗
6	中性〖无法分类〗	阳性〖激动的〗
7	中性〖食物，中性吧〗	阳性〖非常强烈的暴躁的气息，为阳性吧〗
8	中性〖吃的东西〗	阴性〖具有消极色彩〗
9	中性〖没有性别〗	阳性〖充满力量〗
10	中性〖没有特殊含义〗	阳性〖怒，愤怒，有喷薄之感，表示怒气会以火为背景，火性阳，故怒气归属阳〗
11	中性〖无意义〗	中性〖无意义〗
12	中性〖没有明确的感觉〗	阳性〖强硬的〗
13	中性〖感觉跟性别无关〗	阴性〖负面词汇〗
14	中性〖食物〗	阴性〖给人负面影响的情绪〗
15	阳性〖直觉〗	阳性〖直觉〗
16	中性〖我们汉语中，人称代词是有三个性别的，用"它来表示动物无生命物体〗	阳性〖中医说 发怒是肝火旺盛〗
17	中性〖不知道…〗	阳性〖激烈的情绪，阳性比较合理〗
18	中性〖它 如 它好吃〗	中性〖它 它是一个不好的行为〗
19	中性〖汉语对自身的词汇并无阴阳性上的划分〗	阳性〖怒气虽然是消极负面的情绪，但因为容易让人联想到暴力这样的阳性词汇，所以同样归为阳性〗
20	阳性〖热气腾腾〗	阴性〖不好的东西〗
21	阳性〖暖和，吃了有力量〗	阳性〖火上升〗
22	阳性〖主食之一〗	阳性〖强烈的情绪〗
23	中性〖好吃的是阳性，不好吃的阴性〗	阴性〖怒气会给周围带来不好的气息〗
24	中性〖无性别〗	中性〖无性别〗
25	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗
26	阴性〖女人做的〗	阳性〖男性凶〗
27	阳性〖吃了會有能量的感覺〗	阴性〖抽象名詞〗
31	中性〖無特定形象的物件〗	阳性〖這種情緒是開放 外顯的〗
40	中性〖沒什麼特別的〗	阳性〖男性比較會生氣〗
41	中性〖das Baozi〗	阳性〖阳刚之力〗
45	中性〖食物〗	中性〖感情〗
46	中性〖食物〗	阳性〖想到一个人在冒火〗

Resp.	Q39 月亮 *yuèliàng* "moon"	Q40 水 *shuǐ* "water"
3	阴性〖阴阳文化〗	阴性〖女人〗
4	阴性〖汉语说"月光似水"，和太阳相对〗	阴性〖水肯定是阴性的〗
5	阴性〖正如太阳相当于阳性〗	阴性〖流动的，阴性〗
6	阴性〖女性气质〗	阴性〖女性气质〗
7	阴性〖夜间才出现，为阴性吧〗	阴性〖水至柔至阴，为阴性吧〗
8	阴性〖与太阳互为阴阳〗	阴性〖与火相对，则为阴〗
9	阴性〖阴柔〗	阴性〖水属阴柔〗
10	阴性〖朦胧而柔美，皎洁，白色，冷色调〗	阴性〖水，流动，性凉〗
11	阴性〖皎洁〗	阴性〖女人如水〗
12	阴性〖婵娟，女性的象征〗	阴性〖女人如水〗
13	阴性〖中国文化中跟女性有关〗	阴性〖中国文化中常用水形容女人〗
14	阴性〖和太阳相对，中国的阴历是月亮历法〗	阳性〖笼统分类属于阳水〗
15	阴性〖直觉〗	阴性〖直觉〗
16	阴性〖与太阳相对，月亮是阴性的〗	阴性〖中国文化中 水是阴柔的〗
17	阴性〖日为阳夜为阴〗	阴性〖中文里一般把水和女性联系在一起〗
18	中性〖它〗	中性〖它〗
19	阴性〖与"太阳"相反，"月亮"应为阴性〗	阴性〖在汉语中"水"通常是女性化的，有一种阴柔的属性；中国古代关于"水"的诗歌也大都是这样的〗
20	阴性〖阴柔美〗	阴性〖阴柔美〗
21	阴性〖和太阳相对，在晚上出来，嫦娥奔月〗	阴性〖柔和〗
22	阴性〖月为阴〗	阴性〖常形容女人如水〗
23	阴性〖晚上才会看见月亮〗	中性〖纯水是中性的〗
24	阴性〖阴柔之美〗	中性〖无性别〗
25	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗
26	阴性〖阴柔〗	阴性〖女人水做的〗
27	阴性〖晚上才出來〗	中性〖感覺沒有性別〗
31	阴性〖月亮對照太陽顯得陰柔〗	阴性〖水的流動性和質地都給人溫柔的印象〗
40	阴性〖跟夜晚有關〗	阴性〖跟水有關〗
41	阳性〖der Mond〗	中性〖das Wasser〗
45	阴性〖观念思想如此〗	阴性〖自然界生成〗
46	阴性〖固有印象〗	中性〖水是透明的〗

Resp.	Q41 政治 zhèngzhì "politics"	Q42 树 shù "tree"
3	中性〖中立〗	中性〖自然〗
4	中性〖抽象的名词无所谓性别〗	阳性〖树给人的感觉高大，强壮〗
5	阳性〖和力量相关〗	阳性〖扎根于土地〗
6	中性〖两者皆可〗	中性〖两者皆可〗
7	中性〖普通名词，中性吧〗	阳性〖树的生长需要太阳，阳性吧〗
8	中性〖客观现象〗	中性〖植物〗
9	阳性〖力量、权力〗	阳性〖生命力〗
10	中性〖政治，没有什么特殊意义〗	阳性〖树，扎根土地，坚韧不屈，挺拔〗
11	中性〖无意义〗	阳性〖遮挡〗
12	阳性〖正面的〗	阳性〖阳光〗
13	中性〖感觉跟性别无关〗	阳性〖中国文化中 男人的名字用"树"〗
14	中性〖人类社会的产物〗	阴性〖有个词叫"树荫"，还有"前人栽树 后人乘凉"的说法。寒凉即为阴〗
15	阳性〖直觉〗	阳性〖直觉〗
16	中性〖中性可表示动物，无生命物体〗	中性〖中性可表示动物，无生命物体〗
17	中性〖同样是抽象名词〗	阳性〖德语中树是阳性〗
18	中性〖它 政治很肮脏 它 很肮脏〗	中性〖它〗
19	中性〖政治应该是不带有感情色彩的中性词〗	中性〖汉语中树属于中性〗
20	阳性〖力量〗	阳性〖喜欢阳光〗
21	阳性〖国家问题〗	阳性〖生长需要阳光〗
22	阳性〖政治家多为男性〗	阳性〖生机与活力〗
23	阳性〖令人趋之若鹜〗	中性〖感觉是很温和的生物〗
24	中性〖无性别〗	中性〖无性别〗
25	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗	中性〖无男女区别〗
26	阳性〖嗯 你懂〗	阳性〖阳刚〗
27	阴性〖抽象名詞〗	阳性〖吸收很多陽光〗
31	中性〖無特定形象的名詞〗	阳性〖樹會聯想到支撐和高壯〗
40	阳性〖男性話題〗	中性〖沒什麼特別的〗
41	阴性〖政治是复杂的〗	阳性〖der Baum〗
45	中性〖人为划分〗	阳性〖有生命〗
46	中性〖没有跟性别有关的联想〗	中性〖没有特别联想〗

Resp.	Q43 男人 *nánrén* "man"	Q44 地球 *dìqiú* "the Earth"
3	阳性〖阴阳文化〗	中性〖自然〗
4	阳性〖这个不用说〗	阳性〖只是一种感觉，地球宽容一切〗
5	阳性〖和中国的阴阳一致〗	阳性〖和土地有关系〗
6	阳性〖男性的〗	阴性〖母亲〗
7	阳性〖男人阳刚，为阳性吧〗	中性〖实物，中性吧〗
8	阳性〖与女人互为阴阳〗	中性〖客观事物〗
9	阳性〖阳刚〗	阳性〖生命〗
10	阳性〖男性，具有阳刚之气，硬朗之风，棱廓分明，故阳〗	阴性〖常称地球为"地球母亲"，母亲是女性，属阴〗
11	阳性〖xy〗	中性〖无意义〗
12	阳性〖性别〗	阴性〖地球妈妈〗
13	阳性〖男性啊〗	阳性〖法语影响〗
14	阳性〖周易文化中，男人属阳性〗	中性〖天体〗
15	阳性〖直觉〗	中性〖直觉〗
16	阳性〖男性是阳性，与女性相对〗	中性〖中性可表示动物，无生命物体〗
17	阳性〖毫无疑问，男性为阳性〗	阳性〖感觉……〗
18	阳性〖他〗	中性〖它〗
19	阳性〖与"女人"属阴性相对，男人应该是代表阳性的〗	阴性〖汉语中"地球"与"国家"一词相同，多以"她"相称，所以划分到阴性词汇一类中〗
20	阳性〖阳刚美〗	阳性〖承载着许多〗
21	阳性〖易经里男性为阳〗	中性〖大范围〗
22	阳性〖有力量〗	中性〖无法归类〗
23	阳性〖男人是阳性〗	阳性〖地球给我们生存的环境〗
24	阳性〖阳刚之气〗	中性〖无性别〗
25	阳性〖典型阳性名词〗	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗
26	阳性〖你懂 题实在太多了……〗	阴性〖养育〗
27	阳性〖直覺〗	阴性〖大地之母吧〗
31	阳性〖法文內的男性为陽性〗	中性〖無特定形象的名詞〗
40	阳性〖男性〗	中性〖太難歸類了〗
41	阳性〖男性是阳性〗	阴性〖die Erde〗
45	阳性〖习惯划分〗	中性〖不知道〗
46	阳性〖固有印象〗	中性〖没有特别联想〗

Resp.	Q45 龙 *lóng* "dragon"	Q46 镜子 *jìngzi* "mirror"
3	阳性〖文化〗	中性〖生活用品〗
4	阳性〖汉语中的这个词感觉是强壮的〗	阴性〖女性更爱照镜子〗
5	阳性〖和力量有关〗	阴性〖感觉女孩子更离不开镜子〗
6	阳性〖文化上的理解〗	中性〖两者皆可〗
7	阳性〖中国的龙代表天子，九五之尊，至阳至刚，阳性〗	阴性〖黑夜里的镜子，感觉阴森森的〗
8	阳性〖龙代表男性〗	中性〖客观事物〗
9	阳性〖男性的代表〗	中性〖物品没有性别〗
10	阳性〖龙是中国的代表，是中华民族的图腾，腾跃向上，具有力量〗	阴性〖嗯，中国很多鬼故事都有镜子的参与，镜子招鬼，鬼属阴界，镜子也有阴性〗
11	阳性〖壮大〗	中性〖无意义〗
12	阳性〖古代龙为男性〗	中性〖工具〗
13	阳性〖中国文化中 常指男性〗	阴性〖阴柔〗
14	阳性〖传统文化中常常说皇帝是真龙天子的化身〗	中性〖物品〗
15	阴性〖直觉〗	阴性〖直觉〗
16	中性〖中性可表示动物，无生命物体〗	中性〖中性可表示动物，无生命物体〗
17	阳性〖在中国，龙象征光辉灿烂〗	阴性〖女性多用镜子〗
18	阳性〖龙具有人格化故用他 在古代龙象征中国皇帝〗	中性〖它〗
19	阳性〖"龙"在汉语中是阳性的代表，与"凤"相对〗	中性〖镜子应该是中性的〗
20	阳性〖古代分类〗	中性〖没啥含义〗
21	阳性〖龙为皇帝〗	阴性〖鬼片里都有镜子，阴暗〗
22	阳性〖代表至上权利等〗	阴性〖易碎〗
23	阳性〖雄壮威武的生物〗	中性〖真实的反映自己〗
24	中性〖无性别〗	中性〖无性别〗
25	阳性〖同牛一样〗	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗
26	阳性〖权力〗	阴性〖爱美〗
27	阳性〖通常是男性象徵〗	中性〖照出来很多東西〗
31	阳性〖龍會聯想到强盛〗	阴性〖女生比較常照鏡子 因此女生常用的東西叫容易被歸類為陰柔的物品〗
40	阳性〖皇帝〗	阴性〖直覺〗
41	阳性〖龙是力量的代表〗	阴性〖与女性有关的物品〗
45	中性〖虚拟中的生物〗	中性〖人造〗
46	阳性〖固有印象〗	中性〖没有性别概念〗

Resp.	Q47 爱情 *àiqíng* "love"	Q48 狮子 *shīzi* "lion"
3	阳性〚阳光美好〛	阳性〚男性〛
4	中性〚抽象的名词〛	阳性〚强壮〛
5	中性〚难以分类〛	阳性〚力量〛
6	阴性〚温柔而易变的〛	阳性〚想到雄性的狮子〛
7	中性〚抽象名词，中性吧〛	阳性〚刚强勇猛的动物，阳性吧〛
8	中性〚客观现象〛	阳性〚第一直觉，力量〛
9	阴性〚联想到女人〛	阳性〚联想到雄狮〛
10	阳性〚爱与情都是美好的〛	阳性〚百兽之首，具有力量，凶猛〛
11	阴性〚心理〛	阳性〚力量〛
12	阳性〚热烈的〛	阳性〚强壮的〛
13	阳性〚法语影响〛	阳性〚男性〛
14	中性〚可能给人积极的影响，也可能带来消极影响〛	阳性〚兽中之王〛
15	阴性〚直觉〛	阳性〚直觉〛
16	中性〚中性可表示动物，无生命物体〛	中性〚中性可表示动物，无生命物体〛
17	中性〚爱情是人与人之间普遍存在的，感觉不能被定为阴阳〛	阳性〚狮子代表热情，热情为阳性〛
18	中性〚它〛	中性〚它〛
19	中性〚直觉〛	阳性〚狮子是有能量和爆发力的，所以归为阳性事物的一种〛
20	中性〚没有含义〛	中性〚动物〛
21	阳性〚温暖，甜甜的〛	阳性〚森林之王〛
22	中性〚无法简单归类〛	阳性〚凶猛〛
23	阳性〚主观积极的感情〛	阳性〚比较强烈的雄壮感〛
24	中性〚无性别〛	中性〚本身有性别〛
25	中性〚属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〛	阳性〚同"牛"一样〛
26	中性〚不分性别〛	阳性〚力量〛
27	阴性〚抽象名詞〛	中性〚有公母之分〛
31	中性〚爱情可以很强烈也可以很轻柔〛	阳性〚狮子給人男性化 陽剛的感覺〛
40	阴性〚女性話題〛	阳性〚獵殺、肉食〛
41	阴性〚die Liebe〛	阳性〚der Löwe〛
45	中性〚感情的一种〛	阳性〚胎生，有生命〛
46	阴性〚浪漫的事物更女性化〛	阳性〚固有印象〛

Resp.	Q49 火 *huǒ* "fire"	Q50 锤子 *chuízǐ* "hammer"
3	阳性〖男性〗	阳性〖男性〗
4	中性〖无所谓性别〗	中性〖工具类的东西给人感觉没有性别〗
5	阳性〖毁灭的力量〗	阳性〖力量〗
6	阳性〖受狮子的影响〗	阳性〖在中国是一个公司，老板是男的〗
7	阳性〖热烈激昂，阳性吧〗	中性〖实物，中性吧〗
8	阳性〖光，热，与阳相应〗	阳性〖力量〗
9	阳性〖光和热〗	阳性〖虽然是物品，但感受到力量〗
10	阳性〖火热烈，有温度〗	中性〖普通工具〗
11	阳性〖热〗	中性〖无意义〗
12	阳性〖明亮的〗	阳性〖冰冷〗
13	阳性〖跟水相反〗	阳性〖感觉跟男人的工资有关〗
14	阳性〖明亮 热烈〗	中性〖物品〗
15	阳性〖直觉〗	阳性〖直觉〗
16	中性〖中性可表示动物，无生命物体〗	中性〖中性可表示动物，无生命物体〗
17	阳性〖火为阳水为阴〗	阳性〖锤子给人以力量感〗
18	中性〖它〗	中性〖它裤子〗
19	阳性〖火是热的，所以是阳性〗	中性〖汉语中锤子应该是中性〗
20	阳性〖热情似火〗	阳性〖坚硬〗
21	阳性〖暖和，温暖〗	中性〖一样物品〗
22	阳性〖光和热〗	阳性〖有力量〗
23	阳性〖炽热的温度〗	中性〖工具〗
24	中性〖无性别〗	中性〖无性别〗
25	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗	中性〖属于非生物名词，与阴阳性无关〗
26	阴性〖鲜艳〗	阳性〖力量〗
27	阳性〖通常是暖色系的〗	阳性〖硬梆梆的〗
31	阳性〖火给人明亮 强烈的形象〗	阳性〖锤子通常男性较常使用〗
40	阳性〖温暖、光、热〗	阳性〖需要力量〗
41	阳性〖亮光，很激烈〗	阳性〖感觉很有力量〗
45	中性〖自然界生成〗	中性〖人造〗
46	阳性〖固有印象〗	中性〖工具〗