

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Table of Contents</b>	iii
<b>Preface &amp; Acknowledgments</b>	xi
<b>Abbreviations, Symbols &amp; Typological Conventions</b>	xv
<b>Tables &amp; Figures</b>	xvii
<b>Chapter 1 Introduction - Gender assignment in French</b>	
1.1 Gender and languages	1
1.2 Gender and French nouns	2
1.3 Cross-linguistic research into nominal classification systems	5
<b>Chapter 2 Literature review and methodology</b>	
2.0 Introduction	7
2.1 Cross-linguistic research into gender and noun classification	8
2.1.1 Potential universal factors	10
2.1.2 Three major studies of nominal classification systems	12
2.1.3 Nominal classification systems of various languages	18
2.1.4 Systems in European languages	20
2.1.5 Interaction between phonology and gender	22
2.2 The French language – relevant historical information	24
2.2.1 <i>Serments de Strasbourg</i> , 842 AD	26
2.2.2 <i>Cantilène de Sainte Eulalie</i> , ca. 878	26
2.2.3 Later changes in the French language	27
2.3 Current linguistic research into gender assignment in French	28
2.3.1 Gender assignment and word-final phonology	29
2.3.2 Gender assignment and morphology	42
2.3.3 Gender assignment and semantics	43
2.3.4 Gender assignment of homonyms and other French nouns	54
2.4 Summary – literature review	55
2.5 Methodology	56
<b>Chapter 3 Review of phonological, morphological and semantic explanations</b>	
3.0 Introduction	59
3.1 Word-final phone in relation to gender assignment	60
3.1.1 Single syllable nouns - gender assignment and word-final syllable structure	63
3.1.2 Interaction between word-final pronunciation and orthographic representations	66
3.1.3 Changes in word-final pronunciation for loan words entering the French lexicon	67
3.2 Morphology and gender assignment	68
3.2.1 Compound nouns	69
3.2.2 Semantic extensions, grammatical conversions, and loan words	71
3.2.3 Detailed morphological analysis related to word-final phones /it/	73

3.3	Semantic explanations	76
3.4	Summary	78

## Chapter 4 Birds - Gender Assignment and Word-final Pronunciation

4.0	Introduction	80
4.1	Predictability – frequency based on word-final phonology and gender assignment	82
4.2	Initial exploration – word-final phonology and gender assignment	83
4.2.1	Word-final phonology and gender assignment of loan words	83
4.2.2	Word-final phonology and gender assignment of synonyms	85
4.2.3	Word-final phonology and gender assignment of derived nouns	86
4.2.4	Summary	88
4.3	Semantics and gender assignment – initial exploration	88
4.3.1	Semantics and superordinate terms	88
4.3.2	Semantics and collective nouns	93
4.3.3	Semantics related to 'male' and 'female' birds	95
4.3.4	Young terrestrial fowl - distinctions for 'male' and 'female'	96
4.3.5	Other historical terms for 'male' and 'female' of a kind	98
4.3.6	Attributes associated with 'male' and 'female' terrestrial fowl	100
4.3.7	Waterfowl	102
4.3.8	Kind – the 'unmarked' case amongst pairs of terms	105
4.3.9	Gender assignments – other terrestrial fowl	106
4.3.10	Word-final pronunciation	109
4.3.11	Summary	113
4.4	Analysis of count nouns in the corpus	117
4.4.1	Aerial birds	117
4.4.2	Aquatic birds	135
4.4.3	Plumage colour	154
4.4.4	Flightless birds	149
4.4.5	Differences in comparative age, size	161
4.4.6	Remaining nouns in the corpus	166
4.4.7	Summary	167
4.5	Birds in related sets	171
4.5.1	Nouns denoting 'pigeons' and 'doves'	171
4.5.2	Members of the 'finch' family	182
4.5.3	Heron-like wading birds	183
4.5.4	Crow family, incl. <i>corbeau</i> (M) 'raven and <i>corneille</i> (F) 'crow'	189
4.5.5	Summary – related sets	193
4.6	Other issues raised in the analysis	196
4.6.1	Generic term <i>oiseau</i> (M) 'bird'	196
4.6.2	Historical changes in other generic terms - <i>canard</i> (M) 'duck'	197
4.6.3	Woodpeckers - an adaptation too far	197
4.6.4	'Flightless' and the feminine noun <i>talève takahé</i> (F) 'takahe'	198
4.6.5	Compound and simple nouns – alternative gender assignments	202
4.7	Summary of findings	202
4.8	Conclusions	206

## Chapter 5 Fish - Gender Assignment and Word-final Pronunciation

5.0	Introduction	210
5.1	Predictability – frequency based on word-final phonology and gender assignment	210
5.2	General information relating to the lexical field 'fish'	211
5.2.1	General characteristics of fish	211
5.2.2	Difficulties in accurate identification of fish	213
5.3	Initial exploration of gender assignment	216
5.3.1	Superordinate noun	216
5.3.2	Collective nouns	217
5.3.3	Loan words	218
5.3.4	Nouns derived from other linguistic processes	219
5.3.5	Summary – superordinate nouns, collective nouns and loan words	221
5.4	Semantic analysis of count nouns in the corpus	222
5.4.1	Irregular nouns - feminine and vowel-final	223
5.4.2	Irregular nouns - masculine and consonant-final	227
5.4.3	Regular nouns - masculine and vowel-final	231
5.4.4	Regular nouns - feminine and consonant-final	235
5.4.5	Word-final pronunciation	240
5.4.6	Summary - count nouns in the corpus	244
5.5	Attributes - further discussion	247
5.5.1	Elongated shape	247
5.5.2	Upright orientation	251
5.5.3	Distinctions in age and size	255
5.5.4	'Nocturnal'	260
5.5.5	Schooling fish	263
5.5.6	Summary relating to attributes	264
5.6	Comparison of species in related sets	266
5.6.1	Eels	266
5.6.2	Flatfish	268
5.6.3	Billfish (swordfish, marlin, sailfish) and needlefish (garfish, etc.)	276
5.6.4	Wrasse	279
5.6.5	Further comparison - <i>saumon</i> (M) 'salmon' and <i>truite</i> (F) 'trout'	281
5.6.6	Summary – related sets	282
5.7	Word-final pronunciation	284
5.8	Summary and conclusion	285

## Chapter 6 Other Living Creatures - Gender Assignment and Word-final Pronunciation

6.0	Predictability – frequency based on word-final phonology and gender assignment	292
6.1	Initial exploration – association between linguistic processes and gender assignments	293
6.2	Initial exploration – semantics associated with family sets	296
6.2.1	Family sets – lexical distinctions for age and sex	298
6.2.2	Other sets of family pairs	300
6.2.3	Unmarked case amongst family sets	301
6.2.4	Word-final pronunciation patterns	302

6.3	Semantics – collective nouns, superordinate and general terms and loan words	306
6.3.1	Collective nouns	307
6.3.2	Superordinate nouns and general terms	313
6.3.3	Loan words	318
6.3.4	Summary – related sets, collective nouns, superordinate & general terms, loan words	322
6.4	Semantic analysis – count nouns	327
6.4.1	Masculine count nouns	327
6.4.2	Feminine count nouns	337
6.4.3	Similar creatures, different gender assignments (worms, amphibians, reptiles (tortoise/turtle)	348
6.4.4	Word-final pronunciations	351
6.4.5	Summary – count nouns	355
6.5	Attributes and counter-examples	360
6.5.1	Adapted for flight	360
6.5.2	Nocturnal habit	364
6.5.3	Moving in leaps and bounds	369
6.6.	Comparative – differences in some degree	373
6.6.1	'Diminutive' in relation to 'young' of any kind	373
6.6.2	Affective - another form of 'diminutive'	374
6.6.3	Comparative difference in size – 'smaller than'	375
6.6.4	Comparative difference in size – 'larger than'	376
6.6.5	Vowel-final pronunciations - 'diminutive', 'augmentative', 'affective'	377
6.6.6	'Superlative' degree	378
6.7	Related sets	379
6.7.1	Members of the 'antelope' sub-family	379
6.7.2	Snakes	383
6.7.3	Whales	385
6.8	Summary and discussion – other living creatures	389
6.8.1	Summary relating to count nouns	391
6.8.2	Summary relating to word-final pronunciation	395
6.9	Concluding remarks	397
<b>Chapter 7 Gender Assignment and Word-final Pronunciation – Plant Kingdom</b>		
7.0	<i>Introduction</i>	399
7.1	Predictability – frequency based on word-final pronunciation and gender assignment	399
7.1.1	Woody plants – distributions in gender assignment and word-final pronunciation	399
7.1.2	Fruit – distributions in gender assignment and word-final pronunciation	400
<b>PART I – WOODY PLANTS</b>		
7.2	Background	401
7.2.1	Woody plants – defining characteristics	401
7.2.2	Confusion in botanical terms	401

7.2.3	Terminological issues in cross-linguistic identification of plants	402
7.2.4	Reclassification of gender assignments – historical data	403
7.3	Plant kingdom – superordinate terms, collective nouns and loan words	406
7.3.1	Collective nouns - masculine	406
7.3.2	Superordinate nouns	411
7.3.3	Botanical terms	417
7.3.4	Loan words	418
7.3.5	Nouns formed by extension and compounding	419
7.3.6	Nouns derived from other grammatical classes	423
7.3.7	Summary – initial analysis	424
7.4	Woody plants – count nouns in the corpus	428
7.4.1	Masculine consonant-final nouns	428
7.4.2	Masculine vowel-final nouns	434
7.4.3	Feminine vowel-final nouns	439
7.4.4	Feminine consonant-final nouns	442
7.5	Closely-related plants with different gender assignments	452
7.5.1	Genus <i>Rhododendron</i>	452
7.5.2	Genus <i>Hibiscus</i>	454
7.5.3	Genus <i>Rhamnus</i> ('buckthorns')	455
7.6	Summary – count nouns denoting 'woody plants'	459
7.7	Woody plants – further issues	462
7.7.1	Counter-examples <i>épinette</i> (F) 'white spruce', <i>pruche</i> (F) Canadian spruce/hemlock	462
7.7.2	Historically feminine noun <i>mélèze</i> (M) 'larch'	466
7.7.3	Further counter-example - <i>badiane</i> (F) 'star-anise tree'	467
7.7.4	Counter-examples relating to word-final pronunciation	467
7.7.5	Vines and bines	470
7.7.6	Summary	476
7.8	Conclusion - 'woody plants'	478
7.8.1	Trees, shrubs and vines	
<b>PART III – FRUITS</b>		
7.9	Fruits – initial exploration	483
7.9.1	Analysis of superordinate terms	484
7.9.2	Loan words denoting 'fruit'	486
7.9.3	Alternative word-final pronunciations of loan words	493
7.9.4	Summary	494
7.10	Count nouns denoting 'fruit'	496
7.10.1	Nuts	496
7.10.2	Berries	499
7.10.3	Drupes, pomes and other fruits	508
7.11	Sets of related fruits	515
7.11.1	Cherries	515
7.11.2	Apples	518
7.11.3	Citrus fruits	520
7.12	Summary	526
7.12.1	Ranking of attributes	531
7.12.2	Implications of this research for other languages	532
7.13	Conclusion – fruits	535

## Chapter 8 Gender Assignment & Word-final Pronunciation – Human Beings

8.0	Introduction	537
8.1	Gender assignment and biological sex	537
8.2	Preliminary analysis	543
8.2.1	Superordinate terms - gender assignment	543
8.2.2	Nouns formed from various grammatical classes	549
8.2.3	Loan words	552
8.2.4	Summary	554
8.3	Collective nouns denoting human beings	557
8.3.1	General or non-specific collective terms	557
8.3.2	Predictability according to frequency	558
8.4	Semantic analysis of collective nouns	559
8.4.1	Feminine consonant-final nouns	559
8.4.2	Feminine vowel-final nouns	565
8.4.3	Masculine nouns - vowel-final and consonant-final	570
8.4.4	Collective nouns – word-final pronunciation	574
8.5	Collective nouns in related sets	575
8.5.1	Kinship groups - related by blood, marriage	575
8.5.2	Common activity, task, interest	578
8.5.3	Origins, homeland	582
8.5.4	Leader and retinue	584
8.5.5	Gatherings related to quantity	584
8.5.6	Groups based on social conditions	587
8.5.7	Groups on the move	589
8.5.8	Collectives of human beings in general'	590
8.5.9	Summary - collective nouns	594
8.6	Count nouns denoting 'human' – predictability according to distributions	597
8.7	Nouns without any gender assignment	599
8.7.1	No gender assignment, uninflected word-final pronunciation	599
8.7.2	No gender assignment, inflected word-final pronunciation	602
8.7.3	Inflected word-final pronunciation – further discussion	607
8.7.4	Changes in gender assignment as indicators of social norms in French and other languages	609
8.7.5	Summary	610
8.8	Fixed gender assignment - masculine	612
8.8.1	Masculine nouns entailing 'male' in the lexeme	612
8.8.2	Masculine nouns – no semantic entailment for 'male' or 'female'	615
8.8.3	Masculine nouns, semantic referents 'female'	627
8.9	Fixed gender assignment – feminine	629
8.9.1	Feminine nouns entailing 'female'	629
8.9.2	Feminine nouns – no semantic entailment for 'male' or 'female'	630
8.9.3	Feminine nouns, semantic referents 'male'	635
8.10	Summary – count nouns	637
8.11	Issues still outstanding	644
8.11.1	Alternative gender assignments for <i>gens</i>	644
8.11.2	Singular, plural and collective meanings of <i>homme</i>	648
8.11.3	Rank and gender assignment	655

8.11.4	Historical and current acceptance of alternative gender assignments	658
8.12	Summary and conclusions – human beings	657

## Chapter 9 Discussion, Conclusions, & Theoretical Implications

9.0	Discussion of findings	666
9.1	Phonology and gender assignment	666
9.2	Morphology and gender assignment	666
9.3	Semantics of gender assignment and word-final phonology	668
9.3.1	Features and attributes – their different roles in the classification process	675
9.3.2	Gender assignments unrelated to the semantic system	677
9.3.3	Attributes and predictability of gender assignment and word-final pronunciation	681
9.3.4	Features, gender assignments, and nouns denoting human referents	682
9.4	Word-final pronunciation – discussion	685
9.4.1	Features in binary opposition – dimensions in time and space	686
9.4.2	Regularisation of word-final pronunciation for loan words	688
9.4.3	Different word-final pronunciations for synonyms and members of the same family	689
9.4.4	Suffixation	690
9.4.5	'Agreement'? Reconsidering alternative pronunciations of suffixes	694
9.4.6	Word-final pronunciation elsewhere in the French lexicon	698
9.4.7	Male:female oppositions – invariable word-final pronunciation	701
9.4.8	Male:female oppositions and alternative word-final pronunciations – interaction with the phonological template	703
9.5	Concluding remarks	705
9.5.1	A semantic explanation – dual classification systems	705
9.5.2	Third system - a phonological template	707
9.5.3	Ranking among attributes	709
9.5.4	Predictability of classifications	711
9.6	Theoretical implications	711
9.6.1	Implications for lexical fields beyond 'living things'	712
9.6.2	Prototypes and abstractions in French	713
9.6.3	Organising principles for French – contrariety	713
9.6.4	Considerations of French vis-à-vis Noun Class and Classifier languages	714
9.6.5	Dual classification systems in other languages	716
9.6.6	Women, fire and dangerous things	717
9.6.7	Features in French - relationship with other semantic systems	719

## Appendices

Appendix I	<i>Déclaration faite par l'Académie française en séance du 14 juin 1984</i>	723
Appendix II	<i>Déclaration sur la féminisation des noms de métiers, fonctions, grades et titres: 21 mars 2002, Académie française (Translation by M. à Beckett)</i>	725
Appendix III	Single syllable nouns	729

Appendix IV	Nouns with word-final phones /it/	755
Appendix V	Birds	757
Appendix VI	Buffon, George Louis Leclerc, Comte de (1707-88) Extracts from <i>Histoire naturelle</i> , Tomes 1-7	762
	• <i>L'Atruche</i> 'The Ostrich'	763
	• <i>La caille</i> 'The Quail'	764
	• <i>La cigogne</i> 'The Stork'	766
	• <i>Le/Du corbeau</i> 'The Raven'	769
	• <i>La grue</i> 'The Crane'	772
	• <i>Les Hirondelles</i> 'The Swallows'	776
	• <i>Le/Du merle</i> 'The Blackbird'	777
	• <i>L'Oie</i> 'The Goose'	779
	• <i>Oiseaux qui ne peuvent voler</i> 'Birds unable to fly'	782
Appendix VII	Geese – additional terms	783
Appendix XIII	Fish	784
Appendix IX	Fish having an 'elongated' form	788
Appendix X	Other living things	789
Appendix XI	Woody plants	796
Appendix XII	Fruits	799
Appendix XIII	Fruits – German nouns	801
Appendix XIV	Collective nouns - human beings	802
<b>Bibliography</b>		<b>805</b>