**Case1**：

As a visiting professor in an American university, Zhang Hua was invited to give a lecture to a group of American students. He talked about university students in China.During the question-and-answer period after the lecture, one female student asked a question that surprised Zhang Hua. “When you talked about female students, you referred to them as girls. Why?”

“Because they are girls, that's what they are called, " Zhang Hua tried to answer,but he knew he did not really understand the intent of the question. “I don't quite understand your question, I'm afraid.”

“In the United States, we call ourselves women if we're old enough to go to the university. Calling us girls is insulting.”

**Questions for discussion**：

1. Why did Zhang Hua feel surprised when one female student asked the question?
2. In our understanding, is there any difference between the word “girl" and “woman? Do Chinese female college students prefer to be called women?

**Answers**

1. This case can reflect one type of translation problem: the lack of conceptual

equivalence, which refers to abstract ideas that may not exist in the same fashion

in different languages. Different cultures may attach different meanings to the

same thing or person. Concerning this case, we should know what young females

call themselves is very different in China from the States. In China, “girl” means

someone who is young and single. In a way, “girl” sounds more desirable than

“woman” when used to refer to a female. For most people, “woman” means a female

who is married and who probably is not young. In fact, most single Chinese females,

such as university students, would be insulted to be called “women”. In the West, it

is customary to call any female a woman who is physiologically mature, even though

she may not be legally old enough to vote, marry, purchase alcoholic beverages,

drive a car, or sign a contract. This terminology became widespread during

the “Women’s Liberation Movement” in the 1960s. The term “girl” is generally

considered demeaning or disrespectful, when used to describe females of university

age or older.

2. Open.