PASSAGE 3

Questions 21-30

15 minutes

GHI CHÚ

Các câu hỏi dễ hơn cần ưu tiên trả lời đúng

★ Câu hỏi thông tin chi tiết: **22, 23, 24, 29, 30**

★ Câu hỏi từ vựng: **28**

★ Câu hỏi ý chính: **21, 27**

A few languages have only one class of nouns and treat all nouns the same way, but most languages have different classes of nouns. One common way to classify nouns is by gender. In Indo-European languages, genders typically include feminine, masculine, and neuter. Latin has all three of these, but in many of its modern descendants, such as Spanish and French, the neuter gender has all but disappeared. However, a few words in French, especially pronouns with no clear gender, such as *cela* (this), are considered neuter by some grammarians.

English is one language that uses natural gender (also called logical gender). Gender depends on biology. *Mother* is feminine, *father* is masculine, and *chair* is neuter. There are, however, a few oddities. Ships are sometimes referred to as *she*, and so are nations. Animals can be neuter or follow natural gender.

Other languages use grammatical gender. Languages that have only two genders, such as Arabic, Spanish, French, and Urdu, all use grammatical gender. So do some languages, such as German, Russian, and Greek, which have masculine, feminine, and neuter nouns. Sometimes grammatical gender is logical, especially for nouns that refer to people. In Spanish, for example, *hijo* (son) is masculine and *hija* (daughter) is feminine. However, while the assignment of gender to certain nouns seems obvious to a native speaker of these languages, it seems arbitrary and confusing to non-native speakers. Why is *chaise* (chair) feminine in French but *banc* (bench) masculine? Why, in German, is *Fels* (rock) masculine, *Fenster* (window) neuter, and *Tur* (door) feminine? And noun gender varies by culture. In French, *soleil* (sun) is masculine, while *lune* (moon) is feminine. The reverse is true in German: *Sonne* (sun) is feminine, but *Mond* (moon) is masculine.

In some languages, such as modern Greek, it is impossible to predict the gender of a noun by the form of the noun. Gender must simply be memorized. In other languages,

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it is possible, or at least it is sometimes possible. In Latin, most singular nouns that end in a are feminine, most singular nouns that end in *us* are masculine, and most nouns that end in *um* are neuter. There are, however, exceptions, such as *agrícola* (farmer), which is masculine, and *ulmus* (elm tree), which is feminine. For some languages, there are complicated and often incomplete rules that relate form to gender. This is true in German. It may be useful to learn the rule that nouns that end in *leln* and *chert* (meaning young or small) are all neuter. The noun *Mädchen* (little girl) is, rather unexpectedly, neuter. However, is it worth learning that, of the 107 single-syllable nouns ending in a nasal sound plus another consonant, 70% are masculine? A student may end up learning more rules than nouns.

Besides gender, there are many other classes of nouns. According to the linguist Carl Meinhof, the Bantu language family has a total of 22 noun classes. Tamil – spoken in Sri Lanka – divides nouns into rational versus non-rational. In Ojibwa (a Native American language), there is a distinction between animate and inanimate nouns. The names of all living things, as well as sacred things and things connected to the earth, belong to the animate class. Still, the assignment is somewhat **arbitrary**, as the word for *raspberry* is animate but the word for *strawberry* is inanimate.

21 What is the passage mainly about?

A. grammatical gender of nouns
B. noun classification
C. animate and inanimate nouns
D. rational and non-rational nouns.

22 What is true about Spanish language?

A. it has only one class of nouns.
B. the neuter gender exists.
C. It originates from the Latin language.
D. gender depends on biology.

23 According to the grammarians, the French word *cela*

A. can be either feminine or masculine
B. is not really a pronoun
C. is neither masculine nor feminine
D. should not be considered neuter

24 What is true about the oddities in paragraph 2?

A. they are exceptions to the general gender rules in English
B. they prove that English follows grammatical gender
C. they always follow natural gender
D. they show that natural gender is always logical

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25 What language does NOT use grammatical gender?

A. French
B. Spanish
C. English
D. Russian

26 What best expresses the author's opinion of rules about the gender of nouns in German?

A. They are more important for native speakers of German than for non-native learners.
B. It is more important for students to learn these rules than to memorize nouns.
C. The only rule that students must know is the one about nouns that end in lein and chen.
D. Some of them are confusing and are probably not very useful.

27 What is the main idea of paragraph 5?

A. noun classes other than gender
B. the work of linguist Carl Meinhof
C. noun classes in the Bantu language family
D. gender in non-Western languages

28 The word '**arbitrary**' in paragraph 5 is closest in meaning to

A. logical
B. inconsistent
C. sensible
D. rational

29 The author gives Tamil as an example of a language that

A. distinguishes between animate and inanimate
B. has 22 noun classes
C. distinguishes between thinking and non-thinking
D. has a class for all nouns that don't fit into other classes

30 How does the author show that noun class assignment in Ojibwa is somewhat arbitrary?

A. By pointing out that sacred things are considered animate
B. By explaining that two types of fruit belong to the same class
C. By showing that two very similar items belong to different classes
D. By suggesting that raspberries and strawberries are connected to the earth

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