
UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

First Semester Examination
Academic Session 2006/2007

October/November 2006

HET 311 - SEMANTICS

Duration: 3 hours

Please check that this examination paper consists of TWO pages of printed material before you begin the examination.

There are SIX questions altogether. Answer FOUR questions. Each question is 25 marks.

1. Do you agree with the statement that homonymy and polysemy are not mutually exclusive categories? Use the words *school*, *bear* and *pen* to discuss your answer.
2. The relation of hyponymy is transitive. What does this mean? Explain this using your own examples. Then, discuss whether or not **meronymy** is transitive using the set of words listed below:
knuckle, finger, hand, arm, body
handle, door, room, house, street, city, country
3. When Jack says to Jill “I love you too”, he could mean one of several things. Do these possible meanings or interpretations suggest that the sentence ‘I love you too’ is ambiguous? Why or why not? Discuss.
4. ‘If it is hard to say what meaning is, it is fairly easy to show what knowledge speakers have about meanings in their language and therefore what things must be included in an account of semantics’ (Kreidler, 1998). What are the ten aspects of speaker’s semantic knowledge? Discuss and support with examples.
5. Semantic change, or the change in meaning of a word over time may be due to the associations or connotations that the word may have. Given this, discuss the role of connotations in the processes known as **pejoration** and **amelioration**, and the terms **taboo** and **euphemism**.
6. Compare and contrast verdictive, expressive, directive, commissive utterances with regard to whether the action involved is retrospective or prospective and whether the speaker or the addressee is the agent of the act.