UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

First Semester Examination
Academic Session 2007/2008

October/November 2007

HET 512 - LINGUISTIC STUDIES

Duration: 3 hours

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

There are SEVEN questions altogether. Answer FOUR questions.

1. 'In the comparison of human language and animal communication systems, a debate has arisen about whether the two systems are *qualitatively* or *quantitatively* different' (Tserdanelis & Wong, 2004). What is your stand on this issue? Discuss.

    [25 marks]

2. Regular English verbs form their past tense by adding the suffix *–ed/-d.* Other verbs do not. What might account for this behaviour? Discuss this using the data provided below. Be sure to include a detailed explanation of the morphological processes involved in the changes that the verbs undergo.

    is   swim   buy   jump   go   kiss   shut   suit   sweep   train

    [25 marks]

3. Discuss why, in human language, the connection between form and meaning is for the most part **arbitrary**. Include in your discussion how this contributes to the **creativity** of human language.

    [25 marks]

4. According to O'Grady et al. (1996) the structure of individual syllables plays a role in determining which vowel is stressed. Discuss this with regard to English. Use the following sets of words to discuss your answer.

Set 1	Set 2	Set 3
Consénsus	horizón	jávelin
Uténsil	aréna	ásterisk
Appéndix	aróma	análysis
Placénta	hiátus	lábyrinth

    [25 marks]

5. Synthetic languages build up the meanings of sentences by combining free and bound morphemes to make up words. Elaborate on the three types of synthetic languages.   Clarify with examples.

    [25 marks]

6. Discuss how the idea of prototype provides insights into the nature of the human conceptual system and word meaning.

[25 marks]

7. Discuss what is meant by **The Principle of Compositionality**. Make reference to the representation of structural ambiguity and the assignment of thematic (semantic) roles in discussing your answer. Support your answer with examples.

[25 marks]

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