UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

First Semester Examination
Academic Session 2007/2008

October/November 2007

HXE 306 - SOCIOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY OF LANGUAGE

Duration: 3 hours

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

Answer FOUR questions. Answer TWO questions from Section A and TWO questions from Section B.

Section A

1.   The practice of code-switching is often viewed negatively by monolingual and bilingual speakers alike. It is often considered a low prestige form, an incorrect and poor form of language, or a result of incomplete mastery of the two languages. Discuss the knowledge about and attitudes of the speech community towards code-switching in the Malaysian context.

[25 marks]

2.   Discuss why some people describe 'a language' as 'a dialect continuum'. Discuss whether there is a clear dividing line between language and dialect.

[25 marks]

3.   What is the relationship between diglossia and bilingualism? Do concepts of 'high language' and 'low language' have useful applications? Discuss with appropriate examples.

[25 marks]

4.   What is language shift? Discuss the factors that contribute to shifting to another language and then suggest how this shift can be reversed.

[25 marks]

Section B

5.   Define the 'lateralization' process in the brain. Discuss any four studies that have been used to provide evidence for the lateralization of language in the brain.

[25 marks]

6.   [a]   Discuss the difference between human language and animal form of communication.

   [b]   Discuss various attempts that have been made to teach human language to animals. To what extent have these attempts been successful?

[25 marks]

7.   Discuss the neuroanatomical structures of the language areas of the brain and the neural pathways that are involved in speech production, reading aloud and speech comprehension.

[25 marks]

8.   Speech errors provide indirect evidence for units, stages and cognitive computations involved in speech production. What do speech error data suggest about the process of speech production. Discuss.

[25 marks]

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