

UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

Second Semester Examination
Academic Session 2004/2005

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HET 322 - Language, Power and Ideology

Duration : 3 hours

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

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

Section A

1. Discuss the main differences between mainstream approaches to linguistics and critical discourse analysis.
[100 marks]
2. Define the term “discourse” as Foucault understands it. Analyze the following extracts and discuss the discourses that operate in them.

The texts below are extracted from an article which appeared in the female magazine, *Cleo* in June 1984. The article describes different types of women, in the office, and instructs each type how to modify their behaviour in order to improve their situation at work. A number of “types” are addressed, “Miss Mouse”, “Miss Seductress”, “Ms Winner”, “Miss Nonchalant”, “Miss Power Broker”. Here are the descriptions of two, “Miss Seductress” and “Miss Winner”.

Miss Seductress

There's always one of this type in every gathering: at parties she laughs alluringly and touches everyone (even your man); when meeting men she pouts, flutters eyelashes and makes her body do the talking. Even in the supermarket she totters in high sling backs and wears clingy angora. Yes, she's the one who always believes that everything will come to her as long as she looks gorgeous. She attracts men like bees to the honey pot and keeps their attention by direct eye contact while always flashing a dazzling smile. She's all teeth, luscious lips, glossy hair, painted fingernails and seductive curves. Men love her, even if women don't, and that's just the way she likes it. She's managed to get good jobs in the past (always male bosses) and never has to "go dutch" on dinner dates. The trouble with Miss Seductress is that half the world is made up of women, and the men who enjoy her type go down on record as having short attention spans. Which leaves her high and dry much of the time.

You, Miss Seductress, need a lot of help. Turn down the sirens for a start you won't miss out on the men. You may miss out on the bounders, but you could score with Mr. Nice-Guy, the one who's likely to stay for more than the first act. Office harmony hasn't been your strong point because you alienate your female co-workers. Rising in the hierarchy takes enthusiasm and ability, not low-cut dresses and knowing looks. Restraint is the key word, in all aspects of your life.

Ms Winner

Ms Winner isn't always easy to categorize at once, because her self- I, confidence is so unassuming. She's the type who doesn't need to impress others with her abilities - she knows they will shine through anyway. Her self-assurance comes through in every mannerism, every item of clothing, her relaxed posture, her confident speech. She dresses with flair, knowing how to combine basically conservative clotheswith innovative extras to form a completely co-ordinated outfit which exudes her personal style. Basically, Ms. Winner has panache. She dresses well for the occasion whether it's a job interview or dinner party. Her hair is cut in modem, but not outrageous style, her make-up is subtle. But Ms. Winner's strongest point is her well-modulated conversation which is always lively and intelligent. She has many friends of both sexes who never feel threatened by her. She doesn't talk behind people's back, but is no sycophant either. Ms. Winner, you're on the right track, so don't change a thing.

[100 marks]

- 3. What is power and how is it connected to language? Discuss how power is negotiated in the following interaction?

The following text is a medical interview between a patient (P) and a medical doctor (D). Short pauses are marked with full stops; longer pauses with dashes; square brackets show overlap; and unclear material is in round brackets. The medical doctor is a homeopath with the British National Health Service.

P: but she really has been very unfair to me .got [no
 D: [hm
 P: respect for me at [all and I think. that's one of the reasons
 D: [hm
 P: why I drank [so much you [know - a [nd em 5
 D: [hm [hm hm [hm are you
 you back are you back on it have you started drinking
 [again
 P: [no
 D: oh you haven't (uncle [ar.....) 10
 P: [no . but em one thing that
 the lady on the Tuesday said to me was thta . if my mother
 did turn me out of the [house which she thinks she
 D: [yes hm
 P: may do . coz . she doesn't like the way I've been she has 15
 turned me o [ut befo [re. and em . she said that.
 D: [hm [hm
 P: I could she thought that it might be possible to me for
 Me to go to a council [flat
 D: [right yes [yeah 20
 P: [but she
 said it's a very em she wasn't [pushing it because. my
 D: [hm
 P: mother's got to sign a whole [lot of [things and
 D: [hm [hm 25
 P: e: . she said it's difficult [and em . there's no rush over
 D: [hm
 P: it . I I don't know whether. I mean one thing they say in
 AA is that you shouldn't change anything. [for a year
 D: [hm 30
 D: hm yes I think I think that's wise. I think that's wise
 (5 second pause) well look I'd like to keep you know seeing
 you keep. you know hearing how things are going from time
 to time if that's possible.

[100 marks]

Section B

4. News is a representation in the sense of construction; it is not a value-free reflection of “fact” . . . each particular form of linguistic expression in a text—wording, syntactic option, etc—has its reason. There are always different ways of saying the same thing, and they are not random, accidental alternatives. Differences in expression carry ideological distinctions (and thus differences in representation).

(Fowler, 1994)

With reference to Fowler’s quotation, discuss with examples, the connection that he posits between language and ideology.

[100 marks]

5. Explain Fairclough’s three stages or dimension of critical discourse analysis. Analyze the following text using Fairclough’s critical framework.

(Psychiatric text 1)

deprivation of food, bed, walks in the open air, visitors, mail, or telephone calls; solitary confinement; deprivation of reading or entertainment materials; immobilizing people by tying them into wet sheets and then exhibiting them to staff and other patients; other physical restraints on body movement; drugging the mind against the client's will; incarceration in locked wards-; a-range of public humiliations such as the prominent posting of alleged intentions to escape or commit suicide, the requirement of public confessions of misconduct or guilt, and public announcements of individual misdeeds and abnormalities.

(Psychiatric text 2)

discouraging sick behavior and encouraging healthy behavior through the selective granting of rewards; the availability of seclusion, restraints, and closed wards to grant a patient a respite from interaction with others; enabling him to think about his behavior, to cope with his temptations to elope and succumb to depression, and to develop a sense of security; immobilizing the patient to calm him, satisfy his dependency needs, give him the extra nursing attention he values, and enable him to benefit from peer confrontation; placing limits on his acting out; and teaching him that the staff cares.

Source: Edelman 1974: 300

[100 marks]

...6/-

6. What are presuppositions and how are they cued in texts? Analyze the following text and spell out the presupposition and inference that are made in it so as to enable you, the reader, to make sense of the advertisement.

NO amount of make-up and hair stuff will turn you into a glamorous chick if your gnashers aren't in good condition. It's nothing to be proud of if you haven't been to the dentist for the past five years — you're only asking for trouble. Treatment isn't the equivalent of a week of listening to Nana Mouskouri albums, and your dentist isn't there to give you nightmares and inflict unnecessary pain on you. Regular check-ups are the best idea — prevention is always better than cure! If you haven't been to your dentist for eons, pluck up the courage and make an appointment — it'll be worth it! The British Dental Health Foundation have produced a series of well-helpful booklets on dental care. Including information on crowns, gum disease, oral hygiene, sugar and selecting a dentist, they're worth a look. For free copies of the leaflets, send an SAE to the British Dental Health Foundation, 88 Gurnards Avenue, Unit 2, Fishermead, Milton Keynes, Bucks.

Source: *Blue Jeans* No. 488, 24 May 1986

[100 marks]