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UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

Second Semester Examination  
Academic Session 2007/2008

April 2008

**HET 322 – LANGUAGE, POWER AND IDEOLOGY**

Duration : 3 hours

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Please check that this examination paper consists of FIVE 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. "Discourses are systematically-organised sets of statements which give expression to the meanings and values of an institution. Beyond that they define, describe and delimit what it is possible to say and not possible to say and by extension, what is possible to do or not to do with respect to the area of concern of that institution" (Kress, 1985). Discuss this definition of discourse using specific examples.

[100 marks]

2. "News is a representation in the sense of construction; it is not a value-free reflection of "facts"...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 made at random, accidental alternatives. Differences in expression carry ideological distinctions (and thus differences in representation)" (Fowler, 1991). Discuss, with examples.

[100 marks]

3. Analyse the following text and identify the dominant discourse that operates in it. Provide ample linguistic evidence (vocabulary, pronoun choice, modality and transitivity structures) to support your claim.

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT IN HIS ADDRESS TO THE NATION

September 11, 2001, 8.30pm

THE PRESIDENT Good evening. Today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts. The victims were in airplanes, or in their offices; secretaries, businessmen and women, military and federal workers; moms and dads, friends and neighbours. Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror.

The pictures of airplanes flying into buildings, fires burning, huge structures collapsing, have filled us with disbelief, terrible sadness, and a quiet, unyielding anger. These acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat. But they have failed; our country is strong.

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A great people has been moved to defend a great nation. Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundations of America. These acts shattered steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve.

America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining.

Today, our nation saw evil, the very worst of human nature. And we responded with the best of America—with the daring of our rescue workers, with the caring for strangers and neighbours who came to give blood and help in any way they could.

Immediately following the first attack, I implemented our government's emergency response plans. Our military is powerful, and it is prepared. Our emergency teams are working in New York City and Washington, D.C to help with local rescue efforts.

Our first priority is to get help to those who have been injured, and to take every precaution to protect our citizens at home and around the world from further attacks.

The functions of our government continue without interruption. Federal agencies in Washington which had to be evacuated today are reopening for essential personnel tonight, and will be open for business tomorrow. Our financial institutions remain strong, and the American economy will be open for business, as usual.

The search is underway for those who are behind these evil acts. I've directed the full resources of our intelligence and law enforcement communities to find those responsible and to bring them to justice. We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbour them.

I appreciate so very much the members of Congress who have joined me in strongly condemning these attacks. And on behalf of the American people, I thank the many world leaders who have called to offer their condolences and assistance.

America and our friends and allies join with all those who want peace and security in the world, and we stand together to win the war against terrorism. Tonight, I ask for your prayers for all those who grieve, for the children whose worlds have been shattered, for all whose sense of safety and security has been threatened. And I pray they will be comforted by a power greater than any of us, spoken through the ages in Psalm 23: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me."

This is a day when all Americans from every walk of life unite in our resolve for justice and peace. America has stood down enemies before, and we will do so this time. None of us will ever forget this day. Yet, we go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just in our world.

Thank you. Good night, and God bless America.

(<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010911-16.html> )

[100 marks]

Section B

4. Discuss, with examples, the linguistic means that can be used to trigger presuppositions.

[100 marks]

5. The extract below is part of a classroom discourse.

(T = teacher, P = any pupil who speaks)

- T: Now then ... I've got some things here, too. Hands up. What's that, what is it? [1]  
P: Saw. [2]  
T: It's a saw, yes this is a saw. What do we do with a saw? [3]  
P: Cut wood. [4]  
T: Yes, You're shouting out though. What do we do with a saw? Meredith. [5]  
P: Cut wood. [6]  
T: We cut wood. And, erm, what do we do with a hacksaw, this hacksaw? [7]  
P: Cut trees. [8]  
T: Do we cut trees with this? [9]  
P: No. No. [10]  
T: Hands up. What do we do with this? [11]  
P: Cut wood. [12]  
T: Do we cut wood with this? [13]  
P: No. [14]  
T: What do we do with that then? [15]  
P: Cut wood [16]  
T: We cut wood with that. What do we do with that? [17]  
P: Sir. [18]  
T: Cleveland. [19]  
P: Metal. [20]

... 5/-

- T: We cut metal. Yes we cut metal. And, er, I've got this here.  
What's that? Trevor. [21]
- P: An axe. [22]
- T: It's an axe yes. What do I cut with the axe? [23]
- P: Wood, wood. [24]
- T: Yes I cut wood with the axe. Right ... Now then, I've got  
some more things here ... (etc.) [25]

(Source: Sinclair and Coulthard 1975: 93-4)

Analyse the extract in terms of how the discourse type and structure position the subjects, i.e. the teacher and his pupils.

[100 marks]

6. Below is an advertisement for the new Proton SAGA which appeared in *The New Straits Times* (20 January 2008). Analyse the ideology behind this advertising discourse using Fairclough's (2001) framework.

[100 marks]

## Malaysians love to dream.

The all-new Proton SAGA was deemed impossible.  
Not because of the sleek and elegant design. Or the comfortable passenger room and large boot space.

No, not even the cup/bottle holders at every passenger seat (though that's very nice to have, thank you very much).

What *seemed* impossible was the *idea* behind the Proton SAGA.

The *idea* that as our nation celebrates its 50th Merdeka, every Malaysian family should have a car to call their own.

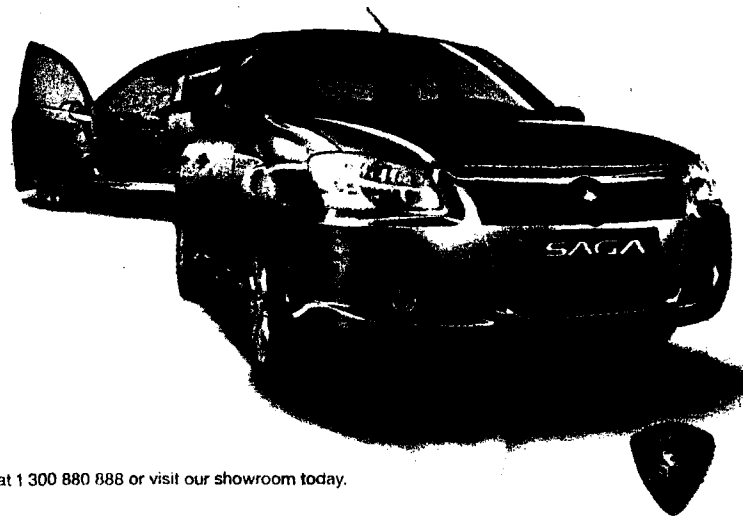
A car Malaysians don't have to *dream* of owning.

A car for the people.

Impossible? Not really. We too, are Malaysians after all.

The all-new Proton SAGA is priced from RM31,500. For more information, call Proton i-care at 1 300 880 888 or visit our showroom today.

A New **SAGA** Begins



www.proton.com