

COURSE CODE AL404/IDE-AL404(M)2008

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

FINAL EXAMINATION PAPER: MAY 2008

TITLE OF PAPER: SPECIAL EXAMINATION PAPER

COURSE CODE: AL404/IDE-AL404(M)

TIME ALLOWED: THREE (3) HOURS

- INSTRUCTIONS:**
- 1. THIS PAPER HAS TWO (2) SECTIONS, SECTION A AND SECTION B.**
 - 2. SECTION A: LANGUAGE/LINGUISTICS. IF YOU HAVE CHOSEN THIS SECTION, ANSWER THREE (3) QUESTIONS FROM IT.**
 - 3. SECTION B: LITERATURE. "AFRICAN ORAL NARRATIVES: THEIR SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE". IF YOU HAVE CHOSEN THIS SECTION, ANSWER THREE (3) QUESTIONS FROM IT.**
 - 4. EVIDENCE OF WIDE READING ON EACH TOPIC WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN THE ASSESSMENT OF THIS PAPER, IN ADDITION TO OBSERVING THE QUALITY OF EXPRESSION AND THE PRESENTATION OF THE ANSWER.**

THIS PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR.

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SECTION A

LANGUAGE/LINGUISTICS

QUESTION 1

Discuss the construct of 'stages' in language acquisition. Describe several good examples of potential stages. How do these stages differ from Piaget's notion of stages?

[25 MARKS]

QUESTION 2

Here are two (paraphrased) views on language acquisition: "Infants must acquire the words of their language, but they bring the sentence with them" (Lila Gleitman).

"Less is more" (Elisa Newport)

Explain these two views, providing evidence for each of them. Which view do you think is more plausible, and why?

[25 MARKS]

QUESTION 3

Compare and contrast the Behaviourist's and Nativist's approach to first language acquisition.

[25 MARKS]

QUESTION 4

What evidence in second language acquisition do we have for supporting a natural route of acquisition? Is this route similar to the route that first language speakers follow?

[25 MARKS]

QUESTION 5

What role does formal instruction play in second language acquisition? What evidence do we have to support and or reject the role of instruction? Does formal instruction influence the route and rate of SLA?

[25 MARKS]

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SECTION B

TRADITIONAL/ORAL LITERATURE

ORAL NARRATIVES IN AFRICA: SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

SOCIETIES STUDIED:

1. SWAZI: SINKAYINKAYI COLLECTION BY O.S. DLAMINI
2. ZULU: Rev. Callaway's COLLECTION - UMXAKAZA.
3. XHOSA: THE XHOSA NTSOMI - Prof. Harold Scheub's.
4. KENYA: AKAMBA STORIES - Rev. John Mbiti
5. SUDAN: THE ZANDE TRICKSTER - Evans Pritchard
6. TOGO: DAHOMEAN NARRATIVE - Herskovits

QUESTION 6

Quoting any three (3) oral narratives from the societies you have studied, discuss the trickster characters found in those societies, stating how far these characters can be perceived as reflections of their societies, where we seem to “laugh” at our own follies and shortcomings.

[25 MARKS]

QUESTIONS 7

“There is, then, no supernatural world to be found in the oral narratives, no world of miracles, incredible deeds and fantastic adventures. There is only man, struggling with those elements in his character that would negate the good in him and his society. The artist, never preaching, projects this elemental confrontation in metaphorical terms.” (Harold Scheub).

Carefully study the given statement and then give a well-informed discussion of its application to present-day societies, illustrating your answer with at least two (2) narratives of your choice.

[25 MARKS]

QUESTION 8

Bearing in mind the latter part of Scheub's statement given in Question 6 above, discuss three (3) oral narratives of your choice, showing how they can be regarded as Metaphorical representations of human society. N.B. Do not repeat examples that have been discussed in other questions.

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QUESTION 9

Give a detailed analysis of the Xhosa oral narrative quoted below, showing the high level of artistic skill reflected in the handling of theme.

Now for a *Ntsomi*

There was a fellow who married two wives, a senior wife and a junior. It happened that this junior wife was envied by the senior wife, the senior wife being excelled by the junior. The senior wife wanted those things that would enable her surpass her junior. Then this younger wife was pregnant, and she gave birth. While she was still nursing her child, the senior wife went calling on others, asking, 'What can I do with this woman? I want her dead! She's loved by my husband and this annoys me!'

The one to whom she was speaking said, 'Get a pumpkin for her, then cook it and tell her that this plant will make her breasts yield much milk. You want her baby to grow! You must prepare it yourself, but don't you taste it! Dish it up for her so that she can eat it.'

This woman did this thing. She journeyed all day, looking in the forest, seeking this plant. But she couldn't find it! She returned. On the following day, she again went to her brother.

She said, 'In which forest exactly is this plant? Because I looked a long time in that one over there! But I didn't find it. I went all round that forest, I went all round seeking this plant, but I couldn't find it! In which forest is it?'

The other said, 'Go to that great forest, and look just beneath a cliff over there. It'll be there!'

She went then to that place, that woman, and she arrived. She looked, she looked and looked. She found a pumpkin, and she picked it. When she had plucked it off, she went home with it. She arrived at home, and she worked at it, she worked at it, she worked at it. She cooked it. She ground it into meal, she poured it out, she made it simmer, saying, 'You see, then, my sister, today I'm coming to you with some food that makes the blood of a child healthy! So that your child will grow! So that your child will be satisfied! Because this plant will help your breasts to provide milk!'

Oh, the young woman was happy about this. 'Yes, you have helped me, Sister!'

'Sister' is what she called this wife of her husband whenever she spoke to her, because she was the older woman.

She had done this thing, then - she took it out of the pot, and poured it nicely into a dish. When she had poured it into the dish, she cooled that food so that this woman might eat comfortably. When she gave it to her, the young mother ate it.

Kwok! It was good! 'This is the best good in the world! It's the first time I've tasted it! I've never tasted such food!' She said, 'Sister!' She said, 'Sister, this food, where did you go to

get it for me?’

‘Well, I went to get it for you over there. I heard from someone else that a nursing mother should be fat so that her baby will grow!’

The young mother was fed that food. ‘Sister, what’s this food called?’

‘Well, it’s a pumpkin. Its name - oh, it’s a pumpkin, yes!’

‘Yo yo yo! It’s good! Say, Sister, please! You taste it, too!’

She said, ‘No! No, I’ll not eat with you now, not from the first pot. I’ll eat with you from another pot!’

And yet she spoke knowing that when the young mother finished she would die. And this senior wife did not want to put this food into her mouth!

The nursing mother finished - and she did not die! In the morning, she had not died, she did not even have a pain! She felt nothing at all! She felt fine! And the milk in her breasts increased!

‘Oh, Sister, when will you go to get some more of that food?’ She again went, she passed on to him, her brother, she said, ‘Hey! I gave her the food, I prepared it for her, and she hasn’t said anything yet!’

‘Does she say that she felt nothing?’

‘No, she hasn’t felt a thing!’

‘Doesn’t she say that she feels any pain at all?’

‘No, not yet!’

‘She doesn’t even have pains?’

‘No!’

‘She doesn’t even have dysentery?’

‘No!’

‘Well, Friend, you probably picked a fresh one that’s not potent yet!

You must go and find a big one that seems to be mature! Don’t pick such a fresh one!’

She returned, determinedly going to that forest. She journeyed, she walked and walked, she left some of the pumpkins alone, looking for an old one, that very one which would make her die today! Finally she came to an old one, and she picked it. When she had plucked that one, she went home with it. She arrived at home, she arrived, and she was very happy today, because she knew that she had found the very one, the one that’s mature! When she arrived, ‘Mnhm! Yo!’ the nursing mother laughed.

‘Tyhin! He he he, Sister, you’ve found another one?’

‘Yes, I’ve found another one!’

‘What can I do now? What should I do, my sister?’

‘I just want you to be satisfied, that’s all! because you always stay in the same place, and because you’re hungry!’

‘Yo! Hey! Kwok! Well, Sister!’

‘You say it’s nice, my little one?’

‘Oh!’

She cooked it. She cooked it, she prepared it well, she ground it into meal. She brought it to a simmer, she stirred it. She ladled it out, she did not taste it because she knew that it was a thing that killed! She didn’t want to die! When she finished, she cooled it and gave it to her. The young mother ate it, the young mother ate until her stomach was big.

She said, 'Wo, Sister! This one is even better than yesterday's! Oh oh oh oh! Mh mh! Lord! It's a miracle, this matter of my sister constantly bringing me such nice food!'

Hey! Well then, the young mother's blood was warming because this food which she was eating was nice. She ate it with great appetite. Then, when morning came, the nursing mother was not dead! Hey! The woman wasn't even in pain! She didn't have a thing wrong! The young mother did not have dysentery, she was just happy!

This other woman said, 'Hey!'

Well, she travelled alone. Friends, what can you say? What is this, that the nursing mother didn't die? She again went to this brother of hers.

'Hey, Friend, that nursing mother is still alive! She's not dead! I just gave the food to her, and she ate it. It was an old plant, it was mature! And she didn't die at all!'

'Well, Friend, you must pluck two plants! Mix them together. Cook them both! She cannot die, that won't happen, unless you pick a green pumpkin and a white one, then mix them together!' She slept all that day, sleeping quickly on her knees, so that she could go to pick these pumpkins. She journeyed. She went to this forest, and she arrived and looked, she looked, and she found a green one. She carried that one on her back, and she sought a white one. She travelled, and she reached her home. She arrived and cooked for the nursing mother.

The young mother laughed when she was yet entering. 'Yo! Sister! Again you've found one!'

'Yes, Child of my father, because I want you to be fat, so that your little child might grow!'

'Oh!'

She cooked it, it was well cooked. She ground it up, she stirred it, she did not taste it. She strained it, and the young mother ate it, the young mother ate and was satisfied. Some of the pumpkin was left over, and she said, 'Put it over there! I'll eat it again when I'm hungry.'

Time passed. The nursing mother did not die! In the morning, the young mother was not dead! The woman became plump, nursing mother became beautiful! She was nourished!.

This woman returned, she went to her brother. 'Hey Friend, what is this? Why didn't you tell me that you want me to nourish this young mother? When I ask you for medicine with which to kill this person who surpasses me with my husband, you keep saying that I should cook a certain thing for her so that she keeps getting plump! I'm tired of cooking! That person over there is plump! she's not dying! She doesn't even have a sore head! She's just sitting there! What are you doing to me? What should I give to that person to make her die? I want that person to die!'

'Well, it could be - let's just travel together, the two of us. We'll go and pluck the plants ourselves, both of us!'

They travelled, and they arrived. They arrived, and there were some others there who were also plucking these pumpkins. They asked the others, 'Why are you picking these pumpkins. They asked the others, 'Why are you picking these things?'

They said, 'Yo! This is food for the blood! It makes one plump!'

This woman then said, 'Oh, you told me that this kills! What is this? Here I was, carrying food for this person, feeding her, and all this time I was fattening her instead of killing her!'

'No, I heard that the pumpkin of the forest kills, I have heard it said that it kills! There's a certain woman who ate it, and she died! Then I thought that perhaps this would happen in this case as well! Since it's not so, what' 'we do now?'

'No, Child of my father ___'

'Let's give up!'

'Let's do something else!'

'What'll we do?'

'Well now, something else should be done! Let's just think of something else, something that we can do!' She sat. She sought some medicine that could be sprinkled into the nursing mother's blankets, so that she would not be wanted by her so that she would not be wanted by anyone here at home! The young mother was sleeping. When she was asleep, she heard something: 'A thing is going to be poured into your blanket so that you're not wanted by your husband, so that you'll have to leave this home! This thing will be poured into the blanket that you pre-spread! Take this blanket then, and burn it!'

She slept then, and in the morning, when she got up, this thing had already been poured, it had been poured while she was asleep. She got up in the morning, she folded this blanket carefully, she held it carefully. The other one, this sister of hers, this one who had poured it, said, 'What are you doing? What are you doing? You'll make the child cold this way, Woman! You're going to make the child cold! What are you doing?'

'No, I won't make him cold! I'm just removing this blanket, that's all!'

'What are you going to do with this blanket?'

'I'm going to spread it afresh.'

The nursing mother took the blanket then, she wrapped it up, she wrapped it up, she tucked her arm and went out with it. She set it on fire.

'Why are you burning this blanket?'

'Well, I don't want this blanket. I'm setting it on fire because I don't want it! I don't want to put this blanket on now, it disgusts me!'

Oh! This is a strange person?

Again she went to her brother. This is a strange woman! She went again to her brother's place. 'Hey, Friend! Do you know that when I poured that thing into that nursing mother's blanket, she took that blanket and burned it outside? Who tells this young mother about these things that we do to her? Because I did that thing when she was asleep! I was sure that she was asleep! I tiptoed, and I poured it in! But then she wakes up and burns the blanket! No, I don't understand her! Because I certainly didn't meet with her, I wouldn't tell her, because I personally want her to leave! I don't want this junior wife with my husband! I wouldn't do such a thing, I wouldn't tell the person such a thing!'

Now then, she sat down, she went out, away from the nursing woman, and sat outside with some other people.

Her child grew up. This other woman gave up hope, because whenever she tried to do anything, it came to nothing. Whenever she tried to do anything, it came to nothing. Whenever she tried to do anything, it came to nothing! She remained thus, she became a sulky person, at a loss as to what to do. This young mother was loved very much by her husband, in the same way that she had formerly been loved. Eventually she weaned the child, and this young mother again became pregnant. Thus did she surpass her sister, and her sister gave up.

The *ntsomi* ends thus.

[25 MARKS]