

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA  
FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY & COUNSELLING  
2022/2023 – SEMESTER II —FINAL EXAMINATION



**BSC (HONS) IN PSYCHOLOGY**  
**PLU4305 – LANGUAGE AND COGNITION- LEVEL 04**  
**FINAL EXAMINATION PAPER**  
**DURATION: 03 HOURS**

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DATE: 12.09.2023

TIME: 1.30 pm -4.30pm

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**SECTION 2: STRUCTURED ESSAY QUESTIONS (60 MARKS)**

Choose 04 out of the 06 questions given below and answer using the provided answer sheets

**2.1 There are multiple areas of thought and other cognitive functions that are influenced by language.**

Discuss with examples three of the followings,

- (i) spatial relationships
- (ii) colour
- (iii) objects and substances
- (iv) numbers

*(15 marks)*

**2.2 The influence of language on thoughts is undeniable. Ample studies note that language can indeed shape our thoughts to a greater degree. However, there are two major issues identified that undermines the deterministic nature of language on cognition.**

Explain the two limitations that undermine the holistic impact of language on thoughts in your own words. *(15 marks)*

**2.3 Language has enabled human beings to become an effective social species. Language enables the transmission of cultural knowledge and provides one with access to the mind of another.**

- a) Describe with an example what is meant by 'Social Talk'. *(3 marks)*
- b) What threefold impact does social talk have on those who engage in it? Explain. *(6 marks)*
- c) Gossip may sound the same as social talk, but there are defining differences. Explain the requirements that need to be met talk to be labelled as 'Gossip'. *(6 marks)*

2.4 Communication takes place both verbally and non-verbally. Some scientists believe that non-verbal communication is more authentic and genuine as it reflects the truth of what we are thinking, or the subconscious. Sigmund Freud states that when we don't talk, our fingers talk.

- a) In the book, "Bodily Communication" Micheal Argyle identifies five main functions of non-verbal communication. What are they? (5 marks)
- b) "The importance of effective communication" by Edward G. Wertheim describes how non-verbal communication interacts with the verbal communication. Describe two such interactions between the two modes of communication with an example. (10 marks)

2.5 Language and cognition are two intertwined complementary processes that facilitate each other. In this context, human children are fluent speakers of language by around 5 years of age, however, cannot yet think like adults. Why? Explain your argument. (15 marks)

2.6 Discourse comprehension is a vital cognitive function of the human brain. Discourse comprehension can be defined as the set of cognitive processes that create a logical representation of the meanings of the discourse. (Van Berkum, Zwisterlood, Hagoort & Brown, 2003).

- a) Relate the four steps of the process of discourse comprehension as presented by Sternberg in 2009. (12 marks)
- b) Provide an example of language discourse in play. (3 marks)

-----END OF QUESTION PAPER-----