1.3 The sociocultural approach

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 30 marks**

KEY WORDS sociocultural approach • social identity theory • in-group favouritism • social learning theory • conformity • enculturation • acculturation

Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on the **sociocultural approach** : social identity theory, social learning theory, social norms and **conformity** , culture, enculturation and acculturation.

You must be able to:

- explain social identity theory and in-group favouritism with Tajfel (1971)
- explain the four steps of social learning with Bandura (1961)
- describe Asch (1951) and explain how conformity varies across cultures
- distinguish enculturation and acculturation, and apply Berry's four acculturation strategies
- use sociocultural research in Sections A, B and C

1 Key knowledge and worked examples

Groups and learning

- **Social identity theory** (Tajfel and Turner): part of our self-esteem comes from our groups. Tajfel (1971): Bristol schoolboys split into groups by a trivial task (which painter they preferred) gave more points to their own group and often chose the biggest **gap** over the most points: **in-group favouritism** .
- **Social learning theory** (Bandura): we copy a **role model** whose behaviour is rewarded. Bobo doll study (1961): 72 children aged 3 to 6 who watched an adult attack an inflatable doll copied many of the same attacks. Four steps: **attention, retention, reproduction, motivation**.

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■ **Norms, conformity and culture**

- A **social norm** is an unwritten rule of a group. **Conformity**: changing behaviour to match a group. Asch (1951): students judged which of three lines matched a test line after actors gave the same wrong answer; about one third of answers followed the group, and three quarters of students conformed at least once.
- Bond and Smith (1996): a review of 133 line-judgement studies in 17 countries found more conformity in **collectivist** than in **individualist** cultures.
- **Culture**: shared beliefs, norms and practices. **Enculturation** : learning your own culture. **Acculturation** : changing on contact with a new culture.

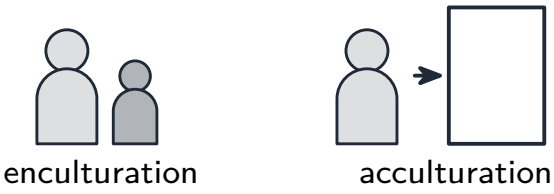
Berry's strategy	keep first culture?	join new culture?
integration	yes	yes
assimilation	no	yes
separation	yes	no
marginalization	no	no

Integration is usually linked to the least stress.

Section C answer shape (15 marks): define the claim and the concept → two or three studies, each used as evidence → evaluate each through the concept → counterpoint → conclusion that answers the claim.

2 Practice

2.1 Distinguish between **enculturation** and **acculturation**. [2]



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2.2 Identify Berry's acculturation strategy for each student who has moved from China to Canada:

(a) Lin keeps Chinese customs and also makes Canadian friends and joins school clubs; [1]

(b) Hao speaks only English and avoids Chinese food and festivals; [1]

(c) Yu mixes only with other Chinese students and keeps all her home customs. [1]

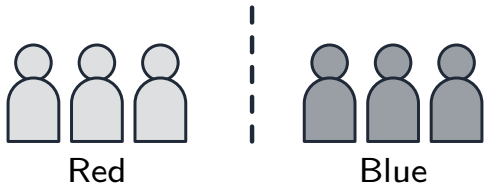
	join new: yes	join new: no
keep first: yes	?	?
keep first: no	?	?

2.3 *(Paper 1 Section A.)* Describe **one** study of conformity. [4]



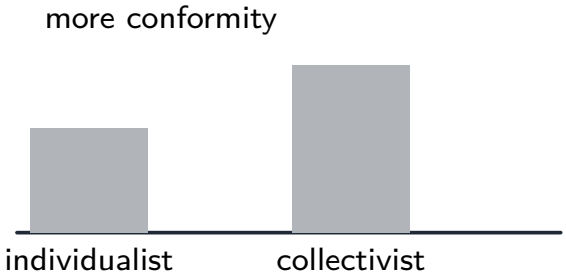
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2.4 *(Paper 1 Section B, human relationships.)* A school puts all Year 7 students into two "houses", Red and Blue, for sports. Soon students from each house call the other house names and refuse to sit together. Using social identity theory, explain this behaviour. [6]



3 Exam-style questions

3.1 *(Paper 1 Section C.)* "How much people conform depends on their culture." Discuss this claim with reference to the concept of **bias**. [15]



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Solutions

Marking: **M1** a correct method, **A1** the correct answer, **B1** an independent mark.

Each answer shows the steps, then the **result**.

2.1

enculturation: learning the norms and practices of your own culture, e.g. from parents; acculturation: changes in a person on contact with a new culture, e.g. after moving abroad

2.2

(a) integration

(b) assimilation

(c) separation

2.3

Asch (1951); students judged which of three lines matched a test line, after several actors gave the same clearly wrong answer; about one third of answers followed the wrong group, and three quarters of students conformed at least once; shows that people often change their answer to match a group norm

2.4

award up to [6]: social identity theory: part of self-esteem comes from the groups we belong to; students categorize themselves as Red or Blue; they compare their house with the other and favour their own to feel good; Tajfel (1971): even trivial groups led boys to favour their own group and to maximize the difference; here the houses are just as arbitrary, so in-group favouritism and rivalry are expected; competition for sports points adds to the conflict / joint goals across houses could reduce it

3.1

Mark with the markbands: [13-15] focused on the claim, accurate knowledge, evidence used to build an argument, the concept used to evaluate throughout, a supported conclusion; [10-12] mostly focused, evidence used, some evaluation through the concept; [7-9] relevant knowledge but mostly description; [4-6] limited knowledge, little evaluation; [1-3] little that is relevant. Points that may be included: Asch (1951): about one third of answers conformed; bias: the sample was American male students from one culture and one period, so it may not represent other cultures; Bond and Smith (1996): 133 studies in 17 countries; more conformity in collectivist cultures; this supports the claim and reduces the sample bias of a single study; but cultural dimensions are national averages, and many people do not fit them; the line task may mean different things in different cultures, e.g. agreeing with a group may be politeness, not changed judgement (a measurement / cultural bias); conformity also depends on the situation, e.g. group size and a dissenter; conclusion: culture appears to affect conformity, but the evidence carries Western-sample and measurement bias

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