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RÉPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN
Paix-Travail-Patrie

MINISTÈRE DE
L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR

COMMISSION NATIONALE D'ORGANISATION DE
L'EXAMEN NATIONAL DU DIPLÔME SUPÉRIEUR
D'ÉTUDES PROFESSIONNELLES/HIGHER
PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMA (DSEP/HPD)

REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON
Peace-Work-Fatherland

MINISTRY
OF HIGHER EDUCATION

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
THE ORGANIZATION OF DSEP/HPD EXAM

EPREUVE : COMMUNICATION ET EXPRESSION BILINGUES

Filières Industrielle, Technologique et Juridiques

Coefficient : 3
Durée : 3 heures

SECTION A : READING COMPREHENSION (16 Marks)

Read this passage and answer the questions below it.

What is a Database Machine?

We are now in a position to examine the question "What exactly is a database machine?" Unfortunately, it is very difficult to give a precise answer to this question, or indeed any answer that will be universally accepted by all workers in the field. There is simply no consensus. Hsiao, for example, defines a database machine as "specialized hardware supporting basic DBMS functions found in most contemporary software database management systems". But this definition excludes the case of a dedicated but conventional backend system, running a conventional software DBMS. Other people reserve the term to mean, specifically, a storage device that incorporates some new hardware technology (for example, magnetic bubble memory) and /or hardware associative addressing. Still others use the term to mean a CPU that includes microcoded support for common database constructs such as indexes and cursors. Perhaps the most satisfactory definition is simply "any special-purpose hardware/software combination that is specifically intended to make the database system go faster" –except that, some proposals are more like to have the opposite effect. In fact, the following point should be made at the outset: Not only is there no consensus on what a database machine is –there is not even any consensus that database machines in general are a good idea.

One consensus that does exist is that most on-line storage will continue to be based on conventional moving-head disk technology for many years to come. The newer technologies –magnetic bubbles, charge-coupled devices (CCDs), and so forth –though they may have some specialized role to play within the overall system, simply cannot compete, in terms of either capacity or cost, with moving-head disk technology for the role of principal data storage medium. Thus, most of the database machine hardware proposals concentrate on either finding a suitable role for the newer technologies (for example, using them for a cache memory between main storage and the disks), or enhancing the moving-head disk technology (for example, adding search logic to the read/write heads), or a combination of both.

and We conclude this section by considering briefly some of the potential gains drawbacks of a database machine.

Improving performance is of course the primary motivation for introducing a database machine in the first place. Note carefully, however, that the performance of any individual database request will almost certainly be worse than in a conventional system, because the execution of that request now involves two messages in addition to everything that had to be

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done before. "He travels the fastest who travels alone". That is, the fact that there are two machines doing work simultaneously where there was only one before –that can yield improved performance. Hence, "improved performance" in a database machine system must be understood to mean "increased throughput", not improved response time. The hope is that the gains from parallel execution will outweigh the losses from host/backend communication; if they do not, then the installation would do better simply to upgrade the host CPU or to invest in additional channels or disks.

Adapted from *An Introduction to Database systems* by C.J. Date, Addison-Wesley, 1985

QUESTIONS

1. Explain, in your own words, "there is simply no consensus". (*4 mks*)

_____

_____

_____

2. How many definitions of a database machine are there in the text? (*2mks*)

_____

3. Which of the definitions does the writer seem to agree with? (*2 mks*)

_____

_____

4. Is everybody satisfied with database machines? Justify your answer with a quotation from the text. (*4 mks*)

_____

_____

_____

5. Find a synonym for these words in the text (*2 mks*)
   a) advantages = _____
   b) disadvantages = _____
6. What, in your own words, is the main reason for using database machines? (*2 mks*)

_____

_____

SECTION B/ESSAY (*14 marks*)

Write an essay of 180 –200 words on any ONE of the following topics.

1. How has the internet changed your life?
2. Do you agree with this assertion, "Computers have done more harm than good to users"?
3. Write a letter of application for the joh of Computer Engineer. Your letter should include the following:

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- The reason for applying for that job
- Your age and present occupation
- Any experience you may have
- Your educational qualifications
- Anything that shows your intelligence
- Any responsibility you have had.

SECTION C/GRAMMAR (*10 marks*)

Complete the sentences with the words or expressions in brackets where necessary.

1. The course begins _____7 January and ends _____10 march. (at, in, on)
2. _____our stay in Bamenda, we visited the Fon's palace and many other interesting places.(During, For, While).
3. The Soviet Union was _____first country to send a man into _____space.(a, the, an)
4. George says he's 80 years old but I _____ him. (am not believing, have believed, don't believe)
5. The Chinese _____printing. (invented, have invented, had invented).
6. A: I don't like living in the country.
   B: _____(Neither do I, so do I, Me too)
7. Physics _____my best subject at school.(were, have been, was).
8. We didn't spend _____time. (much, few, many)

SECTION D/ VOCABULARY (*10 marks*)

Fill in the blanks with words form the brackets.

1. An _____transfers data from a processor to an external medium. (output device, input device, interesting device).
2. The English word for "un disque souple" is _____ (a floppy disk, a magnetic tape, a disk drive).
3. Computers enable _____ and collaboration between users.(functions, communication, language)
4. Computers fulfil informational needs by _____ various reference material, such as phone numbers (enabling, choosing, storing)
5. (Telephone conversation)
   A: Hello, INPUT PLUS, can I help you?
   B: Hello, can you _____to Ms Anong?
   (pass me, put me through, give me)
6. A Computer _____consists of a little plastic box with a sensor inside. It can be moved across any hard surface. (joystick, mouse, touch pad)
7. When you press a button it's called _____ (clicking, validating, pressing)
8. _____are imitations of standard computers. (take, ghosts, clones).
9. A _____is used to connect the computer to the phone line, in order to send faxes and access the Internet. (modem, pointer, link).

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10. A list of things you can ask a computer to do is a _____.(keyboard, instruction, menu)

SECTION E/ TRANSLATION (*10 marks*)

1. Translate into French from "We are now in a position to examine ..." down to " There is simply no consensus" (Paragraph one of the reading text) (5mks)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Traduire ces phrases en Anglais (*5 marks*)

Le TOSHIBA est plus petit et plus facile à porter.

_____

Le Compaq Portable 386 est semblable à l'ancien Compaq Portable III.

_____

_____

Toshiba prétend que sa mémoire étendue est supérieure à celle du Compaq.

_____

_____

Les hommes d'affaires sont de plus en plus accoutumés à voir ce type de portable sur leurs bureaux.

_____

_____

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