FEEDBACK TUTORIAL LETTER

2nd SEMESTER 2019

ASSIGNMENT 1

SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION
(SLA721S)
Assignment 1

Dear Student

Thank you for submitting your first assignment. It was our pleasure to mark it. If your marks are good, I hope this will motivate you to work even harder. If you are disappointed with your marks, please do not give up now, simply work harder. At the same time, we would like to remind you that by doing your assignment on your own, and not copying from the study guide will be to your benefit in the coming exams. Remember to read thoroughly through the questions before answering and ensure that you have attended to all the questions given. Make use of the recommended works so that you broaden your knowledge. You should cite all works used in your texts (in-text reference). Many of you simply copied from the internet without summarising your points and not quoting your sources. Authors cited in your texts should all appear in the reference list. Do not forget to align your paragraphs so that all sentences are of equal length. Responses should be presented in well-structured paragraphs. Adhere to the stated requirements of the assignment in terms of line spacing, font size and type. Responses should be in line with the number of marks allocated per question. Use this opportunity to revise the questions in Assignment 1 with the memorandum in hand. Give attention to the remarks of the marker-tutor in your assignment book. If there is anything that you are still unsure of, do not hesitate to contact the market-tutor.

All the best!

Regards,

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Course Name: SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION
Course Code: SLA721S
Department: COMMUNICATION
Course Duration: SEMESTER 2
NQF Level and Credit: LEVEL 7, 14 CREDITS

Your marker-tutor for SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION
The Namibia University of Science and Technology has appointed ANNELI NGHIKEMBUA as marker-tutor for SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION. ANNELI NGHIKEMBUA will be at your service, should you experience any problems with your studies or with the assignments. Contact details are as follows:
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Your moderator for SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION
The Namibia University of Science and Technology has appointed Dr Nauseb as the moderator for SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION.
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Assignment 1 MEMO [50 Marks]

Question 1 [15 Marks]

3.1) Distinguish between language learning and language acquisition.

Language learning:

- Learning of a language is the formal teaching methodology that can be seen in the form of instructions explaining the rules of the language
- The emphasis is on the form of language rather than text
- Teachers/instructors are seen busy explaining grammar rules to learners/students
- Assessments are given
- Happens in a formal setting
- Places undue importance on the rules of grammar [7.5]

Language acquisition:

- Is one by which every child learns his/her mother tongue.
- A child is not taught the language
- They learn the language through a subconscious process where they know nothing about rules of grammar but know intuitively what is right and wrong or learn through a trial and error method.
- Constant communication is what makes acquiring the lessons of the mother tongue easier for the children [7.5]
Question 2 [20 Marks]

Stages of second language acquisition

1. **Stage I: Pre-production** [5]
   - The length of this stage varies greatly, but most learners spend 0-6 months in stage 1.
   - During this stage, the second language learner actively listens to the language input.
   - They are unable to correctly produce verbs in the past or future tenses and will rely on the present tense for communication.
   - They develop comprehension in the second language.
   - Reading and oral production is marked with transference of their first language pronunciation.
   - Learners can follow directions, point, draw, and act

2. **Stage II: Early production**
   - Learners began producing utterances of one word
   - Learners will repeat words they have often heard and that are comprehensible
   - Learners at this stage might produce memorised phrases
   - Learners transfer the native language pronunciation similar to stage 1
   - Learners will begin to incorporate different verb forms into speech but will overgeneralise the grammar rules.

3. **Stage III: Speech emergence**
   - Learners begin to construct simple sentences until they produce increasingly complex phrases
   - Transference of first language pronunciation will begin to subside although accent will continue to be an issue
   - Learners at this stage begin to use differing verb forms (past, present, future)
They can engage in more lengthy conversations
Learners overgeneralisations which is a sign that they are making progress

4. Stage IV: Intermediate fluency

Learner can now manipulate the language to create original sentences
They engage in more complex conversations
They have a good grasp on different verb forms (past, present, future, etc.)
Grammatical mistakes are still quite common
The learner is ready to acquire advanced writing skills and perfect his/her oral and reading skills

Question 3 [15 Marks]

1. Briefly discuss the mentalist view of second language acquisition giving your own examples.

The theory states that children learn language easily because their brains are pre-programmed for language acquisition

Given the language acquisition device (LAD) humans ‘know’ what kind of a system language is and ‘understand’ the universal principles on which it operates – all unconsciously.

The learner could have been exposed to one form (sentence 1) only, but they are able to produce different sentences which they have not been exposed to

The learner’s mental processes do not just take items from the input and use them as they are but learners formulate their own responses

The mental processes are creative and hence the learner’s mind works out new forms based on the items contained in the input.
The mentalist view is also known as the cognitivist view because by acquiring new forms, the language learner undergoes cognitive development.

[the question also required you to give your own examples which many students failed to give]

END OF ASSIGNMENT 1 MEMO