Dear Student

Thank you for submitting your first assignment on time. It was our pleasure to mark it. Hope your marks are good if not work hard in assignment 2. It was evident that many fail to follow instructions as outlined in the assignment (e.g. font type, size, line spacing, aligning paragraphs). Please read instructions carefully before attempting to answer the questions. There are still students who are failing to reference, both in the text and when compiling a reference list. It is recommended that you cite all sources used despite summarising ideas. There are lots of materials available on line to help you with referencing. Please note that references that appear in the text are those that you use to write a reference list. Some students seem to do the assignments in a rush for the sake of finishing and submitting, thus rely on copying from websites. Some texts copied do not fit well with the question. It is also evident that many did not read the recommended books but simply rely on the study guide. Please read more on the course and topics to enrich your mind and share knowledge. There are many e-books availed online and also in the NUST library.

Plagiarism is a serious offense and needs to be redressed. You might have noticed that the system via TurnItIn picks up issues of plagiarism etc. You end up losing marks for that (see last page of this document). Many students still seem to have no idea how an essay should be structured. Please read more on the layout of an essay and how to place your arguments/information. Always read through your work to check for spelling and any other errors. Do take note of these comments to avoid doing the same in assignment 2. If there is anything that you are still unsure of, do not hesitate to contact the marker-tutor.

We wish you all the best in assignment 2.

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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E-mail: anghikembua@nust.na

Your moderator for SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION
The Namibia University of Science and Technology has appointed Dr Nauseb as the moderator for SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION.
Email: lnamaseb@unam.na
Assignment 1 MEMO [50 Marks]

Answer all the questions

Question 1 [12 Marks]

1.1) Distinguish between language learning and language acquisition. [6]

Nb! Provide correct intexts references for each. No websites or study should be cited.

Below are some sample responses but students are free to give their own responses.

There is an important distinction made by linguists (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, Ellis, 1997 & Krashen, 1982) between language acquisition and language learning. These authors proposed that language acquisition is a subconscious process during which an individual is unaware of grammatical rules. A learner usually acquires his/her first language/mother tongue. The Rules of language not taught, they are in born, there are individuals who can can pick up language subconsciously. Expose to the language is very important, children go through various stages and the correctness of a language is not necessary. Acquisition is enabled mainly by LAD accounts for the process. [3]

Conversely, language learning is a conscious process of learning an additional language and is a result of direct instruction in the rules of the target language. Attention is focused on the language in its written form and the objective is for the learner to understand the structure and rules of the language (Krashen, 1982). The teaching and learning paradigm are technical and based on the syllabus.

1.2) Sequential and simultaneous bilingualism [6]

Nb! Provide correct intexts references for each. No websites or study should be cited.

Below are some sample responses but students are free to give their own responses.

Mastering multiple languages is a commonplace linguistic achievement for most of the world’s population. Chomsky as noted in Mukherji et al. (2000) states that in most of human history and in most parts of the world today, children grow up speaking a variety of languages. Simultaneous bilingual children
are those exposed to two languages from birth or from a very early age (for instance before 3 years of age). The input available to the learner may differ such that one language would become the dominant one. According to Green and Gollan (2009) simultaneous bilinguals often reach the 50-word vocabulary stage at the same age as their monolingual peers. Sequential bilinguals on the other hand, refers to learning an additional language after having learnt your first language/mother tongue. In other words, it refers to children who have been exposed to an additional language from as early as 3 years. Although there is no clear cut as to which age a child is considered a sequential bilingualism rather than a simultaneous learner, the conception is connected to the critical period for language learning (Green & Gollan, 2009).

Question 2 [16 Marks]

Stages of second language acquisition

*NB! Provide correct intexts references for each. No websites or study should be cited.*

Below are simply pointers, responses are suppose to be discussed in paragraph form.

1. **Stage I: Pre-production [4]**

   - 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 (Collier, 1995)

2. **Stage II: Early production [4]**

   - 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 (Collier, 1995)

3. **Stage III: Speech emergence [4]**
- 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 (Collier, 1995)

4. **Stage IV: Intermediate fluency [4]**
- 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 (Collier, 1995)

**Question 3** [22 Marks]

2.1 Distinguish between social interactionist and mentalist (innatist) view on language acquisition.
This is an essay and students’ responses will differ. The students should follow the structure of an essay.

Students should know that an academic essay should be well structured, referenced and arguments should flow. There is no need to indicate subheadings. It is advisable that students review their notes on essay writing, as this skill is not well mastered by many students. Do read through the essay before submission to correct errors made e.g. spelling, punctuation.

Below are some sketches that might help when you are drafting your essay/s.
[Students responses will vary. Marks were based on structure: topic, introduction, body/content, conclusion and references. Responses were to be laid out in clear paragraphs that are also manageable. Below are some points for consideration in the content writing.]

The father of the social interactionist theory is Vygotsky (1978). He states that social interaction plays an important role in the learning process and proposed the zone of proximal development (ZPD), where learners construct the new language through socially mediated interaction. The basic concept in interactionism, or sometimes called social-interactionism, states that:
1. children have some innate knowledge of the structure of language
2. but also require meaningful interaction with others

A child who is not exposed to people speaking some kind of language will not be able to acquire language at all. Thus, a child learns a language that the people around him or her speak (Vygotsky, 1978). In contrast to the work of Chomsky, more recent theorists have stressed the importance of the language input children receive from their care-givers. Language exists for the purpose of communication and can only be learned in the context of interaction with people who want to communicate with you. Interactionists such as Bruner (1961) suggest that the language behaviour of adults when talking to children (known by several names by most easily referred to as child-directed speech or CDS) is specially adapted to support the acquisition process. This support is often described as scaffolding for the child's language learning. Bruner also coined the term Language Acquisition Support System or LASS in response to Chomsky's LAD.

Moving on to the innatist theory, the father of most nativist theories of language acquisition is Noam Chomsky, who brought greater attention to the innate capacity of children for learning language. Nativist linguistic theories hold that children learn through their natural ability to organise the laws of language, but cannot fully utilise this talent without the presence of other humans. Chomsky (1986) claims that children are born with a hard-wired Language Acquisition Device (LAD) in their brains. They are born with the major principles of language in place, but with many parameters to set (such as whether sentences in the language(s) they are to acquire must have explicit subjects). According to nativist theory, when the young child is exposed to a language, their LAD makes it possible for them to set the parameters and deduce the grammatical principles, because the principles are innate.

There are important arguments both for and against Chomsky's view of development. One idea central to the Chomskian view is the idea of Universal Grammar, which posits that all languages have the same basic underlying structure, and that specific languages have rules that transform these underlying structures into the specific patterns found in given languages. Another argument is that without a propensity for language, human infants would be unable to learn such complete speech patterns in a natural human environment where complete sentences are the exception.

[Please note that this is not an essay but simply points for consideration]
END OF ASSIGNMENT 1

2. Plagiarism and Deduction of Marks
   Students should be informed that marks will be deducted if they do not adhere to the rules of the University according to Rule AC3.2.

   All assignments should be submitted through Turnitin, the similarity software that is integrated into the MOODLE Learning Management System. If plagiarism is detected, marks should be deducted as follows:

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   * Please note that the % shown above is an average % for all Faculties and should be used as a Guideline.

   Assignments found with a similarity report above 20%, will not be allowed to apply for a remark or a re-check of marks. For students who fall into the 60–100% similarities group, Rule AC3.2 will apply, and the misconduct procedure will start.

References


[End of feedback letter]