FEEDBACK TUTORIAL LETTER

2nd SEMESTER 2019

ASSIGNMENT 2

SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION
(SLA721S)
Dear Student

Thank you for submitting your second assignment on time. It was our pleasure to mark it. Hope your marks are good as this is your last assignment. It was evident that the comments given in the previous assignment were worked on, although some students still struggle to reference. Please read more on referencing. Plagiarism is a serious offense and needs to be redressed. Many students seem to simply rely on the study guide and copy what is there without summarising and then reference. There are many books that you can access on the course. It seems some students did not read the comments in assignment 1 and end up repeating the same errors again in assignment 2. Issues such as structuring paragraphs, punctuations, aligning sentences/ paragraphs were not well attended to in assignment 2. Remember that you usually lose marks for not following instructions. There is still a need to work on the errors made so that you do not repeat them in any other task that you may be given.

Read the comments that you find in your assignment. We wish you all the best for the upcoming examinations. If there is anything that you are still unsure of, do not hesitate to contact the marker-tutor.

We hope to see you at the October/November examinations.

Regards,

Anneli Nghikembua (Ms)
Tel. +264 612072173
Email: anghikembua@nust.na
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:
Tel.: 061 2072173
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: Inamaseb@unam.na
Assignment 2 [40 Marks]

Question 1 [20]

1.1) Write an essay of not more than 250, in which you argue why the study of second language acquisition is important to you as a student studying towards a Bachelor of English.

Discussion/argument [15], layout [5]

Question 2 [20]

Read the summary of the two theories given below and attend the question given thereafter.

Social Interactionist theory

This theory is an approach to language acquisition that stresses the environment and the context in which the language is being learned. It focuses on the pragmatics of language rather than grammar, which should come later. In this approach, the beginning speaker and the experienced speaker--be they child and adult or second-language learner and fluent speaker--exist in a negotiated arrangement where feedback is always possible. The basic appeal of this approach is the importance it places on the home and the cultural environment in early-childhood language acquisition. Language, according to this theory, is not an innate ability. Rather, it develops in negotiating your environment. Hence, vocabulary is bound by context or, alternatively, by the culture within which speech is necessary and understandable.

This approach to language acquisition is based on culture and environment. Thus, it is not universal in scope. In fact, the theory holds that language is never universal, but always context- and time-bound. On one hand, this means that language seems to be provincial, but also utilitarian, because it develops in the environment where it is most needed and most likely to be understood. On the other hand, it keeps the level of basic comprehension solely on the level of the initial environment. Transitions to other environments, at least on the surface, seem to be a problem. (Lewis, 2010).
Nativist/Innatist Linguistic theories

The manner in which a child acquires language is a matter long debated by linguists and child psychologists alike. 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, which had widely been considered a purely cultural phenomenon based on imitation.

Nativist linguistic theories hold that children learn through their natural ability to organise the laws of language, but cannot fully utilize this talent without the presence of other humans. Chomsky 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.

1.1) From the two theories, which one would you side with and why? Provide arguments. You may also draw from what you have learnt from the course.

END OF ASSIGNMENT 2
Assignment 2 MEMO  [40 Marks]

Question 1  [20]

1.2) Write an essay of not more than 250, in which you argue why the study of second language acquisition is important to you as a student studying towards a Bachelor of English.

- Responses may vary among students. Students argue from their own perspectives. Below are just some pointers.

The study of second language acquisition is important for teaching and learning. The main goal of SLA is to find out how learners acquire a second language L2). One get to learn the diverse interpretation of the underlying theories that have eventually paved the way in understanding the very nature of SLA and their implicative functions to language learning and teaching. Studying SLA necessitates an interrelated set of hypotheses and/or claims about how people acquire a second language and learn this language later on.

Some of the specific goals of SLA thus will include the following:

- The description of L2 acquisition.
- The explanation; identifying the external and internal factors that account for why learners acquire an L2 in the way they do.
- The social environment in which learning takes place that is, the social conditions influence the opportunities that learners have to hear and speak the language; and the attitudes that they develop towards it.

Discussion/argument [15]

Layout [5]
Question 2 [20]

Read the summary of the two theories given below and attend to the question given thereafter.

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1.2) From the two theories, which one would you side with and why? Provide arguments. You may also draw from what you have learnt from the course.

Responses will vary among students. This is a self reflection question and students may pick any theory and argue for its proposition using the information provided. Also based on what they learnt in the course.

Discussion/argument [15]

Layout [5]