

**UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND**  
**INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**  
**FINAL EXAMINATION**  
**MAINN PAPER**  
**MAY, 2005**

**COURSE TITLE: E4P1: LANGUAGE LEARNING AND ACQUISITION**

**TIME ALLOWED                      3HRS**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

**THERE ARE SIX QUESTIONS IN THIS PAPER.**

**ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS ONLY.**

**QUESTION ONE IS COMPULSORY**

**DO NOT OPEN THIS PAPER BEFORE THE INVIGILATOR TELLS YOU TO DO SO.**

**QUESTION 1**

This Question is Compulsory. Answer this question on the multiple choice sheet provided to you.

1. The goal of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research is to:
  - A. describe the process of language restructuring,
  - B. describe and explain the process of acquiring L2 linguistic and communicative competence,
  - C. explain introspective and retrospective language learning processes,
  - D. formulate linguistic rules for L2 use.
  
2. SLA occurs primarily in:
  - A. Japan and China ,
  - B. The United Arab Emirates,
  - C. The United States and Nigeria,
  - D. Zaire and Senegal.
  
3. The term competence is defined as:
  - A. the performance aspect of learning,
  - B. the mental representations of the internal grammar of the learner,
  - C. the communicative aspects of language,
  - D. what is appropriate and correct language behavior.

4. Usage is:

- A. the functional uses of language,
- B. when the L2 learner demonstrates his knowledge of linguistic rules,
- C. when the learner uses language to convey meaning,
- D. the ability to focus on both meaning and form.

5. Acquisition generally means:

- A. a subconscious process of picking up a language,
- B. the learning of rules consciously,
- C. intuitive and naturalistic language learning,
- D. both conscious and subconscious processes of language learning.

6. Pragmatics is the study of:

- A. conversational implicature,
- B. the organization of language,
- C. grammar and spelling rules,
- D. the use of language in communication.

7. Interlanguage (IL) was initially defined as:

- A. the systematic knowledge of an L2 which is independent of both the first language and the target language,
- B. how L2 learners obtain input from native speakers of the target language,

C. failure to reach fluency and proficiency in the target language,

D. all of the above.

8. Field dependence/ independence constitutes

A. input given to learners to revise their IL,

B. form and function relationships,

C. knowledge of rules and items that exist in analyzed form,

D. one kind of cognitive style.

9. Implicit L2 knowledge means:

A. metalingual and conscious L2 knowledge,

B. intuitive and unconscious L2 knowledge,

C. variability in the use of different modes of language use

D. the process of language complexification.

10. Functionalist models of SLA suggest that

A. L2 development occurs as learners move from processing language in pragmatic terms to processing it in grammatical terms,

B. language acquisition involves the learner attending to both form and function,

C. variability is a reflex of different modes of language use,

D. all of the above.

11. In the late sixties and seventies, researchers sought to
- A. describe and explain why learners made errors,
  - B. explain how learners used communication strategies,
  - C. describe principles and parameters of universal grammar,
  - D. describe only the contribution of external factors to L2 acquisition.
12. What areas of SLA have been generally investigated?
- A. characteristics of learner language,
  - B. learner external and internal mechanisms,
  - C. the language learner,
  - D. all of the above.
13. Errors in SLA are believed to be the result of:
- A. first language transfer and evidence of creative construction,
  - B. bad habits acquired in the classroom,
  - C. imperfect learning in naturalistic settings,
  - D. negative transfer of first language habits.
14. Evidence for a definite order in the acquisition of specific grammatical features was provided by
- A. formulas and routines,

B. theoretical linguistics,

C. morpheme studies,

D. ethnographic studies.

15. Evidence of developmental sequences in SLA is provided by:

A. the ZISA Project,

B. case studies of individual learners,

C. Australian SLA research,

D. all of the above.

16. Which of the following theories of learning focuses primarily on the role played by learner internal factors?

A. interactionist theories,

B. behaviorist theories,

C. mentalist theories,

D. all of the above.

17. In submersion programs:

A. the first language of a linguistic minority is taught and used in instruction,

B. the L2 learner is taught in classes where L1 speakers are dominant,

C. learners are taught the L2 separately from the majority group,

D. learners with a prestigious first language are taught through the medium of the L2.

18. Michael Long (1983) argues that input:

- A. serves only as a trigger that sets off the Language Acquisition Device,
- B. which is made comprehensible through conversational adjustments contributes to acquisition,
- C. provides learners opportunities for pushed output in speech and writing,
- D. all of the above.

19. Language transfer is generally understood as:

- A. evidence that various aspects of the first language would be carried over to the second language,
- B. differences between the two languages in contact that interfere with learning,
- C. patterns of the first language that are similar to the language being acquired,
- D. impediments to second language acquisition.

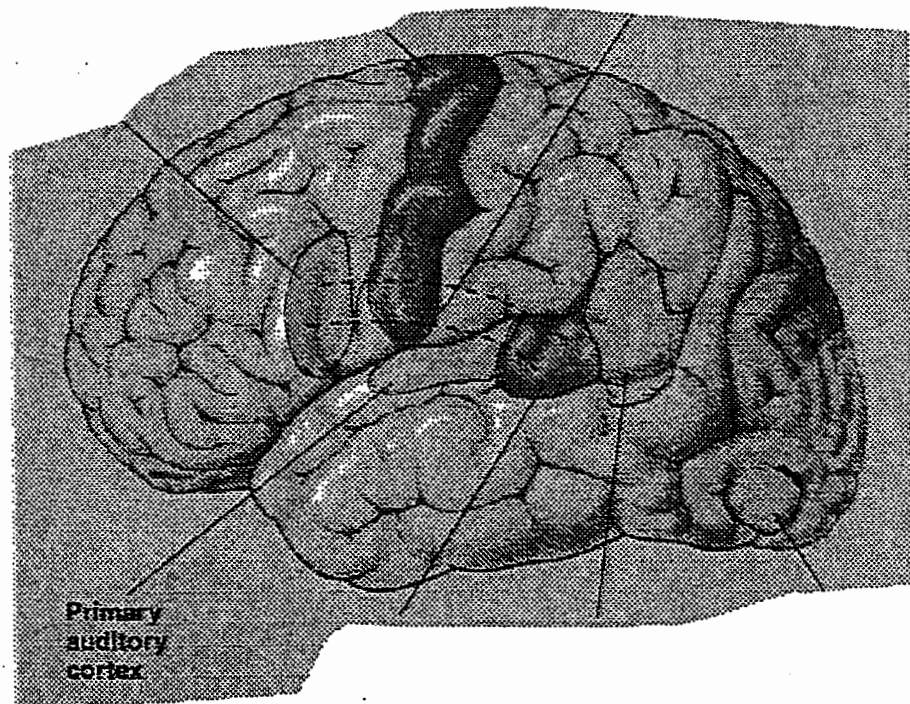
20. Parallel Distributed Processing theories claim that learning results when:

- A. the strength of the connections between units is modified,
- B. the planning and execution phases of speech occur synchronously,
- C. temporal variables and hesitation phenomena are under control,
- D. controlled, automatic and explicit mechanisms are in place.

## QUESTION 2

a) Study carefully the following diagram. Label it properly and state the language function of each of the parts that you have labeled.

(6)



b) Critically discuss any two theories of language learning/acquisition we have discussed in class.

(12)



**QUESTION 3**

What are the stages assumed to form the language learning process. To what extent are these universal and to what extent are they not. Discuss with examples.

(20)

**QUESTION 4**

Discuss the concept of the critical period and explain its importance to understanding the process of language learning and acquisition. (20)

**QUESTION 5**

What are the differences between first and second language learning? Why and how is it important to understand these differences for a language teacher?

**QUESTION 6**

Discuss five factors to be taken into account when describing bilingualism. In your opinion which is better early or late bilingualism? Give reasons for your answer.