Tutorial letter 201/2/2017

Language and Communication Skills Acquisition in an African Language 2

AFL1504

Semester 2

Department of African Languages

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:
This tutorial letter contains the feedback answers to Assignment 01

BARCODE

Define tomorrow.

UNISA | university of south africa

CONTENTS

Important note:

Please note that although there are only 40 questions, the mark you obtain for the assignment will be converted to a mark out of 100.

---

1.   INTRODUCTION

Dear Student

This tutorial letter contains **feedback on Assignment 01.** The multiple choice questions for this assignment were the same for all the languages. We trust that our explanations will give you clarity in instances where you chose the wrong options. The correct option is given first, followed by explanations, where necessary, as to why the other options were wrong.

1.   CONTACT DETAILS OF LECTURERS

Should you have any questions, please contact the lecturer responsible for the language you have chosen for this module. Their names appear below.

isiZulu (Zulu):
Mr CL Zwane
E-mail address: zwanecl@unisa.ac.za
Telephone number: 012 429 2447

isiXhosa (Xhosa):
Ms LR Mfazwe-Mojapelo
E-mail address: emfazwlr@unisa.ac.za
Telephone number: 012 429 6455

Sesotho sa Leboa / Sepedi (Northern Sotho):
Prof IM Kosch
E-mail address: koschim@unisa.ac.za
Telephone number: 012 429 8232

Setswana (Tswana):
To be announced. In the meantime you can contact the module coordinator:
Ms LR Mfazwe-Mojapelo
E-mail address: emfazwlr@unisa.ac.za
Telephone number: 012 429 6455

Sesotho (Southern Sotho):
Ms N Mokuoane
E-mail address: mokuomc@unisa.ac.za
Telephone number: 012 429 3058

Siswati (Swati):
Dr SR Mdluli
E-mail address: mdlulsr@unisa.ac.za
Telephone number: 012 429 8535

(South African) IsiNdebele (Ndebele):
Mr MP Mabena
E-mail address: emabenm@unisa.ac.za
Telephone number: 012 429 3737

Tshivenḓa (Venda):
Mrs A Ndhobela
E-mail address: ndhoba@unisa.ac.za
Telephone number: 012 429 8680

Xitsonga (Tsonga):
Mr D Mathevula
E-mail address: mathed@unisa.ac.za
Telephone number: 012 429 8531

ANSWERS TO MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS – S2 (2017)

Question No.	Correct option	Question No.	Correct option
1	1	21	3
2	3	22	1
3	4	23	4
4	3	24	3
5	2	25	2
6	1	26	3
7	2	27	2
8	2	28	4
9	4	29	2
10	2	30	1
11	2	31	3
12	3	32	3
13	1	33	4
14	2	34	1
15	4	35	1
16	2	36	4
17	1	37	1
18	3	38	2
19	4	39	2
20	4	40	4

1. Which of the following statements best describes the purpose of this module?
   Correct option: (1)

   (2) It is clearly stated in the guide that learning an African language will not benefit you should it remain an intellectual exercise only. The purpose of the module is also not to prepare the learner for scientific writing but to acquire communicative skills.

   (3) This module is not intended for mother-tongue speakers – they would already have mastered pronunciation and comprehension skills in their language.

   (4) Technical passages and advanced grammatical structures are not appropriate for a beginner's course. We introduce you to the literature of the languages through everyday vocabulary in children's stories which have easy-to-follow story lines and simple sentence constructions.

2. Indicate which group of people will benefit most from this module:

   Correct option: (3)

   (1) This module is intended to assist *non mother-tongue speakers* of an African language to gain more proficiency in an African language, not in English.

   (2) This module is not designed to teach illiterate people how to read or write.

   (4) This module is not intended for professional writers in African literature, since the latter would probably have learnt their African language as their mother tongue and would be competent in the language.

3. In what way does this module foster greater *cultural awareness*?

   Correct option: (4)

   (1) Extending a learner's vocabulary and comprehension, does not necessarily mean that the student will gain insight into the culture of a people.

   (2) A person may not necessarily arrive at a greater awareness of African culture by improving his/her translation skills and writing techniques.

   (3) Improving one's listening and pronunciation skills, especially the latter, does not mean that one gains greater appreciation and understanding of another culture.

4. Why is the term 'African languages' preferred to 'Bantu languages' in South Africa?

    Correct option: (3)

    (1) All the languages spoken on the African continent are not African languages, e.g. European languages like Portuguese, French, English, Afrikaans, etc.

    (2) The internationally accepted term for linguistic and classificatory purposes is 'Bantu languages', not 'African languages'.

    (4) The time when the terms 'African' or 'Bantu' were first used, has nothing to do with the preference of one term above the other – the choice was determined by the political situation in South Africa.

5. When a group of languages such as the Bantu languages share the same characteristics, they are known as …
    Correct option: (2)

    (1) A social organisation has specific aims in communities, but their members are not bound together because they have certain linguistic characteristics in common.

    (3) One of the features of the Bantu languages is that they make use of a concordial system whereby agreement is established between elements in a sentence, but this criterion cannot be used to designate the relationships between groups of languages.

    (4) Just because there are certain linguistic features which are common to the Bantu languages, this does not make them a sharing community.

5. Complete the following: The single parent language from which the Bantu languages are said to have developed …

    Correct option: (1)

    (2) Ur-Bantu or Proto-Bantu is a hypothetical language, reconstructed for the purposes of comparison and explanation of the relationship between the Bantu languages. It therefore never existed as a proper language spoken by any particular group of people.

    (3) The assumed original language is merely a reconstruction of a possible common ancestor language. It is a theoretical tool in the hands of linguists doing historical and comparative research on languages and is unrelated to any negative connotations attached to terms during the apartheid era.

    (4) Migrations are a natural phenomenon in communities and mostly take place for economical reasons. The original language, being merely a theoretical concept of a common language, cannot be said to have started the migrations.

7. The lack of colour terms in Western culture to denote multiple colours of animals and livestock by means of a single word is …

    Correct option: (2)

    If something is of great cultural importance, societies are bound to develop more specific terms, as is the case here with colours and colour combinations for domestic animals (particularly cattle).

    In the light of the above determining factor, the other options cannot be considered as valid.

8. Folklore as verbal art includes the following genres:

    Correct option: (2)

    The other options are incorrect, because they contain genres which are not reckoned as part of traditional folklore, i.e. games, journalistic reports, folk dances, court dialogue, initiation ceremonies and rituals.

9. Which one of the following describes traditional African folklore accurately?

    Correct option: (4)

    (1) Traditional African folklore does not include traditional dances, broadcasting and journalism.

    (2) Traditionally folklore was performed/narrated at homesteads or kraals. There were no formal theatre buildings at the time.

    (3) Folklore was not documented in writing, because there were no writing systems at the time and folktales, poems, myths etc. were passed on orally from one generation to the next.

10. Which well-known proverb (paraphrased in English below) expresses the African philosophy regarding the importance of the social group?

    Correct option (2) (See paragraph 1.4 in your guide)

11. The use of expressions like 'I was deserted by my pen' instead of 'I lost my pen' in an African language are examples of …

    Correct option: (2)

    The only explanation for the use of the passive form instead of the active form, is a psychological or social one. Hence it has nothing to do with personal preferences for a specific form or synonymous expressions or incompetence of speech. The speaker does not want to expose him-/herself to society as the guilty party and hence directs blame away from him/her by using the passive form. Instead of saying that he/she lost

his/her pen, because he/she was negligent, it is rather the pen that "deserted" its owner.

12. Which option contains words whose meanings first have to be specified before they can be translated into an African language?

    Correct option: (3)

    Before words like 'nephew' and 'niece' can be translated into an African language, the translator needs to know how these people are related to the family. There are no single equivalents of relationship terms. Options (1), (2) and (4) have unique referents and hence do not need to be specified in order to find their translation equivalents.

13. A cleansing ceremony is held to celebrate the following occasion:

    The correct option is (1) (See paragraph 1.4 in your guide)

14. What do we mean when we say folktales are characterised by certain formulae?
    Correct option: (2)

    (1) This is a true statement about folktales, but it does not answer the question as to what is meant by the expression that 'folktales have formulae'.

    (2) This is also a true statement, but it does not give an answer as to what is meant by formulae in a folktale (i.e. beginning, audience's response line and conclusion).

    (4) The fact that folktales are marked by formulae has nothing to do with any prescriptions regarding when and under which conditions folktales are told.

15. Which of the following is NOT true during the narration of a folktale in a traditional setting?

    The correct option is (4)

    In this question you had to identify a statement which is NOT true during the narration of a folktale in a traditional setting. The only inaccuracy occurred in option (4), because the audience does not use interruptions to voice their *dissatisfaction*, but to demonstrate their *approval* and *encouragement* to the narrator.

16. One of the important functions of folktales is to …
    Correct option: (2)

    (1) The focus is not on animals with human character traits, but rather on what they stand for and the message they bring across. In a fictional world, human traits are often ascribed to animals.

    (2) The primary purpose of telling stories is not to keep children awake (or make them go to sleep for that matter), but to instil social values and life-long lessons.

(4)   The primary aim of folktales is not to inform children about cannibals, monsters and ogres per se. These practices and characters are just used as instruments in stories to convey certain messages, normally to warn against evil practices and unacceptable behaviour.

17.   Many of the African folktales have an open-ended story structure. What is the author's purpose with this?

Correct option: (1)

(2)   In an open-ended story structure, the author's intention is not to convince his/her readers to adopt his/her views, but to think about the issues of life and come to their own conclusions.

(3)   The author's purpose is not to lead the reader up to a point of frustration, but rather to create space in the reader's mind for his own reflections.

(4)   When a story structure is open-ended, there is no strong or definite conclusion and the aim is not to provide answers to the questions of life. The reader is purposely left wondering as to what the end of the story might have been and to make his/her own inferences.

18.   What is the significance of the audience's frequent interruption of a storyteller's narration?

Correct option: (3)

The purpose of the audience's response line conveys the exact opposite to what is stated in options (1), (2) and (4): They do show respect by uttering the response line and want the narrator to continue with his/her story. It is a signal of encouragement, not protest against the pace of the narration.

19.   A characteristic feature of praise poems is that …

Correct option: (4)

(1)   Praise poetry has a specific purpose, i.e. to honour a respected person or an object of beauty at a festive occasion; praise poems are not performed as a form of entertainment at the end of the day when the family is relaxing around the fire.

(2)   The composers of a single poem are usually not known, and over time, many different composers may have contributed to a particular poem.

(3)   Proverbs, not praise poems, are didactic, offering instructions on human behaviour.

20.   As a literary genre praise poems are part of a nation's …
Correct option: (4) (See first paragraph of 2.4 in your guide)
The other options refer to a kind of narration (1), type of lessons in narrations (2) and phrases encountered in narrations (3).

21. Rhythm in African poetry is achieved by …
    Correct option: (3)

    (1) Rhythm is not dependent on the stanzas being of equal length.
    (2) The African languages do not make use of stress to create rhythm.
    (4) Vowel and diphthong sounds are used to create rhyme, not rhythm – the African languages do not have diphthong sounds or a wealth of vowels to create rhyme, especially end-rhyme.

22. Which of the following linguistic devices would a composer of praise poetry AVOID?

    Correct option: (1)

    Options (2), (3) and (4) are devices which a composer can usefully employ for effect. The composer has a reasonable amount of freedom of expression and may manipulate the syntax of the language, but it should be done in such a way that the expression still has a pleasing effect on the reader/hearer and doesn't become forced or unnatural.

23. Riddles perform a specific function in a community, namely to …

    Correct option: (4)

    Options (1) and (3) refer to the role of proverbs in society.

    (4) Praise poems, not riddles, serve to honour an important person.

24. Children combat boredom by entertaining each other by means of …

    Correct option: (3)

    The other options are not associated with children's entertainment. It is usually the grandmother who tells folktales (1), mothers who sing their babies to sleep (2) and adults who recite praise poems (4).

25. A lullaby in African culture would most likely be characterised by …

    Correct option: (2)

A lullaby is a song which is supposed to put a baby to sleep. Therefore any rhythm or noise that would counteract this purpose, as described in options (1), (3) and (4), would not be conducive to calming the baby for it to go to sleep.

26. Children's literature is suitable for adult learners of a language because …

    Correct option: (3)

    (1) It is true that children's stories are easy to read, but it is not true that children's literature is entirely made up of dialogues; it may also include narratives, songs, etc.

(2)   It is not true that children's literature has challenging and complex themes or many central characters. On the contrary, the stories mostly focus on a limited number of main characters so as to keep the child's attention.

(4)   It is true that the stories make use of a lot of repetition, but it would serve no purpose to confront children with many different tense forms. The stories are pitched at the intellectual level of a child. Therefore, tenses (moods and sentence constructions, for that matter) are normally kept simple to match the level of understanding of the child.

27.   Which one of the following genres of folklore has a rigid structure, i.e. it does not allow the author to exercise his/her creative freedom?

Correct option: (2)

Proverbs should be used as they are. On the other hand, creative freedom is possible in folktales, songs and praise poems, which means an author can use his/her own initiative and add his/her own flair to enhance the rendition of his/her performance or narration.

28.   What is meant by the expression: 'proverbs reflect on the culture of a people'?

Correct option: (4)

Proverbs were created based on images from traditional settings and customs. Even though people may not find themselves in these traditional settings anymore, the proverbs still have an impact today. Options (1), (2) and (3) all express statements which are true of proverbs in general, but they do not refer to the traditional way of life or cultural factors which have given rise to many of the proverbs.

29.   Idioms are linguistic forms which …

The correct option is (2):

(1)   Idioms are not a form of entertainment to be recited when the extended family relaxes together at night. They are used by individuals as and when the need arises in a particular situation to bring a point across more effectively.
(3)   Praise poems, not idioms, are composed in honour off a chief.
(4)   Folktales, not idioms, are narrated to children to teach them listening skills.

30.   The common terms used to describe the phenomenon whereby people use words from another language or change over to another language in the course of their conversation are …

Correct option: (1)

The other options contain expressions which are specific to other phenomena.

31. How can pictures contribute to language acquisition?

   Correct option: (3)

   (1) Using pictures without any grammatical instruction on how to form sentences about a picture would be a fruitless exercise.

   (2) Drawing a picture if you fail to express yourself is not an acceptable alternative to acquiring a new language.

   (3) This statement contains an inaccuracy, because the vocabulary and topics which a picture can trigger or generate are infinite in principle.

32. What are you, as a beginner acquiring an African language, advised to do when writing an essay?

   Correct option: (3)

   (1) Avoid topics which require you to coin new words and to use specialised vocabulary. You will get more marks for everyday vocabulary and simple sentence constructions which are correct, than for innovative ideas which you cannot express adequately.

   (2) Stick to short, well-planned sentences and one mood and tense, if possible, to minimise the chances of making mistakes.

   (3) You will only complicate matters if you first draft a perfect essay in your first language (e.g. English) with the aim of converting it in the same style into an African language. Remember that some things cannot be said exactly in an African language as they are said in English. The inability to translate the English version will frustrate you, as you will not yet have the necessary linguistic capacity to do so.

33. In translations the aim is to produce texts that are meaningful and stylistically well-formed. This is achieved by …

   Correct option: (4)

   The other options all contain inaccuracies in their statements, i.e.

   (1) A word-for-word translation does not necessarily give the intended meaning in the target language.

   (2) A literal translation renders direct translations of individual words without consideration of the context and does not produce a meaningful translation.

   (3) Meaningful and stylistically well-formed sentences cannot be produced without consideration of the context.

34. What is an ESSENTIAL requirement for any dialogue?

   Correct option: (1)

   (2) Visual contact is not a requirement for a dialogue to take place – think of a telephone conversation, for example, where there is no eye-contact.
   (3) Not all dialogues necessarily start with a greeting.
   (4) Not all dialogues necessarily end with people bidding farewell to each other.

35. The following types of creative writing are normally characterised by a form of address (greeting), a theme or topic (body) and a conclusion (farewell):

   Correct option: (1) A dialogue and a letter

   The other options contain types of writing in which persons are nor directly addressed, hence the absence of the greeting and the farewell in a paragraph, description of picture, an essay or a news report.

36. The radio can be used very effectively to …

   Correct option: (4)

   (1) The radio is especially suited for visually handicapped people as they do not have to use their sight to follow conversations or listen to music on the radio. Hearing impaired people, however, cannot benefit from the radio as the radio is an auditive medium, making use of sound waves to reach its listeners.

   (4) The radio is a non-visual medium and cannot teach non-literate people how to read and write. Face-to-face contact would be needed for this.

   (5) The radio, being a non-visual medium, does not require décor, costumes, make-up or physical surroundings to be effective. It evokes these images and settings by sound and voice.

37. In which of the following television programme types are you most likely to encounter the use of the standard form of a language?

   Correct option: (1)

   The formal, standard language is most likely to be used in the reading of news bulletins, unlike in dramas, talk shows and game shows, where people are not so much concerned about speaking a pure version of their language, but rather concentrate on communicating in a natural way in their day-to-day interaction with others.

38. If you watch a news bulletin which is presented in one of the Sotho languages, what would you focus on in order to find out which of the three Sotho languages the news reader is using?

    Correct option: (2)

    A reliable way of identifying the language in which the news is presented, is by looking out for vocabulary items unique to one of the Sotho languages.

    (1) Facial expression or the way the news reader is dressed cannot reveal the language which is being used.

    (3) Interviewees can be of any language background and the language they use cannot be an indication of the main language in which the news bulletin is presented.

    (4) The name and surname of the news reader cannot be taken as an indication of the language he/she uses in the news bulletin..

39. What has been the main reason in recent years for the increase in the production of African language texts on products and matters of public concern, such as health, arts, etc.?

    Correct option: (2)

    The other options are inappropriate reasons as to why government has been placing emphasis on the production of texts in African languages.

40. Why is it such a daunting task for computer programmers to design software in an African language?

    Correct option: (4)

    (1) There is no such thing as the ideal or most user-friendly African language for the internet. If the technology is there, nothing will hinder programmers to design software in any of the African languages.

    (2) In today's time developing special symbols for specialised fields is not a problem for programmers.

    (3) This statement is simply not true. If the technology is there, the software can be developed. **TOTAL: [40]**

Your AFL1504 lecturers