

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Larbi Ben M'hidi University – Oum El Bouaghi

Department of English

Applied Linguistics Exam / Semester III / DLE

Family name, First name:, group:

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Answer the following questions in no more than the space provided.

1. According to Groom and Littlemore (2011), foreign language pedagogy is “by far the largest area of research activity in contemporary applied linguistics, and this is likely to remain the case for the foreseeable future”. Based on the emergence and scope of applied linguistics, discuss its contributions to foreign language education (10 pts.)

Language teaching and learning, especially the learning and teaching of foreign languages “have always been universally recognised as central to the concerns of applied linguistics. Indeed, for many people, applied linguistics is the academic study of second language learning and teaching” (Groom & Littlemore, 2011, pp. 7-8). Today with the expansion of the discipline’s scope to include other areas, typical aspects of language education that are still centrally important applied linguistics activities include curriculum, syllabus and materials design/evaluation; classroom management; teaching the four skills; language testing and learners’ assessment; teacher education; etc. (examples of how these areas contribute to foreign language education)

2. Error Analysis (EA) emerged in the 1960s as a response to some of the limitations and criticisms of Contrastive Analysis (CA), which had been prominent in the study of second language acquisition (SLA) prior to that time. Discuss. (10 pts.)

Though contrastive analysis has achieved a great success in explaining language learners' difficulties, it has been subject to criticism regarding its foundations, assumptions and procedures. What comes is a summary of the main criticism addressed to contrastive analysis.

- The foundation of the CAH itself, behaviourism, was criticized. Language is not a collection of reinforced habits. Children learning an L1 may very often use the language creatively, not merely reproduce what they have heard. Eventually, they come up with producing and understanding things they have never heard before. Evidence of internalized rules is shown in the production of forms like *He goed. Similarly, second language learners do a lot of the same things (e.g., over-regularization of forms, like He comed).

- Many errors that second language learners make cannot be traced to influence of their L1.

- Transfer of habits or transfer from the first language does not seem to be consistent across languages. For instance, Zobl (1980) has found out that French learners of English failed to show evidence of a predicted error, but English learners of French did. In French, object pronouns generally come before the verb: Je les vois 'I see them (lit. I them see)'. In English object pronouns come after the verb: I see them. French learners of English never produced *I them see; however, English learners of French did produce things like *Je vois elle ('I see her' cf. Je la vois).