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1. Introduction
1.1 Statement of Objective

Linguistics is the study of the organizing principles underlying human language. Graduate programs in linguistics emphasize theory and research but also provide the opportunity to combine a strong foundation in theoretical linguistics with applied linguistics or related disciplines. The Department offers a concentrations in syntax, phonology and theoretical language acquisition. At the B.A. or M.A. level students may focus on the Teaching of English as a Second Language. In addition, the Department encourages exploration of the close relationships between linguistics and related disciplines such as anthropology, computer science, psychology, speech pathology, specific languages, and others.

1.2 Graduate Training in Linguistics

The department offers programs leading to the Master of Arts (M.A.) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Linguistics. The theoretical core of the programs is in phonology, syntax, and theoretical second language acquisition.

The M.A. degree provides a broad education in linguistics which serves as a base for further study in linguistics or related disciplines. If a student chooses the TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language) focus, in conjunction with the M.A., then the degree prepares students for a career in teaching English to nonnative speakers. The Ph.D. degree is primarily a research degree with a basis in phonology and syntax and with the opportunity for students to develop an area of research specialization.

1.3 Graduate Student Regulations

Students should be familiar with The Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College of the University of Iowa (http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/graduate-college-manual) as well as this Guide for Graduate Students. Students writing a thesis or dissertation should also consult the Thesis Manual (http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/theses-and-dissertations/graduate-college-thesis-manual). Students should also be familiar with the College of Liberal Arts’ student complaint procedures, the College’s policy regarding student academic misconduct, and the University policy on sexual harassment.

1.4 Facilities

The department office is in 169 EPB. The Department has a lab in EPB 402 with 16 work stations equipped with software for speech analysis and psycholinguistic experiments, and with high-speed internet connections. There is also a sound-proof booth in EPB 575 which is connected to a computer equipped with software for speech analysis. One Windows machine, connected to the campus computer network, is available for student use in EPB 571. This computer is connected to a pay-for-print printer. In all TA offices, there are computers for student use. These computers are connected to the internet and to a printer in EPB 569 which is to be used only for materials connected with TA duties. Personal printing (i.e. for a student’s graduate courses) must be done elsewhere, at the library, in the ITC computer lab in 210 EPB, or on the department pay-for-print. In order to use one of the computer terminals, students need to establish a computer account (which is free), by going to http://isis.uiowa.edu to set up an account through ISIS or directly from the Information Technology Center. The Department also has a copy machine in 569. In order to use the copy machine for teaching materials, teaching assistants must get a code from the secretary or their supervising professor. Students may not use the copy machine for personal copying. A small departmental library is maintained in the lounge (EPB 571). Those wishing to check out books, journals, or articles should fill out the appropriate card in the card file located on top of the file cabinets.
Each student has a mailbox in EPB 569, and should check it, the bulletin boards, and the blackboards in 571 frequently for announcements and messages. Keys to 569, 571 and the building entrance are distributed by the secretary and must be returned before leaving the program.

The Department provides office space to those students who are teaching assistants. TAs must share their offices with other TAs. The lounge, EPB 571, has a refrigerator, a microwave and a coffee maker. It is available to all. There is also a seminar room, EPB 269, which can be used for studying when it is not in use for scheduled classes or meetings.

1.5 Student Representative and Linguistics Club
Graduate students in the Department should choose a representative each year to attend faculty meetings and report back to the students. The name of the student representative should be given to the chair and to the Department secretary so that notices of meetings can be forwarded to the correct person. The student representative will be excused from that portion of faculty meetings which deals with evaluation or discussion of other students, or of individual staff or faculty members.

Students have, at one time or another, organized a Linguistics Club to promote student interests in the colloquium series, to arrange social activities, to organize reading groups, and the like. The faculty supports such activities whenever students organize them and can help with contacting outside speakers, giving colloquia, etc.

1.6 Financial Aid
The department can give financial assistance to a limited number of students. Such financial support is in the form of teaching and research assistantships. Teaching and research assistantships are awarded on the basis of merit and suitability for assignment to the courses or projects the department has TA or RA funding for. In particular, first year students are eligible to assist in linguistics courses only if they have the appropriate background, and students are eligible to teach English as a Second Language (ESL) courses only after they have completed the practicum in teaching English or its equivalent. In addition, native speaker fluency in English will be given priority in ESL course assignments. Students who have the appropriate background or who have taken Semantics (103:175) will be eligible for TAships for the General Education Requirement course Language and Formal Reasoning (103:013). For information on other sources of financial aid, please visit the Graduate College funding page:
   [http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/financing-your-education](http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/financing-your-education)

and the International Program student funding website:
   [http://international.uiowa.edu/grants/students/funding/graduate/default.asp](http://international.uiowa.edu/grants/students/funding/graduate/default.asp)

The Department gives financial assistance priority to Ph.D. students who are making adequate progress toward their degrees, and then to M.A. students who are making adequate progress toward their degrees. The Department will, however, reserve some aid for new students each year.

Financial aid is usually limited to four semesters for M.A. students and twelve semesters for Ph.D. students (inclusive of all aid in the Department). Notification of awards will be made to students in the semester prior to the semester for which the award has been granted. Since financial aid awards are made before the end of the semester, each award is contingent upon satisfactory completion of that semester's work by the student. When awards are made for the academic year, continuation for the second semester is contingent upon satisfactory completion of the first semester's work by the student.
If any financial aid is available for the summer, it is usually for teaching English. Interested students should give their names to the Director of ESL programs before March 15. The Director will consult with the faculty before assigning aid. Summer aid does not count toward the semester limits for each degree.

2. General Procedures

2.1 Admission to M.A. and Ph.D. Programs

Students applying for admission to the M.A. program in linguistics will be considered regardless of field of previous training.

Students who apply to the graduate program must submit the following:
1) a complete University application form
2) transcripts of all previous undergraduate and graduate work
3) three letters of recommendation from individuals competent to judge the student's potential for graduate work
4) scores from the general (aptitude) test of the Graduate Record Examination
5) A statement of purpose

International students must additionally take the TOEFL exam. Entering international students in linguistics are evaluated for English proficiency by the ESL staff and are required to take any ESL courses recommended as a result of the evaluation.

Admission to the Ph.D. program requires a Master's degree in linguistics from the University of Iowa or equivalent background in course work. Admission to the M.A. program at Iowa does not imply admission to the Ph.D. program. Admission to the Ph.D. program does not constitute qualification (see 2.3.3 for complete procedures for applying for Ph.D. qualification). Admission to the Ph.D. program depends in part on the availability of a faculty member to serve as the student's advisor. Qualification depends on an evaluation of the student's potential for completing the Ph.D.

2.2 Advisory and Committee System

2.2.1 Advisor

Once a student has been admitted to the graduate program the Department will assign an advisor, matching student interest with faculty interest where known and feasible. After the first semester, students may sign up for an advisor of their choice, after consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies.

Students who pursue an M.A. will be guided in their programs of study by their advisor. Students who elect the TESL focus follow the prescribed course of study. Students who elect a different focus area, including general linguistics, draw up a plan of study with their advisor.

2.2.2 M.A. Thesis Committee

Students who pursue an M.A. with thesis and wish to complete their degree in four semesters must establish a thesis committee of no fewer than three members at the beginning of the third semester. The student's advisor (perhaps newly chosen to reflect the student's topic of interest) is the chair of the thesis committee; the rest of the committee is chosen by the student in consultation with the advisor. At least two of the three committee members
must be regular or adjunct members of the Linguistics Department faculty. The committee is responsible for supervising and approving the student's thesis.

2.2.3 Ph.D. Comprehensive Examination Committee
See 4.3 below.

2.2.4 Ph.D. Dissertation Committee
The dissertation committee consists of a minimum of five faculty members, at least one of whom is from outside the Department. The committee is responsible for advising the student on the dissertation topic (see 4.4), supervising the research for and writing of the dissertation, and for administering and evaluating the final examination (dissertation defense).

2.3 Evaluation

2.3.1 First Year M.A. Evaluation
A preliminary evaluation of M.A. students' progress is made midway during their first semester. Students who appear to be having difficulty will be so advised in writing by the Chair.

All M.A. students in the Department of Linguistics will be evaluated by the departmental faculty at the end of their first year of graduate study in the department. Although subsequent evaluations will be performed at the end of each year by the faculty, the function of this first evaluation in all cases is to determine as early as possible the student's likelihood of success in completing an advanced degree in linguistics at the University of Iowa.

There are two outcomes of this evaluation:
1) Qualified
2) Not Qualified

Students who are evaluated as Not Qualified may be reconsidered during the following regular semester, if they so request and remain enrolled in the program, but if the reconsideration does not result in an evaluation of Qualified, the student will be dismissed from the program at the end of the semester in which they are reconsidered.

2.3.2 The M.A. Comprehensive Examination

The M.A. Comprehensive Examination, which is required of all M.A. students, functions both as a final examination for the M.A. degree and as one of several measures of competence by which potential Ph.D. candidates are judged. Students are normally expected to take the examination no later than the year following their first complete academic year of residence. Failure to take the examination on schedule may be considered lack of normal progress toward the degree. Part-time students must develop a time table for taking the examination and completing their degree in consultation with their advisor. Graduate College guidelines mandate that students complete their degree within one year of passing their M.A. comprehensive examination.

All (full-time) M.A. students take the M.A. Comprehensive Examination in January of the second year in the M.A. program. The examination covers class work and works included on the M.A. Comprehensive Reading List, which includes material not explicitly covered in classes. The Reading List is made available to students during the first week in May of their first year. The exam consists of five parts: Phonology 1, Phonology 2, Syntax 1, Syntax 2, and Second Language Acquisition & Applied Linguistics. Each candidate must
attempt four of the five parts: Phonology 1, Syntax 1, and two additional parts to be determined by the student in conjunction with his/her advisor. Phonology 1 and Syntax 1 will require test takers to analyze a set of phonological or syntactic data and justify the analysis. Phonology 2 and Syntax 2 will require a discussion of the theoretical implications of the data or a comparison of two approaches to the data, building on the Phonology 1 and Syntax 1 answers, respectively. The Second Language Acquisition & Applied Linguistics part will involve analysis of a data set and discussion of theoretical implications. Test takers are allowed 24 hours for each part of the exam. Each part of the exam is graded by two faculty members with expertise in that area; all exams are anonymous. Results of the exam are reported to students in writing within one week following completion of the exam. Students who fail are allowed to retake the part(s) of the exam that were failed. If only Phonology 1 or Syntax 1 was taken and failed, only that section must be retaken. Failure on Phonology 2 or Syntax 2 requires that the student retake both parts of the relevant exam. The retake time is either during the first two weeks after the end of finals week for spring semester or during the regular comprehensive exam period the following January. In accordance with Graduate College guidelines, students who fail the exam may retake the exam only once.

2.3.3 Ph.D. Qualification

All M.A. students intending to pursue the doctoral degree will normally be evaluated for Ph.D. qualification by the faculty during their fourth semester of graduate study in the Department (excluding summer sessions). This could be as late as the fifth semester for students who write theses or who enter at midyear.

Students may be considered for Ph.D. qualification only after passing the M.A. Comprehensive Examination. This condition applies to all students, including those holding Master's degrees in Linguistics from other institutions.

All students must petition for Qualification and submit to the faculty the following material in support of the petition:

1) A letter outlining their goals and a general plan of study for the Ph.D. This letter should be written after consultation with the student's advisor and appropriate faculty and should describe their graduate study in linguistics thus far and the areas of linguistics and related fields they plan to study.

2) Written evidence of ability to do advanced work in linguistics. The evidence will consist of the student's M.A. Comprehensive Examination, and the student's thesis or at least one paper in linguistics, which preferably is based on original research done by the student.

All determinations will be made by a majority vote of the faculty. Four outcomes are possible:

1) Qualified.

2) Conditionally Qualified. This outcome will be reached only for students who show clear promise of being able to complete the degree but whose competence in some areas needs to be improved. The weaknesses, the means of demonstrating that the desired standard of competence has been reached, and the time limit for so doing will be specified by the faculty in writing.

3) Deferred Without Prejudice. This outcome will typically be reached for students whose application for qualification is premature or for
whom special circumstances have hindered their reaching the desired standard of competence within the expected time limits. (Students are expected to bring such circumstances to the attention of the faculty.) In the case of premature application, the faculty will specify in writing what steps the student should take before petitioning again.

4) Not Qualified.

If there is a tie vote on all outcomes considered, then outcome #4 Not Qualified is the default outcome.

2.4 Normal Progress Toward Degrees

After two regular semesters of study, a student must have a cumulative grade-point average in courses offered by the Department of at least 3.0 (3.5 for Ph.D. students), and must maintain academic performance which, in the majority opinion of the faculty, is satisfactory and demonstrates promise of ability to complete degree requirements. If not, the student shall be so advised in writing by the Chair and shall be placed on departmental probation for the immediately following semester of study. The notification will specify in what way (or ways) the student is failing to meet the standards and will also include an indication of how these deficiencies may be remedied. If, at the end of this probationary semester, the student's grade-point average in the Department remains below 3.0 (3.5 for Ph.D. students) or if a majority of the faculty considers that the student has not remedied the deficiencies, the student will not be permitted to re-register in the Department. (See Academic Dismissal Procedures for further details.)

A student's chances for continuation of financial aid and avoiding probation or dismissal depend on following this schedule. In particular, students must qualify for the Ph.D. degree within twelve months after completion of two academic years of graduate study in the Department, or they will be dropped from the graduate program.

A student who enters with a Master's degree from another institution must qualify for the Ph.D. degree within twelve months after completion of one year of graduate study in the Department; otherwise the student will be dropped from the graduate program.

2.5 Academic Dismissal

Grounds for dismissal are:

1) Failure to maintain minimum GPA for the program in which the student is enrolled (see section 2.4).
2) Failure to make normal progress toward the degree.
3) Failure to perform tasks and meet deadlines set by the Department and the Graduate College.
4) Commission of an unprofessional act, such as plagiarism or falsification of data, in the course of academic work.

A detailed description of dismissal procedures is available in the departmental office.

2.6 Right of Petition
As with all regulations, students have the right to petition that an exception be made on the grounds of unusual circumstances or special cases not covered by the procedure outlined.

3. The M.A. Degree

3.1 Requirements

The number of credit hours for the M.A. varies between 30 and 37 depending on whether the degree is with thesis (30-37) or without thesis (37). All students must have a minimum of 30 semester hours of graduate credit to receive the degree regardless of prior preparation. All students are required to take the 22 hours that comprise the core curriculum including:

- Articulatory and Acoustic Phonetics (110),
- Proseminar: Morphosyntax (200),
- Introduction to Syntax (201),
- Syntactic Theory (202),
- Introduction to Phonology (203),
- Phonological Theory (204),
- Generative Second Language Acquisition (173) and Linguistic Field Methods (113), Linguistic Structures (210), or Language Universals and Linguistics Typology (217).

Students writing a thesis must take a minimum of 9 semester hours of elective coursework, approved in consultation with the advisor. Nonthesis M.A. students may choose a 9-hour focus area consisting of a series of related courses or may take the M.A. in general linguistics, which requires 9 semester hours of elective credit.

If a focus area is chosen, it is decided upon by students in conjunction with their advisor. The focus area can be in TESL, syntax, phonology, psycholinguistics, theory of second language acquisition, and others.

The TESL focus area consists of:

- The Structure of English (141),
- Methods of TESL (145), and
- Practicum in TESL (107)

Students who have had one or more of these courses prior to beginning the programs may substitute an approved elective in consultation with their advisors and the relevant course instructors.

3.2 Sequence of Courses

The normal schedule of coursework leading to the M.A. degree consists of:

Sequence of courses for thesis M.A.:

Semester I (Fall)

- 103:110 Phonetics 3 s.h.
- 103:200 Proseminar: Morphosyntax 1 s.h.
- 103:201 Introduction to Syntax 3 s.h.
- * Elective 3 s.h.

Semester II (Spring)

- 103:202 Syntactic Theory 3 s.h.
- 103:203 Introduction to Phonology 3 s.h.
- * Elective 3 s.h.
Semester III (Fall)
103:204 Phonological Theory 3 s.h.
103:173 Generative Second Language Acquisition 3 s.h.
* Elective 3 s.h.

Semester IV (Spring)
103:113 Field Methods, 103:210 Linguistics Structures, 3 s.h.
or 103:217 Language Universals & Linguistic Typology
Thesis 0-6 s.h.
31-37 s.h.

*To be determined in consultation with the student's advisor.

2. Sequence of Courses for Linguistics M.A.: (Non-thesis with approved 9-hour focus area)

Semester I (Fall)
103:110 Phonetics 3 s.h.
103:200 Proseminar: Morphosyntax 1 s.h.
103:201 Introduction to Syntax 3 s.h.
* Elective or Focus 3 s.h.

Semester II (Spring)
103:202 Syntactic Theory 3 s.h.
103:203 Introduction to Phonology 3 s.h.
* Elective or Focus 3 s.h.

Semester III (Fall)
103:204 Phonological Theory 3 s.h.
103:173 Generative Second Language Acquisition 3 s.h.
* Elective or Focus 3 s.h.

Semester IV (Spring)
103:113 Field Methods, 103:210 Linguistic Structures, 3 s.h.
or 103:217 Language Universals & Linguistic Typology
*Elective or Focus 3 s.h.
*Elective or Focus 3 s.h.
37 s.h.

* To be determined in consultation with the student's advisor. A focus area will consist of nine hours of related course work, e.g. general linguistics, a language area, second language acquisition, teaching English as a second language (TESL). Students take two additional electives.

3. Sequence of Courses for Linguistics M.A.: (Non-thesis with TESL focus)

Semester I (Fall)
103:110 Phonetics 3 s.h.
103:200 Proseminar: Morphosyntax 1 s.h.
103:201 Introduction to Syntax 3 s.h.
103:141 Structure of English 3 s.h.

Semester II (Spring)
103:145 Methods of Teaching English as a Second Language 3 s.h.
103:202 Syntactic Theory 3 s.h.
103:203 Introduction to Phonology 3 s.h.

Summer
***103:107 Practicum 3 s.h.
Semester III (Fall)
103:173 Generative Language Acquisition       3 s.h.
103:204 Phonological Theory                   3 s.h.
***(*Elective)                                (3 s.h.)

Semester IV (Spring)
103:113 Field Methods, 103:210 Linguistic Structures, 3 s.h.
or 103:217 Language Universals & Linguistic Typology
* Elective                                     3 s.h.
***(*Elective)                                3 s.h.

*To be determined in consultation with the student's advisor.
**103:107 is only offered in the Summer. If a student has taken it previously, an elective may be substituted.
***A student will take a minimum of 2 electives usually either two in the fourth semester or one in the third and one in the fourth.
Electives which are offered on a regular basis include:
Advanced Syntactic Theory (212), which many students take the fall semester prior to comprehensive examination,
Advanced Phonological Theory (214)
Introduction to Semantics (175), which can help qualify students for teaching assistantships in Language and Formal Reasoning (013),
History of the English Language (131), Historical Linguistics (215)
First Language Acquisition (206) and seminars in phonology and syntax.

Part-time Study

It is possible to take the M.A. curriculum on a part-time basis, that is, taking fewer than 9 hours of classes per semester. However, students wishing to do so should devise a timetable with their advisor. Additionally, it is strongly recommended that students taking the comprehensive examination after studying part-time review the less recent core course material (Phonological Theory or Syntactic Theory) by auditing the current course.

3.3 Comprehensive Examinations

The M.A. Comprehensive Examination, as described in Section 2.3.2, is generally taken in January prior to the fourth semester of study. Part-time students develop a timetable for taking the examination with their advisor.

3.4 Thesis

The thesis is a paper of potentially publishable quality on an area of research undertaken by the student. Students work closely with their advisor and thesis committee members on the selection of a topic for the thesis and the writing of a thesis prospectus. After the thesis is completed and approved by the advisor and committee, the student defends it in an oral examination before the committee. All faculty are invited to attend the thesis defense. A copy of the thesis should be made available to the faculty a minimum of one week prior to the defense.

4. The Ph.D. Degree

4.1 Requirements

The Ph.D. requires a minimum of 72 hours (including courses taken for the M.A.). A minimum of 18 hours must be advanced coursework. These 18 hours must include two upper-level phonology courses and two upper-level syntax courses.
Students must also take two seminars, either or both of which may be in phonology and syntax and may count toward the upper-level phonology and syntax course requirement (but the hours may not be double-counted). An 18-hour specialty area is also required, which should be decided upon in consultation with the student’s advisor. In addition students must achieve proficiency in a foreign language; pass the Ph.D. comprehensive examination; and write and defend a dissertation. Three years of residence are required, as is supervised experience in teaching and research.

4.2 Language Requirement

Students must demonstrate the capacity to read literature of professional significance in a second language, or to speak a second language of relevance to their program of study. The language requirement should be satisfied at the time that the student takes the Ph.D. comprehensive examination. The student and advisor should choose a language and propose a plan to the faculty for demonstrating proficiency during the student’s first semester in the Ph.D. program. Students whose first language is not English may count English as the second language. Students whose undergraduate major is in a foreign language will be considered to have satisfied the second language requirement. Normally students demonstrate proficiency in a language they studied as undergraduates. Foreign language courses taken in graduate school may not be counted toward required hours for the degree.

4.3 Comprehensive Examination

To pass the comprehensive examination for the Ph.D., a student must have two papers of publishable quality approved, as defined below. One of the papers must be in phonology or syntax and the other in an area of the student's choosing, but distinct from the area of the first paper. Either paper may be in the proposed dissertation area. Each paper will be read by a committee made up of three faculty members, one of whom will serve as the main advisor for that paper. At most one committee member may come from outside the Department. For each paper, the student will choose an advisor appropriate to the paper's topic. The student and the advisor will consult on the makeup of the committee. It is the student’s responsibility to approach the other prospective members of the committee and, after each member has agreed to serve, to report the list of members to the advisor. The advisor will then consult with the other committee members about the direction of the work on the paper and a tentative timetable for its completion.

In the normal case, comprehensive exam papers will be substantially revised and rewritten seminar papers, papers from advanced classes, a project done as an independent study, or papers from other courses. Maximum length for papers is 50 pages, unless special arrangements are made with the advisor and the committee. A paper will be considered approved after it has been judged of publishable quality by the committee. Part of this judgment includes successful presentation as a departmental colloquium. This oral presentation must be scheduled with the consent of the advisor and committee members; a draft of the paper must be submitted to committee members at least two weeks prior to the presentation. To ensure steady progress and timely completion of papers, students should work closely with advisors on a plan for research and writing. It is expected that the student will enroll in an individual study course with the primary advisor during the semester in which he or she plans to present the paper orally.

A. Completion Dates for Comprehensive Exam Papers
The timetable for the completion of the comprehensive exam papers is as follows: (1) The first paper will be normally started, at the latest, during the first semester post-MA. During that semester, students will typically enroll in an advanced class or seminar which requires a research paper or will sign up for independent study to revise an existing paper written for a class or seminar. The first paper will typically be approved during the second semester post-MA and presented at the colloquium at the end of the semester or at the beginning of the following semester. (Deadline: End of the 3rd semester post-MA.)

(2) The second paper will typically be approved by the end of the fourth semester post-MA and be presented during the fifth semester. (Deadline: End of the 5th semester post-MA.)

B. Failure to Meet Deadlines for Qualifying Papers

If the student misses a deadline for a comprehensive paper, this constitutes a failure of the PhD comprehensive exam. The student is allowed one opportunity to ‘retake’ the examination. The ‘retake’ will be passed if the paper is presented and approved within the following time frame:

Paper #1: by the end of the fourth semester of enrollment post-MA

Paper #2: by the end of the sixth semester of enrollment post-MA

A student who successfully retakes the first paper will have two semesters in which to complete the second paper. By Graduate School policy, the student is allowed a single retake of the exam. Any student failing more than one time will be subject to expulsion from the program.

Specifications for a "publishable paper"

1. The Ph.D. qualifying exam requires two publishable papers. While the paper doesn’t actually have to be published, it should be written in the same way as papers submitted to linguistics journals. Many such articles start out as course papers or conference papers, just like the comprehensive examination papers. They undergo revision and expansion, often in several stages. In fact, the published version of a journal article may have been written, rewritten and rewritten again. In each version, the analysis is strengthened and refined, and the presentation is improved, in response to comments and criticism.

2. Writing a paper like this of restricted length, on a single topic, is good practice for writing a longer and more complex analysis in a dissertation. It is also a chance to do reading in some area in more depth than was possible in the regular courses. Students and their advisors should consult on what preliminary reading the student should do.

There are three basic options for topics:

(i) The topic of the paper can be a single, well-focused and substantive issue, which gets discussed in relation to a theory or a set of assumptions within a theory about some aspect of language or language learning. Previous work on the topic should be given clear and concise discussion, summarizing what the existing proposals are and why they are
unsatisfactory. The paper should resolve the issue by providing substantial arguments and evidence. You should make clear the consequences of your proposal for the theory, and note any remaining issues which have not been accounted for; there could also be a discussion of why they are not accounted for, and what future research might be done which is not in the scope of your paper.

(ii) The topic of the paper can be the description of a particular grammatical phenomenon in a single language that has not been well described, e.g., a thorough description of a phonological process, a morphological characteristic, a syntactic construction. It should not only catalogue all the environments in which the phenomenon occurs but also propose an analysis and summarize any previous work on the phenomenon in the language, and if appropriate, give an overview of that type of phenomenon in general. Comparative data from related languages could be included where it illuminates the main focus of the paper. Finally, there should be a discussion of any potential theoretical implications of the data and proposed analysis. In the normal case the data for such a paper would come from consultation with a native speaker.

(iii) The topic of the paper can be an experiment of the student’s design and execution. Both first and second language acquisition psycholinguistic investigations, as well as computational linguistic studies are appropriate. The experiment may involve human subjects. It may also involve a corpus such as CHILDES or the UPenn Trebank. For acquisition studies, a control group of native speakers (in the case of L2A) or adults (in the case of L1A) is a necessary condition. The experiment should be motivated by clear hypotheses driven by theoretical analyses and current research questions in the fields of language acquisition, psycholinguistics, or computational linguistics. Acquisition of phonetics, phonology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics are all acceptable topics. Previous work on the topic should be concisely described and interpreted, with a view toward explaining what has prompted the present study. Appropriate statistical analysis of the data obtained in the experimental study should be presented, and implications of the study for current theories should be discussed.

3. Articles written for submission to journals often have to conform to various specifications. There may be an overall limit on length, like the 50 page limit for the comprehensive exam papers. There should be a list of references in which the information is presented in a specific format (see the Language style sheet in the LSA bulletin, or the Linguistic Inquiry style sheet in volume 24.1 or the web site listed in the current issues, inside back cover). Examples also have to follow a standard format, with a uniform transcription system from a non-English writing system, word by word glosses and idiomatic translation. The source of every piece of data and idea must be cited, if it is not your own. What is cited can be published material, unpublished papers or personal communications. References should be within the text (e.g., Jespersen 1940:231); save the end or footnotes for substantive comments. Naturally the final version should be as free from mistakes and typographical errors as possible.

4. The comprehensive exam paper you write is supposed to be the kind which could be submitted to a refereed publication. A refereed journal or annual collection is one which has an editor and an editorial board, who select 2-4 anonymous referees to read the manuscript carefully and
critically. The referees are supposed to know the field and the subject matter of the manuscript, so that they can assess the soundness of the arguments, and the appropriateness and quality of data. They each send a written report to the editor. The papers selected for publication are chosen by the editor and board on the basis of the referees’ reports. Many publications, such as conference proceedings and departmental working papers, do not use outside, anonymous referees.

4.4 Dissertation Topic

In the semester following the comprehensive examination, but no later than the sixth semester of enrollment in the Ph.D. program, the student presents a dissertation prospectus to the dissertation committee. The dissertation prospectus consists of a formal statement of the dissertation topic and proposed research program which is defended by the student before the dissertation committee: The prospectus will highlight both the significance of and the original contribution to be made by the proposed research. In the typical case, the dissertation prospectus will consist of two main sections: (1) a narrative of approximately twenty to forty pages which describes in detail the dissertation topic, provides a review of the existing literature relevant to the topic, and outlines the research methodology and/or theoretical approach to the topic, and (2) a preliminary bibliography, a preliminary description of the chapter divisions, and a timetable for completion of the research and writing of the dissertation.

The dissertation advisor, in consultation with the student, will determine when the prospectus is complete. The dissertation advisor will then set up a meeting of the dissertation committee at which the candidate will give a brief oral presentation of the prospectus and answers questions which the committee members may have. The committee members should receive the written prospectus at least two weeks prior to this meeting. The dissertation committee must approve the prospectus in order for the student to proceed with the dissertation.

4.5 Dissertation

The dissertation is a major research work on a topic chosen by the student and approved by the dissertation committee. Typically the members of the committee provide feedback on drafts of chapters of the dissertation as it is being written. After the dissertation committee reads and approves the dissertation, it is defended orally by the student in a public defense. A complete, revised copy of the dissertation must be available to the faculty at least two weeks prior to the defense.

5. Graduate Program Timetable

M.A.

1st semester: select focus area for nonthesis degree, especially important for TESL focus
2nd semester: choose advisor

3rd semester: choose advisor

Ph.D.

4th semester: take MA comprehensive exam (January)

write and defend thesis

apply for Ph.D. qualification after MA comprehensive exam or thesis defense if continuing
1st semester: choose advisor, begin with first comprehensive paper
2nd semester: present first comprehensive paper
3rd semester: establish specialty area
4th semester: present second comprehensive paper
5th semester: establish Ph.D. dissertation committee (with advisor)
               select dissertation topic and present it to the committee
6th semester: defend dissertation