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## **POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES**

**IN**

## **GENERAL LINGUISTICS**

## **PROSPECTUS 2020**

HONOURS IN GENERAL LINGUISTICS

MASTER'S IN GENERAL LINGUISTICS



**Department of General Linguistics**

*your guide through the world of language*

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## SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

### 1. GENERAL

The Department of General Linguistics at Stellenbosch University (henceforth referred to as "the Department") offers two postgraduate programmes in General Linguistics: (i) an Honours in General Linguistics, and (ii) a Master's (MA) in General Linguistics. The details of the Honours programme are given in section B below, and those of the MA programme in section C.

Since its inception in 1986, many people from across South Africa and abroad have benefited intellectually and professionally from the content of these programmes. The content is continually revised to keep up with new research findings and insights, the changing needs of students, and the requirements of various language professions. A number of factors ensures that a high standard is maintained –

- \* **Individual supervision:** Every student receives intensive personal supervision.
- \* **Experienced lecturers:** The staff has gained a wealth of experience in their supervision of hundreds of postgraduate students since 1986.
- \* **High-calibre students:** Because of their excellent reputations, the programmes attract students who set high standards.
- \* **An internationally well-established department:** The Department is highly regarded internationally and is involved in several research and exchange projects with foreign tertiary institutions, including universities in England, Sweden, and The Netherlands. Staff members also regularly attend and deliver papers at local and international conferences. The Department's two journals, *SPiL* and *SPiL Plus*, are both accredited with the National Department of Higher Education and publish contributions by leading local and overseas scholars. Since 2011, these journals have also been available online. Books and monographs by staff members have also been published by respected international publishing houses.
- \* **External evaluation:** The content, organisation, requirements and other aspects of the programmes are subjected to peer evaluation on a regular basis.

## 2. STAFF PROFILE

Students are supervised by the following lecturers in the Department:



**Prof. Manne Bylund**  
**Professor and Director of the  
 MultiCog Laboratory in the Department**

Qualifications:

- PhD 1 (Stockholm University) entitled "Age differences in first language attrition: A maturational constraints perspective".
- PhD 2 (Stockholm University) entitled "Conceptualización de eventos en español y en sueco. Estudios sobre hablantes monolingües y bilingües".

Fields of academic expertise:

Psycholinguistics, multilingualism, language and cognition

Current research project(s) as of January 2019:

- Unravelling the multilingual mind
- Pitch in language and perception
- Lexical processing and representation in bilingualism

Recent completed research projects:

- Time in language and thought
- Linguistic diversity and motion event cognition
- The effects of age of acquisition and bilingualism on L2 proficiency

Recent publications:

Samuel, S., E. Bylund, R. Cooper & P. Athanasopoulos. In press. Illuminating ATOM: Taking time across the colour category border. *Acta Psychologica*.

Bylund, E., N. Abrahamsson, K. Hyltenstam & G. Norrman. 2019. Revisiting the bilingual lexical deficit: The impact of age of acquisition. *Cognition* 182: 45–49.

Bylund, E. 2017. Interpreting age effects in language acquisition and attrition. *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism* 7: 182–186.

Bylund, E. & P. Athanasopoulos. 2017. The Whorfian time warp: Representing duration through the language hourglass. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General* 146: 911–916.

Montero-Melis, G. & E. Bylund. 2017. Getting the ball rolling: The cross-linguistic conceptualization of caused motion. *Language and Cognition* 9: 446–472.

Recent Masters' supervision:

- L. Broders. 2018. Temporal gestures in Afrikaans.
- J. Crossley. 2017. Reversing time: The effects of mirror reading and writing.
- K. Jonas. 2017. Perceived object similarity in isiXhosa: Assessing the role of noun classes.

Recent PhD supervision:

- G. Montero-Melis. 2017. Thoughts in motion: The role of long-term L1 and short-term L2 experience when talking and thinking of caused motion.



**Prof. Frenette Southwood**

**Associate Professor and  
Chair of the Department**

Qualification:

PhD (Radboud University Nijmegen) entitled "Specific language impairment in Afrikaans: Providing a Minimalist account for problems with grammatical features and word order".

Fields of academic expertise:

Second language acquisition, language impairment, child language

Current research project(s) as of January 2019:

- Early childhood language development and family socialisation in three South African language communities
- Towards a dialect-neutral evaluation instrument for the language skills of South African English and Afrikaans-speaking children

- Linguistically fair and culturally relevant early child language assessment: Developing the MacArthur-Bates Communicative Developmental Inventory in seven South African languages

#### Recent completed research projects:

Receptive and expressive activities for language therapy

#### Recent publications:

Haman, E., M. Łuniewska, P. Hansen, H.G. Simonsen, S. Chiat, J. Bjekić, A. Blažienė, K. Chyl, I. Dabašinskienė, P. Engel de Abreu, N. Gagarina, A. Gavarró, G. Håkansson, E. Harel, E. Holm, S. Kapalková, S. Kunnari, C. Levorato, J. Lindgren, K. Mieszkowska, L. Montes Salarich, A. Potgieter, I. Ribu, N. Ringblom, T. Rinker, M. Roch, D. Slančová, F. Southwood, R. Tedeschi, A. Müge Tuncer, Ö. Ünal-Logacev, J. Vuksanović and S. Armon-Lotem. 2017. Noun and verb knowledge in monolingual preschool children across 17 languages: Data from cross-linguistic lexical tasks (LITMUS-CLT). *Clinical Linguistics & Phonetics* 31(11–12): 818–43.

Nel, J. & F. Southwood. 2016. The comprehension and production of quantifiers in isiXhosa-speaking Grade 1 learners. *South African Journal of Communication Disorders* 63(2): 1–10.

Potgieter, A.P. & F. Southwood. 2016. A comparison of proficiency levels in four-year-old monolingual and trilingual speakers of Afrikaans, isiXhosa and South African English across SES boundaries, using LITMUS-CLT. *Clinical Linguistics & Phonetics* 30: 87–100.

Southwood, F. & E. D'Oliveira. 2016. The language scripts of pre-school children and of the language intervention volunteer: Mismatched discourses? *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics Plus* 49: 249–263.

Southwood, F. & O. Van Dulm. 2016. Unlocking later-developing language skills in older children by means of focused language stimulation. *Per Linguam* 32(2): 30–46.

Ssentanda, M.E., K. Huddlestone & F. Southwood. 2016. The politics of mother tongue education: The case of Uganda. *Per Linguam* 32(3): 60–78.

Van Dulm, O. & F. Southwood. 2016. Does socioeconomic level have an effect on school-age language skills in a developed country?. *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics Plus* 49: 59–84.

#### Recent Masters' supervision:

- S. Coetzee. 2018. The comprehensibility of plain language for second language speakers of English at a South African college of further education and training.
- M. Manca. 2018. Language attitudes in pre-adolescent multilinguals: A comparison of five data elicitation techniques.

- H. Stromvig. 2018. The functions of teacher code switching in classrooms, and teachers' perceptions towards this practice: A case study of siSwati-English interactions in a semi-urban high school in Eswatini.
- J. Van Stryp. 2018. The effect of multilingual glossaries of metacognitive verbs on improving assessment performance in first-year students: A case study at a South African university of technology.
- B. Kamwi. 2017. Student expectations and perceptions of the usefulness of their linguistic repertoires for achieving social integration and academic success at an international university in Namibia.
- M. Bam. 2016. The position of English in the language repertoires of multilingual students at a tertiary institution: A case study at the Vaal University of Technology.
- J. Carolissen. 2016. Afrikaans on the Cape Flats: Performing cultural linguistic identity in *Afrikaaps*. (Co-supervisor.)
- M. Steyn. 2015. Investigating the course of L1 SASL development and L2 Afrikaans reading development in young deaf children following a newly introduced curriculum with SASL as both LoLT and school subject.

#### Recent PhD supervision:

- M. White. 2018. Processes underlying language development and rate of English language acquisition, with specific reference to ELLs in a multilingual South African Grade R classroom.
- J. Nel. 2015. The comprehension and production of later developing language constructions by Afrikaans-, English- and isiXhosa-speaking Grade 1 learners.
- S. Nahayo. 2017. Construction of linguistic identities among cross-border communities: The case of Samia of Uganda and Samia of Kenya. (Co-supervisor.)



## **Dr Marcelyn Oostendorp** **Senior Lecturer**

### Qualification:

[PhD \(Stellenbosch University\) entitled "Effects of the second language on the first: Investigating the development of 'conceptual fluency' of bilinguals in a tertiary education context"](#).

Fields of academic expertise:

Multilingualism, multimodal discourse analysis, sociolinguistics

Current research project(s) as of January 2019:

- Image-ining multilingualism in transformation: The linguistic repertoires of underrepresented students in higher education (2017–2021)
- Re-imagining Afrikaans: Past, present and future
- Foodscapes and the multimodal construction of personhood, locale and time

Recent completed research projects:

Semiotic diversity in educational contexts in the Western Cape (2014-2016)

Recent publications:

Haese, A., E. Costandius & M. Oostendorp. In press. Fostering a culture of reading with wordless picturebooks in a South African context. *International Journal of Art and Design Education*.

Oostendorp, M. 2018. Extending resemiotization: Time, space and body in discursive representation. *Social Semiotics* 28(3): 297–314.

Oostendorp, M. 2017. "As an undergrad I don't have the right to an opinion": Reconstructing students as creative meaning-makers in the Applied English language classroom. *RELC: Journal of Language Learning and Teaching* 48(2): 278–285.

Oostendorp, M. & T. Jones. 2015. Tensions, ambivalence and contradiction: A small story analysis of discursive identity construction in the South African workplace. *Text and Talk* 35(1): 25–47.

Oostendorp, M. 2015. The multimodal construction of the identity of politicians: Constructing Jacob Zuma through prior texts, prior discourses and multiple modes. *Critical Discourse Studies* 12(1): 39–56.

Bristowe, A., M. Oostendorp & C. Anthonissen. 2014. Language and youth identity in a multilingual setting: A multimodal repertoire approach. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies* 32(2): 229–245.

Oostendorp, M. & C. Anthonissen. 2014. Multiple voices in bilingual higher education: Language choices of Afrikaans/English bilinguals at Stellenbosch University. *Per Linguam* 30(2): 69–87.

Recent Masters' supervision:

- M. Nel. 2017. Student voice and agency in Masters' thesis writing.
- D. Zimny. 2017. Language and place-making: Public signage in the linguistic landscape of Katutura, Namibia. (Main supervisor.)



- C. Roets. 2016. Racialised discourse in a former Model C school: Narratives of inclusion and exclusion.
- J. Carolissen. 2016. Afrikaans on the Cape Flats: Performing cultural linguistic identity in AFRIKAAPS. (Main supervisor.)
- M. Parker. 2015. Patterns of use of and attitudes towards the Afrikaans language by South African expatriates: A sociolinguistic perspective.

Recent PhD supervision:

- S. Nahayo. 2016. Construction of language identities among cross-border communities: The case of Samia of Uganda and Samia of Kenya (Main supervisor).



**Dr Kate Huddlestone  
Lecturer**

Qualification:

[PhD \(University of Utrecht\) entitled "Negative indefinites in Afrikaans".](#)

Fields of academic expertise:

Language structure, language variation, pragmatics, sign language linguistics

Current research project(s) as of January 2019:

- Negation in South African Sign Language
- Syntax-pragmatic interface in Afrikaans and South African English (Pragmatic markers in Afrikaans & South African English)

Recent completed research projects:

Negative indefinites in Afrikaans

Recent publications:

Huddlestone, K. 2017. A preliminary look at negative constructions in South African Sign Language: Question-Answer clauses. *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics* 48: 93–104.

Huddlestone, K. & H. de Swart. 2014. A bidirectional Optimality Theoretic analysis of multiple negative indefinites in Afrikaans. *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics* 43: 137–164.

Huddlestone, K. & M. Fairhurst. 2013. The pragmatic markers “anyway”, “okay”, and “shame”: A South African English corpus study. *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics Plus* 42: 93–110.

Recent Masters' supervision:

- N. Lochner. 2018. “So we were just like, ‘ok’”: The discourse markers *like* and *just* in the speech of young South Africans.
- S. Strauss. 2017. Afrikaans-English code-switching among high school learners in a rural Afrikaans-setting: Comparing the GET and FET phases.
- JJ. Meyer. 2016. A nominal-shell analysis of restrictive relative clause constructions in Afrikaans. (Co-supervisor.)

Recent PhD supervision:

- A. Gauché. 2017. A relevance-theoretic analysis of selected South African English pragmatic markers and their cultural significance.
- S. Nakijoba. 2017. Pragmatic markers in Luganda-English bilingual spoken discourse: A relevance-theoretic approach.



## Dr Lauren Mongie Lecturer

Qualification:

[PhD \(Stellenbosch University\) entitled “The discourse of liberation: The portrayal of the gay liberation movement in South African news media from 1982 to 2006”.](#)

Fields of academic expertise:

Critical discourse analysis; language, gender and sexuality; language and social media; intercultural communication in diverse settings

Current research project(s) as of January 2019:

- The representation of beggars in the media
- The representation of eating disorders on pro-ED websites
- Interdepartmental research project on homelessness in Stellenbosch

Recent publications:

Mongie, L.D. 2016. Critical discourse analysis as queer linguistics: Religious pro- and anti-LGBT equality framing and counterframing in two letters to the editor in the "City Press". *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics* 49: 23–43.

Mongie, L.D. 2015. The discourse of liberation: Frames used in characterising the gay liberation movement in two South African newspapers. *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics* 46: 67–83.

Recent Masters' supervision

- L. Wilkinson. 2018. "Crazy, mad and dangerous": A critical discourse analysis of the (re)construction of mental illness in South African magazines.
- N. du Plessis. 2017. Young South African adults' attitudes towards the use of obscene language.



## Ms Robyn Berghoff Lecturer

Qualifications:

- [MA in General Linguistics 1 \(Stellenbosch University\) entitled "Dimensions of space in sociolinguistics"](#).
- [MA in General Linguistics 2 \(University of Utrecht\) entitled "Cross-categorical degree modification in Afrikaans: An analysis of the high-degree modifier \*baie\*"](#).

Fields of academic expertise:

Psycholinguistics, multilingualism, language structure

Current research project(s) as of January 2019:

- Syntactic processing in English-Afrikaans bilinguals
- Flipping the switch: Testing structural constraints on the priming of code-switching in high-proficiency English-Afrikaans bilinguals

Recent completed research projects:

Cross-categorical degree modification in Afrikaans (Utrecht University MA)

Recent publications:

Berghoff, R., R. Nouwen, L. Bylina and Y. McNabb. In press. Degree modification across categories in Afrikaans. *Linguistic Variation*.

Berghoff, R. 2017. Movement in the Afrikaans left periphery: A view from anti-locality. *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics (SPiL) Plus* 48: 35–50.

Berghoff, R. and K. Huddleston. 2016. Towards a pragmatics of non-fictional narrative truth: Gricean and relevance-theoretic perspectives. *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics (SPiL) Plus* 49: 129–144.

Recent Masters' supervision

- D. Zimny. 2017. Language policy and place-making: Public signage in the linguistic landscape of Katutura, Namibia. (Co-supervisor.)

Where necessary, experts from outside the Department may act as co-supervisors or academic consultants for certain sections.

The postgraduate programme coordinator responsible for all administrative matters is:

**Lauren Onraët**. MA (Stellenbosch).

For further information about the research done by students and staff members of the Department over the years, please consult the SUN Scholar open access [research repository](#) hosted on Stellenbosch University Library's website.

### 3. AIMS

The Honours programme and the MA programme both focus on the systematic study of language and language-related phenomena. The specific aims of these programmes are stated in sections B and C, respectively. However, as a general aim, our programmes are intended to equip students with –

- \* a sound knowledge and understanding of current theoretical insights in a linguistic domain that is relevant to their particular interest and/or profession; and
- \* the skills needed to apply these theoretical insights in an informed, critical and creative way to solve problems of linguistic theory and/or language practice.

To achieve this general aim, students in the programme are instructed in –

- \* the theoretical linguistic concepts and principles required for analysing and understanding problematic aspects of particular linguistic phenomena;
- \* the patterns of thought, forms of argumentation and methods of research that characterise the study of these phenomena within the relevant theoretical framework; and
- \* general intellectual norms such as those of conceptual precision, reasonedness, coherence, clarity of formulation, etc.

Both programmes are highly relevant to the developmental needs of Southern Africa. In this regard, they are intended to develop an awareness of the strategic importance of understanding language and language-related issues in our multilingual and multicultural society, and to enable graduates to practise their (planned) professions with greater expertise, effectiveness and satisfaction. The successful completion of the MA programme also formally paves the way for possible doctoral studies in linguistics.

#### **4. MODES OF TUITION**

The programmes make provision for three modes of tuition –

- \* technologically-mediated tuition for off-campus students,
- \* on-campus tuition, or
- \* a combination off-campus and on-campus tuition.

**Students in the Honours programme in General Linguistics are required to attend lectures and seminars on the Stellenbosch campus.** Furthermore, all Honours and new MA students are required to attend a compulsory contact session held in the Department at the beginning of the year. Contact with students is also maintained by email, Skype, telephone, and other technologically-mediated ways. All students are encouraged to contact the relevant lecturer(s) regularly for individual support.

#### **5. LANGUAGES OF TUITION**

Both programmes can be done in English or Afrikaans. Approximately 80% of students do the programmes in English and 20% in Afrikaans. Seminars and lectures are mainly presented in English, with summaries and clarification provided in Afrikaans should it be required. Programme materials (except prescribed literature) are available in both languages.

#### **6. DURATION OF THE PROGRAMMES**

Each programme has a minimum duration of one year. Students usually have no problem completing either programme within one year: the programmes have been designed to make this feasible for working people as well.

Both programmes contain a compulsory research component. This takes the form of a research assignment in the case of the Honours programme, and a full thesis in the case of the MA programme. A student may, under certain circumstances, be granted permission by the departmental chairperson to continue work on the research assignment/thesis after the end of the particular year of study. As a rule, however, such permission is granted only if the student has made significant progress with the work on the research assignment/thesis.

## **7. DOMAINS OF STUDY**

The Department offers tuition and research supervision in several domains of language study. In both the Honours programme and the MA programme, the student has to choose one of these domains as an area of specialisation based on the student's academic interests and/or professional needs. The domains from which students may choose are described briefly below. Please note that the choice of a particular domain or subdomain in a given year is subject to the availability of a supervising lecturer.

### **7.1 The structure of language**

This domain focuses on the principles and analysis of language structure within the framework of recent generative theories of –

- \* morphology
- \* syntax

### **7.2 The use of language**

Language is used in a multitude of different ways. To mention but a few, people may use language to –

- \* ask questions, promise, apologise, persuade, request, warn, etc.;
- \* be polite, friendly, rude or insulting;
- \* debate, argue and reason;
- \* convey and acquire knowledge;
- \* read and write different kinds of factual texts, including newspaper reports and academic texts;
- \* create and interpret literary texts such as poems and novels.

The use of language is studied in disciplines such as pragmatics, discourse analysis, text linguistics and literary analysis. Some investigators focus on spoken or written texts as products of the use of language, while others focus on the activities or processes by which texts are produced.

The emphasis is on the contribution that each of the following can make to our understanding of the use of language –

- \* insights into the way language works;

- \* insights into the way the mind works, that is, cognition;
- \* insights into the way language relates to society and culture.

Attention is also given to possible interfaces between pragmatics and some of the other disciplines involved in the study of the use of language.

### **7.3 Critical discourse analysis**

Language is often deliberately used to deceive, defraud or injure people, to ridicule, degrade, disempower or oppress them, or to rob them of their dignity in some other way. The immoral use or abuse of language is studied in branches of linguistics such as language ecology, critical linguistics and societal pragmatics, which focus on –

- \* the aims of the immoral use of language;
- \* the means used to attain those aims;
- \* the strategies people may adopt to protect themselves from being abused linguistically.

Interesting work has been done on the properties and mechanisms of –

- \* the language of advertising;
- \* the language of sexism, racism and ideological manipulation;
- \* the language of war, politics and bureaucracy;
- \* the language of sustainability;
- \* the language of life-threatening diseases (such as HIV/AIDS).

The findings of such work have been used as a basis for penetrating criticism of society. Forms of institutionalised discrimination against individuals and groups have been singled out as focal points for such criticism.

### **7.4 Sociolinguistics**

In the Honours and MA programmes, a primary aim is to equip students with theoretical and practical knowledge of the tools used in the analysis of social life from a linguistic perspective.

Language in society can take on a variety of forms. Commonly recognised varieties include –

- |              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| * dialects   | * registers |
| * sociolects | * styles    |

Investigators are interested in the distinctive properties of the various forms of language and in the processes by which distinct varieties originate. They also study phenomena resulting from the occurrence of more than one variety in a community, such as –

- \* variation
- \* code-switching
- \* bilingualism and multilingualism.

Variety in language can be studied from different perspectives –

- \* From the perspective of theoretical linguistics, it sheds light on the structural properties of language as such (as outlined in paragraph 7.1).
- \* From a sociolinguistic perspective, it yields insight into the complex relationship between language and social variables such as culture, sex, age, socio-economic status, and context of use.

## **7.5 Intercultural communication**

As a region, Southern Africa is strikingly rich in its cultural diversity. This means that communication between people of different cultural backgrounds forms part of the fabric of our existence. Such intercultural communication takes place, for instance, when people with different languages communicate using another shared language, or when people with the same first language but different cultures communicate with one another. These and other forms of intercultural communication occur in a wide range of domains, including education, business, religion, health, public affairs, law and, of course, private life.

To be successful in these domains, people need to understand the central features of intercultural communication. These include –

- \* variation across cultures in performing speech acts such as requests, complaints, promises and apologies;
- \* variation across cultures in organising the discourse of teaching encounters, academic interaction, public meetings, business meetings, professional consultations, and so on;
- \* variation across cultures in systems of address or honorific expressions;
- \* variation across cultures in styles of conversational interaction, including turn-taking, interruptions, use of silence and topic management;
- \* misunderstandings across cultures caused by different conceptions of politeness, conversational interaction and so on.

A thorough understanding of these and other central features of intercultural communication can be gained by choosing this domain as an area of specialisation. This option has been designed specifically for –

- \* people who, in a professional capacity, are required to communicate regularly with people of other cultures in such domains as education, business, religion, public affairs, law and health;
- \* people who are responsible for training, educating or managing other people who are or will be required to engage on a regular basis in intercultural communication;



- \* people who have a scholarly interest in the phenomenon of intercultural communication.

## **7.6 Second language acquisition**

This domain of study is an obvious choice for students interested in the linguistic foundations of modern approaches to second language teaching. Underlying every approach to second language teaching are assumptions about –

- \* the nature, properties, components and cognitive representation of knowledge of language;
- \* the way in which knowledge of language is related to other linguistic capacities (including the language acquisition capacity) and to other cognitive capacities;
- \* the functions of language and the principles underlying its use for various purposes;
- \* typical differences between first and second language knowledge, acquisition and use;
- \* the role of learner attributes such as age, prior linguistic knowledge, motivation and personality in second language acquisition;
- \* the effects of different types of linguistic input and sociocultural environments on second language acquisition.

Second language acquisition and teaching can be studied from –

- \* *a grammatical perspective*: What does knowledge of grammar comprise and how is it represented in the mind? How does knowledge of a second language grammar differ from knowledge of the first language grammar? How is knowledge of a second language grammar acquired? What is the role of first language knowledge in the acquisition of a second language grammar? Can/should second language grammar be taught?

**OR**

- \* *a pragmatic perspective*: What role does the understanding of context play in the interpretation of discourse by second language learners? Which aspects of language use may be common to all languages? Which aspects of language use need specifically to be learned by second language learners?

Students who choose second language acquisition as their area of specialisation in the Honours programme and who (upon successful application) are admitted into the MA programme also have the option of studying psycholinguistics in the MA programme – see paragraph 7.7 below for details.

## **7.7 Psycholinguistics**

Language is uniquely human. No other species has developed a communication system as complex and diverse as human language. This raises a number of questions regarding the human mind: How does the mind enable us to acquire language? And, once acquired, does language influence our minds? These

questions are addressed by the field of psycholinguistics, which seeks to use experimental methods to generate insights into language and the human mind. Central focus areas of research in this field are as follows:

- \* *The multilingual brain:*  
How are multiple languages organised in the brain, and what is their effect on brain functioning?
- \* *Language and the body:*  
While the human body has traditionally been seen as detached from basic language functions, recent evidence shows that it plays an important role in language processing.
- \* *Language and thought:*  
Does language influence thought, and if so, do speakers of different languages think differently?

## **7.8 Child language acquisition and language impairment**

In this domain of study, the focus is on typical and atypical acquisition of language(s) by children in monolingual or multilingual settings. Research topics include –

- \* the acquisition, comprehension and/or use of various structural aspects of the language(s) in question;
- \* linguistically appropriate and culturally fair child language assessment in Afrikaans, South African English or isiXhosa;
- \* child language intervention based on established or emerging linguistic theory.

Any student with an interest in child language is welcome to study in this domain, but research with children with language impairment is, as a rule, reserved for students with a qualification in speech-language therapy.

## **7.9 Sign language linguistics**

Sign language linguistics is one of the more recently developed areas of linguistic research, with the first research investigating sign languages from a linguistic perspective being published in the 1960s.

The following aspects form part of this domain of study:

- \* the nature, functions and structure of sign languages, specifically South African Sign Language (SASL);
- \* the principles of sign language use;
- \* diversity and variation in sign languages, especially SASL;
- \* sign language in multilingual and educational settings; and
- \* the acquisition of sign language.

## 8. ACQUISITION OF PRESCRIBED TEXTS

The Department makes every effort to ensure that all prescribed and recommended textbooks are stocked by Protea Bookshop and Van Schaik Bookshop in Stellenbosch. Books can be ordered by email or telephone. The books prescribed for a given academic year are normally available towards December of the previous year.

Additional prescribed literature in a format other than that of a full-length published book – such as articles in journals, contributions to collections, unpublished dissertations, excerpts from books, etc. – may either be obtained from an academic library by students themselves or be supplied by the Department at the student's request. Students bear all copying and forwarding charges.

Students must have access to an academic library to do the exploration of the literature that is required for both the Honours research assignment and the MA thesis. Students automatically have the right to register as users of the Stellenbosch University Library. Access to the libraries of other universities can usually be obtained without any difficulty upon submission of proof of registration as a user of the Stellenbosch University Library. Usually, therefore, students should be able to gain access to the university library closest to their place of residence.

## 9. FEES

As the fees for the two programmes are usually adjusted every year, all enquiries about current or expected fees should be addressed directly to –

### Mr Sean Davidse

Student Fees Section  
Stellenbosch University

Private Bag X1 (Telephone : 021 808 3530)  
7602 MATIELAND (Email : [seand@sun.ac.za](mailto:seand@sun.ac.za))

Please note that, in addition to tuition fees, students also need to budget for study material costs, which include fees for any photocopied study material sent to the student by the Department, as well as textbooks.

## 10. BURSARIES

Students requiring particulars of NRF, Stellenbosch 2020 or other bursary and loan schemes may contact –

### The Postgraduate Bursaries Section

Stellenbosch University

Private Bag X1 (Telephone : 021 808 4208)  
7602 MATIELAND (Email : [postgradfunding@sun.ac.za](mailto:postgradfunding@sun.ac.za))

Completed bursary application forms must be submitted to the Postgraduate Bursaries Section as well. Before applying for an NRF bursary, however, it is **essential** to consult the Department.

## 11. APPLICATION AND SELECTION

Application for admission to either the Honours programme or the MA programme in General Linguistics must be done via the [University's website](#). An application can be considered only if it is accompanied by a complete study record showing exam marks for all subjects taken both at undergraduate and at postgraduate level.

The closing date for applications from South African prospective students is **30 November** of the year preceding the year for which admission is sought. The closing date for current final-year undergraduate students enrolled at Stellenbosch University and international prospective students is usually earlier than the November date. Please consult the Stellenbosch University [Postgraduate Studies webpage](#) for programme-specific closing dates. **Prospective students are advised to apply, and submit their additional documentation to the Department, well before these respective dates as places on the Honours programme and all of our MA programmes are filled quickly.**

As there are normally more applicants than available places in both the Honours programme and the MA programme in General Linguistics, a selection has to be made from the applications received. Students are selected on the basis of their previous study record(s) as well as their written responses to [diagnostic test questions](#) which applicants have to answer as part of their application. This diagnostic test is used to appraise a candidate's ability to read an academic text critically and to respond to questions in a clear and coherent way.

In addition to this diagnostic test, all Honours and MA applicants are required to submit their ideas for the research they would like to conduct if their applications are successful. These ideas should be between  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a page and 2 pages in length (1.5pt paragraph spacing, Times New Roman font size 12pt). Please note that the research ideas submitted at this stage of the application process are not necessarily the applicant's final, set-in-stone ideas; these ideas may, of course, change during the following year, provided that the student has been accepted into the Honours or MA programme.

**NB:** When you draft your research ideas, please bear in mind the fields of study in which our members of staff are experts (see "STAFF PROFILE" section of this prospectus). The Department unfortunately will not be able to help you further your research if you are planning on conducting the research for your Honours/MA degree outside of these fields.

Please note that the Department views an application as incomplete if the application, the answers to the diagnostic test and the ideas for research have not been received by the Department. **The Department does not review incomplete applications.**

All complete postgraduate applications are subject to a rigorous evaluation and selection process by members of the Department at several departmental Postgraduate Admissions Committee meetings held between early October and early December every year. Amongst other things, we look at and evaluate the following:

- The marks obtained by the applicant for the majors during his/her undergraduate degree(s), and his/her postgraduate degree(s) where relevant, as well as the relevance of these majors/degrees to the programme applied for;
- The mark achieved by the applicant for the "Jupiter" diagnostic test;
- The suitability of the applicant's research ideas to the Department's fields of specialisation;
- The supervision availability within the Department;
- The applicant's linguistic and cultural diversity.

You will be informed of the result of your application at our earliest convenience.

## 12. REGISTRATION

Applicants who have been admitted to the Honours programme or the MA programme must register as students before they can start with the programme. Registration forms are automatically sent to all students who are admitted to a particular programme.

- **All accepted Honours students** are required to register in person at the Centre for Student Administration in the Admin A building on Stellenbosch campus. The person in charge of this registration is Mrs Cheryl Richardson ([cherylr@sun.ac.za](mailto:cherylr@sun.ac.za); 021 808 9111; Room A3005).
- All **new MA students** who do not reside in Stellenbosch may register by email. It is advisable that those who live locally register in person at the Centre for Student Administration in the Admin A building on Stellenbosch campus. The person in charge of this registration is Mrs Annatjie Moolman ([amm@sun.ac.za](mailto:amm@sun.ac.za); 021 808 9111; Room A3002).

## SECTION B: HONOURS IN GENERAL LINGUISTICS

### 1. AIMS

The Honours programme in General Linguistics has been designed for people in a range of professions that revolve around language or language-related phenomena, as well as for postgraduate students who have an academic interest in such phenomena.

The programme has the following specific aims (see also section A, paragraph 3):

- \* to equip students with a sound knowledge of (i) current linguistic insights into phenomena in a domain relevant to their interests and/or profession, and (ii) the theoretical approaches and research methods that are used to gain such insights;
- \* to produce individuals who have the ability to identify and convey their understanding of problematic phenomena in a particular linguistic domain;
- \* to develop the academic and intellectual skills needed (i) to do independent small-scale research on a problematic phenomenon in a particular linguistic domain, and (ii) to report the findings of such research in a technically well-finished text.

### 2. REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

The minimum formal qualification required for admission to the Honours programme is (i) a Bachelor's degree with a major in linguistics, a language, a language-related subject, or speech therapy (logopaedics), or (ii) some other tertiary qualification deemed by the Senate to be equivalent to such a degree. The candidate should have an aggregate mark of at least 60% for the Bachelor's degree. In addition, the candidate must complete the Department's diagnostic test, which is used to appraise his/her ability to read an academic text critically and to respond to questions in a clear and coherent way. Finally, the candidate must submit the ideas for the research s/he would like to conduct should s/he be accepted for the programme (see pages 18–19 of this prospectus).

Students from all language groups may register for the Honours programme. However, students without a good command of English will experience difficulties, as the prescribed literature is almost exclusively in English. Assignments may be written in either English or Afrikaans.

Students who complete the Honours in General Linguistics with a minimum aggregate mark of 60% formally qualify for admission into the MA in General Linguistics. Note, however, that successful Honours students need to apply officially for admission into the MA programme, and admission into this programme is neither automatic nor guaranteed. All such applications are subjected to a rigorous selection process.

### 3. PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

The programme consists of **three compulsory** modules which make up a total of 120 credits:

#### 3.1 Base module (30 credits)

The base module is usually completed in the first semester of the year, and serves to provide a broad base for the rest of the programme. It comprises the study of prescribed literature that introduces students to core concepts and assumptions in different areas of linguistics. During the first semester, **students are required to attend lectures** and seminars on specific topics that align with the aims of the base module. Please note that it is not necessarily the case where we adhere to the official University semester dates; for the past two years, we have begun the Base Module somewhat earlier than these official dates. Please bear this in mind when you apply, and contact the Department should you require further information.

Each student completes four or more written assignments. These assignments are based on the content of the lectures, seminars, prescribed readings and other learning material, and have to be submitted at specific deadlines. Assessment of the base module is on the basis of these assignments. Preparation for and participation in seminars may also be taken into consideration when the mark for the base module is calculated.

#### 3.2 Specialisation module (60 credits)

The specialisation module is completed during the last part of the second quarter and/or the beginning of the third quarter of the year. The content of this module is individualised. It comprises the study of prescribed literature with a view to increasing the sophistication of the student's knowledge and understanding of one or more particular theoretical approaches to and the analysis of some particular phenomenon in a domain of language study relevant to the student's interests and/or professional needs. The domains from which the student can choose are described in paragraph 7 of section A. The prescribed literature for the specialisation module is selected according to each student's chosen domain of study. Students are informed well in advance about any textbooks that are prescribed for this module.

Students have to submit two or three written assignments at specific deadlines. These assignments are based on the content of the prescribed readings and other learning material, and are designed – where possible – to meet the interests and/or professional needs of individual students. Assessment of the specialisation module is on the basis of these assignments. Students are required to attend lectures and seminars, and their performance in such seminars may be taken into consideration when the mark for the specialisation module is calculated. Regular contact between off-campus students and the lecturers is maintained by email, telephone, Skype, and other technologically-mediated ways.

### 3.3 Research module (30 credits)

The research module of the programme is completed in the last part of the third quarter / beginning of the fourth quarter of the year, with preparatory work (e.g. literature study) already starting in the third or sometimes the second quarter. For this module, students have to conduct a small-scale investigation of a particular empirical problem or theoretical issue within a coherent framework of linguistic assumptions. The design and conduct of the investigation is done in consultation with the supervising lecturer. Both the framework of assumptions and the problem/issue to be dealt with must relate to a phenomenon that the student examined in the specialisation module. The choice of topic is further subject to the availability of a supervising lecturer. A research proposal is then written and presented by the student at a proposal presentation seminar; more information about this seminar is provided to students well before the presentation dates. The findings of the investigation are presented in the form of a written assignment that must be submitted by a specific deadline. Assessment of the research module is on the basis of this assignment and presentation.

## 4. PROMOTION

In order to successfully complete the Honours programme in General Linguistics, a student must obtain a final mark of 50%. A student who obtains a final mark of 75% or more passes with distinction.

The final mark is calculated as follows:

Base module	Specialisation module	Research module	Total
Assignments 50%	Assignments 25%	Research Assignment 25%	100%

## 5. SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

Special assistance is available for students who, for various reasons, find that they have difficulties meeting the requirements in the base module and/or the specialisation module of the programme. Instead of proceeding with the work of the relevant module, these students receive intensive assistance that is aimed at –

- (a) the extension of the student's existing knowledge of the principles of language and linguistics, and
- (b) the further development of academic skills that will enable the student to –
  - \* read technical texts with precision and insight;
  - \* write academic prose that meets generally accepted standards of respectability;
  - \* reason objectively and critically;
  - \* conceptualise clearly.

Students who receive special assistance are given comprehensive information on the principles, strategies, requirements, etc. underlying the academic skills mentioned in (b). In addition, each student completes a series of carefully structured assignments. The



completed assignments are submitted to the Department and the lecturers provide detailed feedback in the form of critical comments and constructive suggestions.

Students who obtain an average mark of 50% or more for the special assignments automatically proceed with the work of the relevant module. Students who fail to obtain an average mark of 50% for the special assignments are strongly advised by the Department against proceeding with the Honours programme, as they have virtually no chance of completing it successfully.

Students who qualify for special assistance take a minimum of two years, instead of one year, to complete the Honours programme. The programme fees remain the same, regardless of whether a student receives special assistance or not. However, a continuation fee is required for the second year of study.

Please note that the special assistance offered by the Department does **not** include the teaching of English or Afrikaans. This means that only persons who are able to read academic English adequately, and who are proficient in writing academic English or Afrikaans, can be accommodated in the programme.

## SECTION C: MASTER'S IN GENERAL LINGUISTICS

### 1. AIMS

As a region, Southern Africa shows a very rich diversity of languages and cultures. However, there is a lack of people with the necessary knowledge, insight and skills to address language and language-related issues, and who can conduct sophisticated research on such issues. The MA programme is intended to make a significant contribution by providing students with the high-level skills needed to understand and conduct research on issues relating to language structure and use, language acquisition, language variation, intercultural communication, multilingualism, language planning and policy, language disorders, and so on.

The MA programme builds, to a large extent, on the type of work that is done in the Honours programme in General Linguistics. As such, it subsumes many of the generic and substantive aims of the Honours programme, although on a more advanced level (see paragraph 3 of section A and paragraph 1 of section B). The main aims of the MA programme are to provide students with –

- (a) specialised knowledge of and insight into linguistic theories dealing with issues such as those mentioned above;
- (b) a sound understanding of theoretical approaches and research methods used in studying linguistic phenomena in various domains (syntax and morphology, pragmatics, second language acquisition, language variation, intercultural communication, language impairment, etc.);
- (c) the academic and intellectual skills that are required for conducting independent research on a problematic phenomenon, including the ability to –
  - \* read technical texts with precision;
  - \* represent other people's views, arguments, theories, etc. with a high degree of conceptual and terminological precision;
  - \* identify and analyse linguistically significant problems;
  - \* critically appraise and construct solutions to such problems;
  - \* defend a point of view, and reason in a logically coherent way;
  - \* integrate different perspectives into a coherent whole;
  - \* produce a technically well-finished thesis.

### 2. REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

The minimum formal qualification required for admission to the MA programme is –

- \* an Honours degree or postgraduate diploma in General or Applied Linguistics, or
- \* an Honours degree or postgraduate diploma in a language or a language-related discipline, or
- \* another postgraduate qualification deemed by the Senate to be equivalent to one of the above.

The candidate must have an aggregate mark of at least 60% for the Honours degree/postgraduate diploma. A candidate who did not obtain this degree/diploma from the Department of General Linguistics at Stellenbosch University will be required (i) to complete the Department's diagnostic test and/or (ii) to supply the Department with a copy of one or more written assignments that the student submitted as part of his/her Honours/postgraduate diploma study at the relevant tertiary institution. Finally, the candidate is required to furnish the Department with a brief outline (minimum  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a page, maximum 2 pages in length; Times New Roman font size 12pt; 1.5pt paragraph spacing) of the ideas for research s/he would like to conduct should his/her application be successful.

Students from all language groups may register for the MA programme. However, students without a good command of English will experience difficulties, as the prescribed literature is almost exclusively in English. The thesis and any assignments may be written in either English or Afrikaans.

### 3. PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

The programme entails the study of phenomena in the domains described in section A, paragraph 7. Students who obtained their Honours degree/postgraduate diploma in the Department continue studying one or more phenomena relating to the domain that they chose as their area of specialisation in the Honours/postgraduate diploma programme. Students who obtained their Honours degree/postgraduate diploma from another tertiary institution select a phenomenon from one of the relevant domains as their area of study. This choice is made in consultation with the lecturers involved and is determined by the student's academic background, interests and/or professional needs. Please note that the choice of a particular domain or subdomain in a given year is subject to the availability of a supervising lecturer.

Students have to complete **one compulsory research module**. The student investigates a particular empirical problem or theoretical issue within a coherent framework of linguistic concepts and assumptions. The choice of research topic and the design and conduct of the investigation is done in consultation with the supervising lecturer. Please note that the choice of research topic is subject to the availability of a supervising lecturer. The findings of the investigation are presented in the form of a full-length thesis that must be submitted by a specific deadline. Assessment of the student's MA study is on the basis of this thesis.

### 4. PROMOTION

In order to successfully complete the MA programme in General Linguistics, a student must obtain a final mark of 50%. A student who obtains a final mark of 75% or more passes with distinction.

The final mark is calculated as follows:

<b>Research module</b> Full-length thesis 100%	<b>Total for the programme</b> <b>100%</b>
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**5. DOCTORAL STUDIES**

Like any Master's programme, the MA in General Linguistics formally qualifies students for entry into a doctoral programme at a South African university. The Department itself also offers such a programme. Various prominent foreign universities are also eager to admit to their doctoral programmes students who have done well in this MA programme.