

Information brochure for master's level students

English Section, Department of
Language and Literature, NTNU

Autumn 2023/Spring 2024

Information for master's level students

This brochure is addressed to students who are planning to write a master's thesis in the English subject area, that is, students taking:

- the Master's program in English (*Master i engelsk*);
- the five-year teacher training program in languages (*Lektorprogrammet i språkfag*) with English as their main subject (*fag 1*).

Students on the MPhil program in English Linguistics and Language Acquisition will receive a separate information booklet from the program coordinator.

The purpose of this brochure is to assist you in the initial stage of the process by providing information about available supervision in the English section, specifically information about supervisors and their areas of specialization, or topic areas in which they are willing and able to supervise master's theses.

You will spend the second year of your program¹ undertaking your master's thesis research project and writing the thesis, under the supervision of one or more staff members from the English section of the Department of Language and Literature.²

However, before you can begin writing your thesis, you must first decide on a subject area and a topic. It is *your* task, during the year before you write the thesis, to work out what you want to write your thesis on and then to draw up a project proposal which outlines your topic and/or the research questions you will pursue. The proposal should be 3-5 pages long and include a preliminary literature list/bibliography.

Part of the process of deciding on a topic involves finding out whether what you hope to work on is feasible. As well as being academically acceptable and realistic, and meeting requirements set out in the relevant course description (see below), the topic must fall within an area in which the section is able to provide supervision. Note that each member of the staff has his or her own specialized area of research and interest; the further outside these areas you go, the more independently you will have to work, and the less effective supervision will be. See the individual profiles at the end of this document for more ideas about possible topics and areas of supervision.

It is important to note that this is *your* thesis. It is therefore important that the topic you choose is one which interests you and which works toward your educational goals. If, for instance, you plan to continue beyond the master's level, you will want to be sure that your master's thesis helps provide a foundation for doctoral studies. While the section cannot offer supervision in every topic, it will do what it can to provide both guidance and assistance in your selection. If, however, you are passionate about a particular subject, you should not hesitate to talk to more than one member of the staff in order to gain ideas. Remember, this is *your* thesis, and a document which will require a significant amount of your time and energy in the coming year.

As you consider what you would like to focus on, keep in mind that your thesis does not have to be limited to a single discipline. In other words, your thesis does not have to be purely literature, or purely language/linguistics, or purely cultural studies. If your idea or suggested topic crosses divides between disciplines, you may opt to work on an interdisciplinary thesis. Indeed, some research topics automatically lend themselves to this approach. If it seems as if your topic is leaning in this direction,

¹ For students in the lektorprogram, this is the fifth year of the program.

² In certain cases, it may be possible for a thesis to be jointly supervised by a member of the English section and someone from outside the section. The main supervisor must be from the English section, and the primary focus must be connected to the English program.

your projected supervisor will help you identify some possible options, so do not eliminate these kinds of ideas when you submit your supervision agreement (*veiledningsavtale*) in November.

Halfway through the autumn semester before you begin the thesis, you are required to submit a supervision agreement, in which you outline your preferred thesis topic or topic area. This deadline is usually **November 15**. Several weeks after that you will be notified who your supervisor(s) will be (normally, December/January). At the end of the following semester (**June 15th**), you are required to submit the project proposal.³

Students enrolled in the 5-year MA programme in Teacher Education who wish to write a thesis with a didactic focus may apply for a second supervisor in didactics from ILU (*Institutt for lærerutdanning*); applications will be granted in those cases where it is academically desirable and when resources permit.

In other words, you will need to start thinking (and reading) about the area you want to work in and about possible topics already during your first semester.⁴ At the latest, you will need to settle the topic when you have been assigned a supervisor, which is when you will be setting up your project proposal. You should be aware that research and other designated leave may affect your schedule and supervision options. For instance, if your supervisor is out on leave during the spring semester, there is a possibility that proper supervision will begin in the following term, thus your project proposal may be delivered in September rather than June.

You may wish to talk to a potential supervisor or supervisors before handing in the supervision agreement (*veiledningsavtale*) in order to gain a sense of additional possible topics, and you may suggest a preferred supervisor on that form. However, please be aware that **there is no guarantee that you will be assigned to your preferred supervisor**.

Some useful links

In Norwegian:

<http://www.ntnu.no/isl/masterstudenter>

In English:

<http://www.ntnu.edu/isl/for-masters-students>

Please also check out the course description (*emnebeskrivelse*) for the Master's thesis course code relevant to the program you are taking. You can find these via one of these links:

<http://www.ntnu.no/studier/emnesok>

<https://www.ntnu.edu/studies/coursesearch>

ENG3900 *Master's Thesis in English* 60sp (ca. 30,000 words)

ENG3901 *Master's Thesis in English* 30sp (*lektorprogram*) (ca. 15,000 words)

The learning outcomes (*læringsmål*) in these descriptions specify the basis on which the thesis will be assessed. The thesis topic must also comply with what is set out here.

³ These dates presuppose that you started the program in August (autumn semester). If you started on the program in January (spring semester), the dates are February 15th (supervision agreement / *veiledningsavtale*) and December 15th (project proposal).

⁴ Semester 7 for students in the *lektorprogram*.

Who we are

The staff members of the English section who are available for supervision of master's theses in English over the coming academic year are listed below. You can find us all somewhere along the corridors of the 5th floor of building 5 at Dragvoll. You can discover more about our supervision areas on the following pages.

- Giosuè Baggio (Professor, English language and linguistics); room 5543A
- Nicole Busby (Associate Professor, English language and linguistics), room 5573C
- Yuri Cowan (Professor, English-language literature); room 5564
- Nicole Falkenhayner (Associate Professor, English-language literature); room 5536
- Paul Goring (Professor, English-language literature); room 5544
- Hanna Musiol (Professor, English literature); room 5512
- Annjo Klungervik Greenall (Professor, English language and translation studies); room 5534
- Gary Love (Professor, English cultural history); room 5570
- Domhnall Mitchell (Professor, English-language literature); room 5507
- Susanne Mohr (Professor, English sociolinguistics); room 5511
- Astrid Rasch (Associate Professor, English cultural history); room 5572A
- Rhonna Robbins-Sponaas (Associate Professor, English-language literature); room 5530B
- Andrew Weir (Associate Professor, English language and linguistics); room 5508

The following individuals will be on research leave, administrative assignment, or have other conflicts and are expected to be unavailable for new supervision assignments for the H2023/V2024 period.

- Anne Dahl (Associate Professor, English language and linguistics), room 5543B
- Eli Løfaldli (Professor, English literature); room 5542
- Mila Vulchanova (Professor, English language and linguistics); room 5555

Giosuè Baggio

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My primary research interest is human language processing, with a focus on semantics.

Possible areas of supervision for master theses include:

- Experiments using behavioural measures or event-related potentials (ERPs) on topics related to meaning composition and compositionality, also in connection to other basic operations in language processing (e.g., prediction, inference, referential processing);
- Experiments using behavioural measures or ERPs on the semantics and pragmatics of plurality, quantification, intensionality (e.g., tense, aspect, modality), inquisitiveness (e.g., conditionals, questions), or other related topics;
- Behavioural or survey studies in experimental philosophy of language (e.g., tests of theories of reference of proper names or natural kind terms), experimental semantics and pragmatics;
- Theoretical or critical reviews on parallel approaches to syntax-semantics relations, or any of the topics above.

Nicole Busby

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I am interested in second language acquisition, particularly in vocabulary acquisition and reading in a second language. My research has mainly focused on the acquisition of English in Norway, and whether learning English through informal out-of-class activities such as watching movies and playing computer games has an impact on how well Norwegian students are prepared for reading academic texts in English at university. I am also interested in the acquisition of and the use of English as a language in academia more widely.

I would be happy to supervise master projects related to the following topics:

- Second language acquisition
- Reading in a second language
- Academic language
- Vocabulary
- Metacognitive awareness and reading strategies
- Parallel language use

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Possible Areas of Supervision:

- Romantic and Victorian lyric and narrative poetry
- Victorian fiction and non-fiction prose
 - Victorian journalism
 - The Victorian novel
 - Nineteenth-century sport and rural life
 - The Victorian reception of medieval history, art, and literature
- Medieval and Early Modern literature in verse and prose
- History of the Book:
 - Periodical culture (magazines and journals)
 - The book arts
 - Constructions of authorship
 - Reading communities and reception
 - Paratext and epitext, including the relationship between text and illustration
- Literature and Historiography (including the historical novel and the Neo-Victorian)
- Speculative Fiction (esp. utopia/dystopia, cyberpunk, steampunk, the fantastic)
 - Victorian fantastic literature (so-called “Forgotten Fantasy”)
- Fairytale, Myth, Legend, Saga, Ballad, Romance, and the Gothic
- Comics and the graphic novel
- Literature of the First World War
- Canadian Literature (especially regionalism in Canada from rural, urban, western, or Atlantic perspectives, and the First Nations or immigrant experience)
- Games and play in literature and culture
- Animals in literature
 - Representing animal consciousness in fiction
 - Human/animal interactions
- Eco-criticism
- Life writing: memoir and autobiography (including travel writing)
- Material culture in literature
- Digital culture and the future of the book

About this list:

Notice that all these topics include writers in both verse and prose. You should consider working on poetry; we’ve had a couple of good theses on poetry lately, and it’s critically rewarding and interesting. I’m also happy to recommend books to read in any of the areas covered above, based on your own articulation of your interests. I think it’s important that you choose a topic that fits your taste in reading, and conversely that you try to get out of your comfort zone; I prefer to see students go out of their way to tackle works beyond the ones that they’ve already encountered in their courses.

There is also a project in the department on Norwegian “skillingsviser,” a genre which has its counterpart in English broadside ballads, a diverse and interesting eighteenth- and nineteenth-century form of near-ephemeral publishing. If you’d like to work on a topic in this field, it could be a really interesting chance to explore the popular culture of the past. The same goes for studying literature that was published in Victorian periodicals, or for studying novels and poems in conjunction with reviews, news, travel accounts, author biographies, and other supplementary material in periodicals. These topics offer you the chance to read some unusual and rarely-studied material, and to base your research on digital archives.

Anne Dahl

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English language and linguistics

My research interests include language acquisition and multilingualism, in particular the acquisition of new languages after early childhood. Examples of topics that interest me are the acquisition of English as a second language, third language acquisition, the role of age in language acquisition, cross-linguistic influence in multilingual speakers, and the use of English in international contexts. I am interested in both very theoretical questions (for example the acquisition of a specific syntactic phenomenon) and more applied or practical issues (for example questions of how languages are learned in schools). Most theses that I supervise involve some form of data collection from language learners or multilingual speakers.

Examples of thesis topics that I have supervised are:

- Word order in the second language English of Norwegian learners
- Norwegian university students' sensitivity to subject-verb agreement errors in English
- The acquisition of indirect questions in English by Norwegian speakers
- The intuitions and interpretations of the English progressive by Norwegian L1 speakers
- Norwegian university students' reading comprehension of English academic and non-academic texts
- Norwegian upper secondary students' sensitivity to formal vs. informal English
- Acquisition of pragmatic principles in English left dislocations by French speakers
- Adverbial placement in the second language English of Chinese learners
- The influence of English as a second language on the first language of speakers of Chinese
- The second language acquisition of English clause structure in speakers of Chichewa in Malawi
- Cross-linguistic influence in the third-language acquisition of English by Spanish/Catalan bilinguals
- Cross-linguistic influence in the third-language acquisition of Norwegian passive constructions by native speakers of Russian with L2 English
- English vocabulary acquisition from the classroom and from extramural exposure in Ghana
- Teachers' language choice (English vs. Norwegian) in English classrooms in Norway
- A comparison of the vocabulary of English textbooks in France and Norway
- The role of explicit grammar instruction in English textbooks in Norway
- Norwegian pre-service English teachers' preparedness for teaching multilingual students

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I am a scholar of British and anglophone literature and cultural studies. I have worked on the cultural relevance of surveillance images in novels, film, and artworks (*Media, Surveillance, and Affect*, Routledge, 2019), on the representational history of British Muslims (*Making the British Muslim*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), on aesthetic ideology and spatiality, futurity in contemporary anglophone literature and the heroic in popular culture.

I studied English and American Literature, Cultural Sociology and Linguistics at the University of Constance and at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Through my Constance education, I was early in my studies introduced to a constructivist approach to the everyday, and the fascination created by understanding how malleable our realities are by words, metaphors, and images has remained with me ever since and informs my teaching and research interests. After my PhD in Constance, flanked by research stays at the University of California at Riverside and the National University of Australia at Canberra, I pursued my second larger research project on affects and stories evoked by surveillance camera images at the University of Freiburg, where I also co-headed a research project on heroizations in British television series.

Areas of research I would be interested in supervising include but are not limited to:

Contemporary British and anglophone literature (prose as well as poetry), affect studies, narratology, popular cultural studies (television, film, computer games), cultural translation, surveillance studies, memory studies, visual cultural studies, postcolonial literature, Victorian literature and culture (prose as well as poetry), utopian and dystopian literature.

Paul Goring

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The main areas in which I supervise theses are:

1. Twentieth-century and contemporary British fiction
2. Eighteenth-century literature and culture

My expertise and ongoing research projects lie within the latter area, but I am a great enthusiast for the former and am delighted to supervise in either area. As one of the lecturers in the department with responsibility for older literature, I am also happy to guide projects on pre-eighteenth-century literature.

I am also interested in the Digital Humanities, Environmental Humanities and new methodologies within literary studies and so am encouraging of projects which develop innovative research questions and creative methodological approaches.

Particular topics that I work or have worked on include:

- Eighteenth-century theatre
- Theatrical biography
- The literature of London, from the eighteenth-century to the present day
- The works of Laurence Sterne
- The life and works of Charles Macklin
- News, the mediation of news, the relationship between news and fiction
- Relationships between literature and the visual arts
- Literature and the environment
- Literary representations of insects
- Archival studies / digital archival studies
- Music and poetry/literature (notably the works of Bob Dylan)
- Representations of lotteries, chance and life transformations

I have supervised theses on many other topics, though, and am always pleased to be led into new areas through the particular interests of students.

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My field of expertise is **translation studies**. The following are some broad topics that I would be happy to supervise theses within. Remember that each topic can spawn a number of different research questions (projects/theses).

- Audiovisual translation (dubbing, subtitling)
- Literary translation (including song translation)
- Other forms of translation (technical translation, legal translation, amateur translation, translating into one's 2nd language, localization, etc.)
- Translation/subtitling as a tool in language teaching and learning
- Translating from English as a global language: Societal, cultural and linguistic effects on smaller languages like Norwegian
- Translation of cultural, non-standard and creative language use (e.g. culturally-specific items, swearing, humour)
- The role of translation in society

Other ideas are of course also welcome.

The following is a list of some recently completed theses within the field of translation studies:

- Culture-specific items in legal translation: The case of EU legal texts in Norway
- The subtitling of face-threatening acts in Jane Austen's *Persuasion*
- A universe more childish? A comparison of the potential connotations created by original and translated Norwegian names in *Harry Potter*
- The cultural influence on translations between Britain and Norway: A study of domestication and foreignization in British vs. Norwegian translations
- Translating humorous wordplay in the American sitcom *Friends*
- Friend or foe? The use of translation as a didactic tool in English teaching in Norwegian schools
- "They don't think it be like this, but it do". The rendering of African-American Vernacular English dialogue in Norwegian subtitles
- What the fuck just happened? A comparison of translating strategies in subtitling the swearword 'fuck' in the movies *Born on the Fourth of July* and *Crash*
- Translating humour in subtitling: The case of Vicky Pollard in Little Britain
- "Fighting mad to write her story": A study of the Norwegian translations of Jean Rhys' post-colonial novel *Wide Sargasso Sea*
- To translate or not to translate: Ethical issues in adapting "2083 – The European Declaration of Independence" for the Danish stage
- Hybrid texts in translation: A comparative study of the Norwegian and Spanish translations of Julia Alvarez's *In the Time of the Butterflies*
- The Norwegian translations of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*: A comparative study of the book and films
- The purpose and function of code-switching in Nabokov's *Invitation to a Beheading* and three of its Russian translations
- Representations of linguistic variation in audiovisual translation: A study of American animated films and their Norwegian dubbed translations

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British History and Culture

I am Professor of British History and Culture at ISL and I supervise MA theses in most areas of twentieth century British history and culture. I usually teach an interdisciplinary MA course (ENG3450) on Britain in the 1980s, but I am not teaching courses in 2023 because I am on research leave. I run an academic research seminar with Astrid Rasch for the research group 'Anglophone Political Cultures' at ISL and in terms of my current research I am now leading two grant-funded research projects:

- 'Cultures of conservatism in North-West Europe, 1945-90' (The Research Council of Norway)
- 'Genres of Political Writing in Britain since 1900' (Arts and Humanities Research Council UK)

My research area is British political history and I have published academic articles on the history of British Conservatism, the periodical press, radical-right women, political Catholicism and Christian Democracy, and fascism.

However, I have always taught British history more broadly and students are welcome to pursue the historical approaches and perspectives that interest them (for example, political, economic, social, cultural, gender, imperial, transnational, international). I would advise students to approach me when they have thought about some general historical themes and/ or periods that interest them. We can discuss ideas for potential topics, which we will then refine if I am assigned as your supervisor. In terms of what types of sources my students usually work with, some have chosen to visit archives and research libraries in the UK or elsewhere to look for research materials, whereas others have made use of a mix of online archives (increasing all the time) and published primary sources. Under my supervision students will develop their reading, writing, and research skills, especially in relation to analyzing primary and secondary sources, which they will have already worked with in different ways on various courses in English Culture and Literature at the 1000, 2000, and 3000 levels.

For example, I have supervised Master's theses on a range of interesting topics in these areas at NTNU, including on the following themes:

- A Vital Outlet for the British left: Marxism Today as a discursive space, 1979-1983
- The Thatcher Governments and the Revolutions of 1989 in Germany and Eastern Europe
- The Reputations of Margaret Thatcher and John Major in relation to 'Black Wednesday' and the European Exchange Rate Mechanism
- The Miners' Strike of 1984-85 and 'Community' in North-East England.
- A Comparative history of the Conservative policies of the Thatcher and Willoch governments in Britain and Norway
- The Hooligan Problem: British state responses to Football-related violence in the 1970s
- British foreign policy and the politics of intervention in Norway, 1939-40
- Britain's renewal of the nuclear deterrent, 1976-81
- Anglo-Dutch relations in the Second World War
- Britain, the USA, and the special relationship during the Grenada crisis, 1983-84
- Birth control and eugenics in interwar Britain.
- Britain, the USA, and the world oil crisis, 1973-74
- The rise and fall of 'cool Britannia' in the 1990s
- The Labour party's economic policy, 1979-83.
- The 2012 Olympic Games in London and British national identity.
- Christianity and the public sphere in twentieth century Britain

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Main areas of supervision

1. Nineteenth-century American literature
2. American song writers and their reception in Norway
3. The American short story

My research is almost exclusively on the poetry of Emily Dickinson (1830-86), and especially on discussions about the status of her manuscript lyrics, largely unpublished in her lifetime. I am also currently supervising a thesis on the broad popular reception of her work through documentary and creative media, novelisations and theatrical productions, and there is certainly more work to be done in this field. I have also supervised one thesis on the adult writings in English of Tove Jansson, and there are more opportunities to write about the most recent reception of her work in English-speaking countries, and in the English-language works of other Norwegian writers, including comic novel writers such as Jason. I would be interested in supervising research on writers of the nineteenth century, or on adaptations of their works for the stage, television and film. Related to my background in American literature of the nineteenth century is a keen interest in the wider historical contexts of prose fiction about Native Americans, especially in the writings of Lydia Maria Child, James Fenimore Cooper, Catharine Maria Sedgwick and others.

I have recently written on how the work of Bob Dylan and Leonard Cohen is translated and represented (by the press, in critical articles, and in book-length studies) in Norway. Cohen and Dylan, like Joni Mitchell, are highly valued because of the density and allusiveness of their lyrics, and therefore make ideal subjects for treatment in an M.A. thesis.

My third area of interest is the American short story, with particular emphasis on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Finally, though Irish literature is by no means my field of expertise, I would be enthusiastic about supervising research on Seamus Heaney as well as other authors from the North of Ireland.

Susanne Mohr

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I am a Professor of English Sociolinguistics and my work is based on the constructivist notion that language emerges out of and is closely linked to social interaction. My research interests are in the area of sociolinguistics broadly defined, particularly relating to issues of language and power. I am especially interested in and have myself conducted research on multilingualism and language contact, for instance on language use in tourist spaces (offline and on social media), attitudes towards former colonial and Indigenous languages in former British colonies, and cross-modal borrowing between English and Irish Sign Language. My research is usually informed by anthropological and cultural frameworks and based on qualitative research designs. I have, however, also worked extensively with language corpora. A final area of interest is different varieties of English around the world, their structures, use and attitudes towards them. This includes the use of varieties in English language teaching, as well as their promotion in language policies.

I would be happy to supervise MA theses relating to these and related topics in the area of sociolinguistics.

The following is a concise list of possible areas of supervision:

- Attitudes towards multilingualism
- Language contact (across modalities, including computer-mediated communication and sign language communication)
- Language ideologies
- Language and globalization
- Language and decolonization
- Language learning outside and inside the classroom
- Varieties of English (in English Language Teaching)

Below are a few titles of theses I have supervised:

- Accommodation strategies in ELF couple interactions: A case study of five ELF couples
- Assessing language attitudes towards Papua New Guinea's educational system: A pilot study
- A study of acceptability and contemporary use of -ee word formations in Australian English
- Norwegian attitudes towards non-native English speakers and their accents
- Scottish attitudes towards immigrant accents
- Compliment responses in Australian English
- "Good luck in bad luck". A corpus-based study of idioms in German learner English
- "It creates an atmosphere of freedom" - Functions of and attitudes towards Ghanaian Student Pidgin
- Motivation, orientation and attitudes towards learning English: a study among Russian undergraduate students
- "Not racist, just a little xenophobic" - Analysing anti-immigration discourses of the 2016 Brexit online campaigns
- A sociolinguistic case study of Trevor Noah's impersonations of South Africans

Hanna Musiol

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I am Professor of modern and contemporary American / Anglophone literatures. I publish widely on literary, visual, and transmedia aesthetics, civic participation, and justice, but also frequently collaborate with art and community institutions on urban-scale curatorial, public humanities, and global classroom initiatives in cities across Europe and the US (e.g. [Futurescapes](#), Spectral Landscapes, Narrating the City, [Resist as Forest](#), [Landscapes of Injustice](#), [Landscapes of Repair](#), and more).

In my research and teaching, I work across print and post-print literatures (fiction and nonfiction, young adult narratives, emergent arts, transmedia storytelling, poetry), gender/sexuality, environmental humanities, comparative media studies, critical theory, and critical pedagogy, with emphasis on migration, human rights and environmental justice, political ecology, and (post)coloniality.

Other areas of my specialization include public humanities, literature and community engagement, public education, and narrative approaches to urban studies. In addition, I'm a founding member of the NTNU Environmental Humanities and NTNU ARTEC, and a member of the TRANSLit: Sustainable Ethics, Affects, and Pedagogies research groups. I also frequently collaborate with the [Literature for Inclusion](#), and Poetry without Borders program at the Literature House in Trondheim. Finally, I am actively involved in local and international research networks, such as [Writing Urban Places](#); [ANEST: Environmental Storytelling](#); [ENVIROCEN](#): Environmental Practices Across Borders; [One by Walking](#); and [Narrating Sustainability](#).

I look forward to working with NTNU students across these and other research areas. If you would like to discuss your research and MA thesis plans with me in more detail, contact me at hanna.musiol@ntnu.no.

Astrid Rasch

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I am interested in memory culture, particularly after empire, and in the relationship between individual and collective identities and narratives. As a cultural studies person, my work draws on the methods of the historian and the literary scholar, examining a variety of source materials to understand what they tell us about wider cultural and political trends. Thus, much of my past work has been on post-imperial memoirs, but I am also interested in statues, textbooks and museums.

I welcome MA theses within a range of topics listed below, but in particular I would love to see projects on post-imperial memory politics in Britain or Zimbabwe.

Fields of interest include:

- Memory studies, including:
 - Life writing, memoirs and autobiographies
 - Monuments, museums, commemorations and memory in the public space
 - Apologies, reparations and the politics of regret
 - Debates over history teaching
 - Nostalgia, trauma and amnesia
 - Postcolonial memory
- The British Empire and decolonisation, including these areas:
 - Zimbabwe and Southern Africa
 - The UK
 - Australia
 - The Caribbean
- Social and political issues, including:
 - Individual and collective identity and narrative
 - Brexit
 - Migration and belonging
 - Racism and race relations
 - Social media
 - Censorship and repression

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I hold a Master's in writing with a focus on creative nonfiction, and a Ph.D. in American literature. The relative contrast between these two areas means that I tend to approach literature from a slightly different perspective and am as much fascinated by the execution of the craft as by the product itself. The background in writing also means that I have a special passion for creative nonfiction such as nature writing, travel writing, memoir, personal essay, literary journalism, and so on. Each of these subgenres have their own traditions, expectations, and characteristics as well as a growing body of literature and resources to draw upon. This is far from a new form of writing; it is, in fact, ancient. While often used in lower education, however, it is an area which typically has no foundation or training in Norwegian academics and is largely not handled at NTNU. Creative nonfiction is, however, a significant genre within literature. As of this writing, Norway lags behind other educational systems in academic recognition of creative production, but that does not mean that we cannot examine these texts in the same way that we might examine fiction, poetry, or drama.

While my doctorate is American literature, my primary area of focus is on literature of the American South. I continue to work with a little-known Virginia writer, Mary Johnston (1870-1936), but am strongly interested in all aspects of Southern literature, particularly literature authored by female writers.

In addition to writing and literature of the American South, I also have a strong interest in textiles, including textile history, development, representation in literature, and as an aspect of cultural studies. This area overlaps heavily with the other two fields of interest and may also be expressed in terms of examination of the surrounding textiles and textile production, issues of personal and regional or national identity, family, gender roles, definition and presentation of home, and so forth. This is a rather broad topic and can be explored in a large variety of ways and from an equally large variety of perspectives or purposes.

Outside of these areas, I entertain a peripheral interest in a selection of other topics, but it must be noted that I do not research these topics or specialize in them and students would be expected to forge their own road. Nevertheless, I am moderately familiar with or have supervised topics dealing with graphic novels/comic books as literature/cultural studies within literature; computer games and hypertext as interactive story; children's and young adult literature; and online and digital aspects of textuality and community.

Mila Vulchanova

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Research Lab website: <http://www.ntnu.edu/langdevlab>

Areas of research and supervisor expertise:

- first and second language acquisition
- bilingualism
- language and cognition
- language processing
- acquisition of literacy (reading and writing)
- learning deficits (e.g., dyslexia)
- figurative language in development
- computer games and language learning
- role of digital formats in reading

Students are encouraged and supported to publish results from their projects in high impact journals in the field of psycholinguistics. Some examples of published papers authored by master students in collaboration with the supervisors can be found here:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S104160801400154X?via%3Dihub>

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.01510/full>

Recent theses I have supervised can be accessed (in full text) here:

<https://www.ntnu.edu/web/langdevlab/theses-archive>

Andrew Weir

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I specialize in theoretical linguistics, in particular syntax – the licit arrangement of words into sentences – and semantics – the ability to map words, phrases, and sentences onto meaning in a compositional way (such that the meaning of a larger expression follows from the meanings of the parts and some very general principles about how these parts are combined). I am also interested in how these two domains, syntax and semantics, interact with each other (as well as with other domains such as phonology and pragmatics).

A few topics that I particularly specialize in are:

Variation (especially within English): investigation of syntactic and semantic variation between (usually related) languages and dialects. I am especially interested in differences between standard English and dialectal English (e.g. Scottish English), or between dialects of English; I am also interested in comparison of the grammars of English and Norwegian. I focus on this from the formal grammatical point of view, e.g. what kinds of syntactic or semantic analyses can account for a wide but not unbounded range of variation between languages and dialects. However, there is clearly a sociolinguistic aspect to this too, especially when it comes to dialect variation, and co-supervision of a project that looked at both sociolinguistic and formal aspects of variation would be a possibility.

Ellipsis: constructions such as ‘verb phrase ellipsis’ (*John ate brunost but Mary didn’t ___*), ‘noun phrase ellipsis’ (*John ate two strawberries and Mary ate three ___*), ‘sluicing’ (*John ate something but I don’t know what ___*) etc. In all of these cases, some linguistic material seems to have ‘gone missing’ in the sentence, but we can still understand what is meant. When do languages allow such ‘silent meaning’? What constraints are there on the ‘interpretation of silence’? What cross-linguistic variation do we find and why (e.g. why does English allow verb phrase ellipsis, while French (for the most part) doesn’t)? This interest also extends to other similar phenomena, in particular expressions like *do so* in English and *gjøre det* in Norwegian.

‘Special registers’: English, and other languages, have certain so-called ‘registers’ which show different grammatical properties from ‘standard’ language. For example, in some forms of written English, such as recipes or diaries, a number of elements can be omitted: subjects can be omitted in diaries, articles can be omitted in newspaper headlines, objects can be omitted in recipes. Notably, there are grammatical restrictions on this phenomenon: for example, prepositions can generally *not* be omitted even in these registers, even if the meaning of the preposition is very ‘light’ or could easily be recovered from context. I am interested both in how these differences from the standard can be understood on their own terms (what governs their distribution, interpretation, etc.) as well as what governs the range of possible variations between registers.

These represent my particular areas of interest, but I would be interested in supervising MA theses in the areas of syntax or semantics even if they do not fall into the above categories. Students should feel free to contact me to discuss possible topics. I can also potentially offer supervision in other theoretical subfields of linguistics such as phonology, morphology or pragmatics, but I specialize less in these areas, and students would therefore have to expect to be more independent in their own research.