



UiT The Arctic University of Norway

Program description

Master in English Acquisition and Multilingualism

120 credits/Campus Tromsø

The programme description has been approved by the board of The Faculty of Humanities, Social Science and Education on 25.9.2025.

From autumn 2026



Study programme name	Bokmål: Mastergradsprogram i engelsk språktilegnelse og flerspråklighet Nynorsk: Mastergradsprogram i engelsk språktilegning og fleirspråklegheit Engelsk: Master's Programme in English Acquisition and Multilingualism
Degree obtained	Master of English Linguistics with a specialization in Language Acquisition and Multilingualism
Target group	The Master's in English Acquisition and Multilingualism is well suited for students who are interested in how mental grammars are acquired, how they may vary, and how they may be lost or weakened through lack of exposure and use in multilingual contexts. The programme is also relevant for students with a general interest in English linguistics and provides the candidate with both in-depth knowledge of how languages are acquired in multilingual settings and the tools necessary to carry out research in the field. Students admitted to the programme will be closely integrated into the C-LaBL Centre (Centre for Language Brain and Learning), which houses an active and prolific research group producing cutting edge research on various aspects of multilingualism and multilingual language acquisition. The students will get the opportunity to carry out hands on research and co-publish with the members of the group. For this reason, the programme is particularly well suited for students who want to pursue a career within research.
Admission requirements, required prerequisite, recommended prerequisite knowledge	Admission to the master's programme in English Acquisition and Multilingualism requires a bachelor's degree (180 ECTS), or equivalent qualification, in English language, or a degree combining English language and literature (minimum 80 ECTS in English). Applicants must have a minimum grade average comparable to a Norwegian C (2,5) in the ECTS scale, see UiT's webpage for international admissions for more information on how the point average is calculated. Admission to master's programmes is regulated by Forskrift om opptak til UiT §§ 12.-16 Applicants from EU/EEA and Switzerland and outside Europe: • Applicants with education from non-Nordic countries must document English language proficiency. <u>You will find more information about English language requirements here.</u> • <u>You will find more information about international admission here.</u>

The study programme's Learning Outcome	Upon the completion of the Master's programme the candidate will have the following learning outcomes: Knowledge The candidate has extensive knowledge about: • the acquisition of English as a first, second and third language • different theoretical accounts of language acquisition, variation and attrition, both in general and with regard to specific linguistic phenomena • how languages may influence each other in multilingual situations, and which factors determine the direction of this influence • how the English language can both affect and be affected by contact with other languages, and how this has shaped varieties of English around the world • methodological approaches to the study of acquisition, variation and attrition Skills The candidate can: • make use of available literature appropriately and evaluate it critically • identify linguistic structures in language acquisition, variation and attrition that may add to our knowledge of these phenomena • make use of appropriate methodology to study language acquisition, variation, and attrition, taking into account the context in which the relevant phenomenon occurs and the speakers it affects • apply a theoretical framework to the linguistic structure in question, even when this represents a novel analysis of the relevant linguistic data • undertake a small research project with the help of a supervisor General competence The candidate is able to: • apply methodological and theoretical knowledge to other linguistic contexts • communicate academic content in a way appropriate for audiences of both experts and the general public, and can do this both orally and in writing
Academic content and description of the study programme	The Master's degree comprises a course component of 80 ECTS and a thesis of 40 ECTS.

The course work consists of eight modules; three of these will run in first semester (autumn), three will be offered in the second semester (spring), and two will be offered in the third semester (autumn).

Courses offered in the programme include:

- ENG-3019 Psycholinguistics and Neurocognition of Multilingualism (10 ECTS)
- ENG-3040 First Language Acquisition (10 ECTS)
- ENG-3050 Second Language Acquisition (10 ECTS)
- ENG-3060 Multilingualism (10 ECTS)
- ENG-3070 Varieties of English (10 ECTS)
- HIF-3001 Foundations in linguistic theory and analysis (10 ECTS)
- HIF-3082 Quantitative Methods in Linguistics (10 ECTS)
- HIF-3080 Methodology and Research Design (10 ECTS)
- HIF-3041 Semantics (10 ECTS)
- HIF-3051 Topics in Language Variation (10 ECTS)

In the third semester (Autumn), the students have to take the course TVR-3000 Sustainability and Innovation (10 ECTS).

The course components provide the students with a solid empirical and theoretical background in issues pertaining to language acquisition, variation and attrition in monolingual and multilingual situations.

The courses investigate how English is acquired in different contexts, including monolingual first language acquisition, bilingual first language acquisition, child and adult second language acquisition, as well as the acquisition of a third (or more) language(s).

The courses also consider how the presence of two or more languages in the mind affects both general cognition and the languages themselves. This includes the study of heritage languages, that is, minority languages that develop in small communities removed from the geographical area where these languages were originally (and still are) spoken.

In the course of the study programme, students will get a thorough overview of varieties of English. This includes both macro and micro-variation. Micro-variation is manifested in different dialects of English, while macro-variation pertains to how different Englishes are the result of different acquisition and language contact situations. As a consequence of the latter, multilingualism may influence the course of development of a language, and the many varieties of English in the world today are good examples of this.

	Finally, the study programme provides a foundation in linguistic theory, research design, and quantitative methods in order to prepare the students for the more independent work on the MA thesis.																				
Table: programme structure	The courses are usually offered in the following order: <table><tr><th>Semester</th><th>10 credits</th><th>10 credits</th><th>10 credits</th></tr><tr><td>1. semester</td><td>ENG-3050 Second Language Acquisition</td><td>ENG-3070 Varieties of English</td><td>HIF-3001 Foundations in linguistic theory and analysis</td></tr><tr><td>2. semester</td><td>ENG-3019 Psycholinguistics and Neurocognition of Multilingualism, or exchange</td><td>HIF-3080 Methodology and Research Design or exchange</td><td>HIF-3082, Quantitative Methods in Linguistics, or exchange</td></tr><tr><td>3. semester</td><td>Either ENG-3060 Multilingualism or ENG-3040 First Language Acquisition OR either HIF-3051 Topics in Language Variation or HIF-3041 Semantics</td><td>TVR-3000 Sustainability and Innovation</td><td>ENG-3996 MA-thesis in English Linguistics</td></tr><tr><td>4. semester</td><td colspan="3">ENG-3996 MA-thesis in English Linguistics</td></tr></table>	Semester	10 credits	10 credits	10 credits	1. semester	ENG-3050 Second Language Acquisition	ENG-3070 Varieties of English	HIF-3001 Foundations in linguistic theory and analysis	2. semester	ENG-3019 Psycholinguistics and Neurocognition of Multilingualism, or exchange	HIF-3080 Methodology and Research Design or exchange	HIF-3082, Quantitative Methods in Linguistics, or exchange	3. semester	Either ENG-3060 Multilingualism or ENG-3040 First Language Acquisition OR either HIF-3051 Topics in Language Variation or HIF-3041 Semantics	TVR-3000 Sustainability and Innovation	ENG-3996 MA-thesis in English Linguistics	4. semester	ENG-3996 MA-thesis in English Linguistics		
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Learning activities, examination and assessment	The course work consists of a combination of lectures and seminars. The candidate is expected to take an active part in their own learning experience, and to accept an offer to study on the programme is to agree to do so. All courses include compulsory assignments, such as oral presentations, problem-solving tasks, and smaller paper assignments. These assignments must be approved in order to take the exam. The most common forms of examination are home exams written on assigned topics over a one-two week period or term papers on topics																				

	that students choose in cooperation with course instructor. Grades range from A-F, where A is the highest grade and F is fail. For further information about work requirements, exam format and evaluative criteria, see the individual course descriptions on the UiT website.
The study programme's relevance	With increasing migration, experts on multilingualism are constantly becoming more sought after in both public and private workplaces. The Master's in English Acquisition and Multilingualism provides the candidate with a solid background in language acquisition and multilingualism and educates candidates that are well suited for work in educational institutions, administrative public institutions related to issues of multilingualism, as well as international associations, organisations, and enterprises that are multilingual or deal with multilingual and multicultural issues. The programme is also an excellent starting-point for further study at the PhD-level, as it provides the candidate with in-depth training in theoretical, empirical and methodological issues in an exceptional research environment which places a great deal of emphasis on teamwork and co-publishing.
Work scope	The Master's in English Acquisition and Multilingualism is a demanding programme that requires the student to work throughout the term. The students are expected to spend 40 hours per week on their studies, including preparation for lectures and seminars, work on term papers and other assignments.
For master's theses/independent work in master's degrees	The master thesis includes a theoretically informed piece of independent research on a limited topic within English linguistics under supervision, in most cases related to acquisition, variation, attrition or other aspects of multilingualism. The master thesis usually involves an empirical study where the student comes up with a research design to collect linguistic data and makes use of quantitative methods to analyse them. The thesis should be 50-70 pages in length (1.5 spacing, Times New Roman 12); it should involve full-time work in the fourth semester and one third of one term's work in the third semester. The topic of research will be decided upon in collaboration with members of staff.
Language of instruction and examination	English
Internationalisation	The programme's international profile is ensured in the following ways: • by being an international programme attended by students with a variety of backgrounds • by including international literature in the reading lists • by making use of international guest lecturers

	• by having international exchange students visit UiT • by encouraging local students to make use of our international exchange agreements
Student exchange	Students taking the Master's in English Acquisition and Multilingualism are encouraged to make use of one of our exchange agreements in the second semester. We especially recommend our agreements with the following institutions: The University of Konstanz, which offers an MA in Multilingualism: https://www.ling.uni-konstanz.de/studium/master-of-arts/ma-multilingualism/ The University of York (via the Norwegian Study Centre in York): https://www.york.ac.uk/nsc/masters/why-masters/ Both these institutions offer MA programmes with a high degree of thematic overlap with the MA in English Acquisition and Multilingualism, making a high level of overlap in the course work possible while on an exchange in the second term. However, as both institutions also offer a wide variety of programmes and courses in adjoining areas, an exchange also facilitates possibilities for course work on related topics relevant to the MA-thesis. Students are required to take 30 ECTS in their second semester.
Administrative responsibility and academic responsibility	Administration of the program is handled by the Department of Language and Culture within the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education. Academic responsibility is handled by the leader of the study programme.
Quality assurance	The programme will be evaluated every year, while the courses will be evaluated once during the two-year period of the study programme. The leader of the study programme decides which methods are to be made use of for the evaluation, as well as how the results should be reported back to the students and used for the improvement of the programme.

