

Comprehensive Oral Examination in English Linguistics - Guidelines

The comprehensive oral exam can be chosen in Module 8 of the BA programme for English Majors. It consists in a 60' exam for which the student prepares a reading list on 3 topics related to English linguistics.

Procedure

A student interested in selecting the comprehensive oral exam option for Module 8 should approach one of the three possible supervisors in English linguistics, Prof. Didier Maillat, Prof. tit. Steve Oswald, and Dr David Correia-Saavedra to agree on which three topics they are going to prepare for the exam. The focus for such a topic could be theoretical (e.g. Relevance Theory, morphology), conceptual (e.g. metaphors, irony, language attitudes), or data-oriented (e.g. advertising language, political discourse, Jamaican English).

With the help of their supervisor, the student will prepare a reading list which comprises 5 references including one book-length publication, or 10 article-or-chapter-length publications, for each topic. The reading list needs to be validated by the supervisor before a date for the oral exam can be arranged between the supervisor, the student and an examiner (another member of the department's English linguistics staff).

Exam

In principle, the exam will take place in the first two weeks following the end of courses in every semester.

The exam is divided between a preparation period of 30' and a discussion of 30'. At the beginning of the preparation, the student will be given two questions to prepare for each topic (6 questions in total) based on their readings. During the exam, the supervisor and the examiner will use these questions to structure the discussion on the respective topics. About one third of the time will be devoted to the discussion of each topic.

Goal

The student is expected to demonstrate an ability to discuss their topics in light of the bibliographic references they worked with. In the discussion, they should demonstrate their ability to explain differences and similarities between different accounts of the same phenomena. General comprehension of the notions linked to each topic and presented in the bibliography is also expected.