

**УТВЕРЖДЕНО**  
**Академическим советом**  
**ОП Лингвистическая теория и описание языка**  
**факультета гуманитарных наук**  
**Национального Исследовательского Университета**  
**«Высшая школа экономики»**  
**Протокол от 24.09.2018 № 6**

**MA PROGRAMME**

**LINGUISTIC THEORY AND LANGUAGE DESCRIPTION**

Master in Theoretical and Applied Linguistics: 45.04.03.

- Area: 035800.68 Theoretical and Applied Linguistics
- Special focus on interdisciplinary approaches to language description
- Diploma: Master in Theoretical and Applied Linguistics
- Language – English
- Location – Moscow
- Schedule of study – 2 -year full-time curriculum
- Tuition-free positions for Russian citizens
- Tuition-free positions might be available for foreign citizens under QUOTA
- Hosted by the School of Linguistics, department of humanities, HSE
- Exchange programmes with European universities

**OUTLINE**

The MA programme primarily aims at developing skills and knowledge required for language description and documentation. Its major focus is multidisciplinary approach to the study of language, including not only description and modelling of linguistic structures but also understanding of the social, anthropological and psychological context of language use. Its main content is a typologically informed and interdisciplinarily contextualized language description.

The MA programme is based on the NRU HSE educational standard 035800.68 Theoretical and Applied Linguistics (*Фундаментальная и прикладная лингвистика*, 2 years, 120 units). The programme is streamlined so as to follow academic carrier and has academic agenda, but also includes applied courses and practical skills in linguistic data management and analysis. It is a full-time

attendance programme with English as the instruction language. Our international partner institutions are University of Stockholm, Sweden (department of linguistics), University of Tromsø, Norway (Institute of Linguistics) and University of Helsinki (department of general linguistics and department of modern languages).

The academic supervisor of the programme is Michael Daniel (School of Linguistics, Higher School of Economics).

#### **TARGET AUDIENCE OF THE PROGRAMME AND THEIR PROFESSIONAL PROSPECTS**

The program addresses the following categories of students:

We plan to attract international audience, including people interested in Russian language and linguistics. These are students in various BA programmes of Slavic and/or Russian studies and Slavic and/or Russian linguistics, as well as students in linguistic BA programmes at large. Especially for the former, MA at the School of Linguistics, which hosts many important names and experts in the grammar and history of Russian (Ekaterina Rakhilina, Sergei Kniazev, Valentina Apresjan, Aleksandr Letuchij, Marina Bobrik and many others) is a not-to-miss opportunity to get first-hand knowledge of the state of the art of modern Russian linguistics. For international students, many of whom are apparently more academically mobile than Russian graduates and thus have a wider academic choice, the MA programme at HSE is, in addition to continuing their theoretical trajectory, also an opportunity to improve their Russian skills and to get a good exposure to Russian culture. Importantly, being taught in English, the programme may be a host to students with all levels of Russian competence, from advanced to beginners, and actually for those students that have an interest in Russian but never studied it before. The existing social practices of the School of Linguistics suggest a possibility of very strong involvement of students with a high level of motivation into non-curricular activities, which will mean a strong exposure to Russian complementary to the courses of Russian as a foreign language.

There is also obvious national audience for the MA programme. We see from the enrolment campaigns that there are many interested and motivated students from other BA programmes that clearly express their interest towards our programme. We have noted that the educational motivation of the future MA students is much stronger than that of an average BA student, and their choice of the programme is more a result of their own purposeful decision-making. Basically, they want to continue to learn. Some of these people, usually coming from a very different field / BA programme and basically lacking background in theoretical linguistics, are so strongly motivated that they are eager to make up for the gaps; on our side, the School is ready to provide necessary sources and consultations. For these students, the suggested MA programme will be an opportunity to acquire totally new knowledge and skills and to answer to their cognitive challenges.

We plan to recruit students that graduate from the BA programme in theoretical and computational linguistics hosted by the School of Linguistic of the NRU Higher School of Economics since 2011. The BA programme has quickly established itself as one of the main competitors in the educational field of linguistics; it competes for students with the oldest and internationally renowned theoretical linguistic department of the Moscow State University. The BA programme is organised as two profiles, theoretical linguistics and computational linguistics, branching after the second year of education and more or less equally populated. The MA in computational linguistics exists since 2012 and may host all students willing to continue at HSE; but so far there have been no alternative in theoretical linguistics. After two years in the theoretical profile, some of our students are positive about continuing their academic trajectory at least in an MA programme, and probably further on. We expect that this tendency will continue, as the interest of our students in theoretical linguistics does not seem to wane with years. For these students, the suggested MA programme is an opportunity to continue their studies at their home university. One of our central motives in launching this programme was providing this opportunity.

So far, interacting with all three categories of potential students we noticed that the following components of the programme and other opportunities institutionally provided by HSE are most important for them:

**Interdisciplinary courses**, especially for the students of the HSE BA programme in theoretical and applied linguistics and Russian BA graduates from other programmes. These include a course in linguistic anthropology and experimental linguistics; as well as sociolinguistics as one of the three main tracks, and Russian linguistics for international students. **International exchange**, especially for Russian students. **Russian studies**, especially for foreign students. **Research projects**, to be carried out individually or in groups, and **field linguistics projects**: for all three categories.

We also expect that international students can be attracted by HSE **courses of Russian as a foreign language**, supplementary to the main MA courses.

Graduates from the MA programme will be specialists in linguistic theory and language description. A continuation of this programme is basically a further academic trajectory, such as candidate's degree in Russia or PhD positions abroad, where an ever increasing number of Russian graduates receive PhD fellowships. Inclusion of some components, such as Russian linguistics and sociolinguistics, may also open ways to non-academic jobs. Thus, expertise in Russian linguistics will allow to enter the national educational system or work at language schools (including Russian as a foreign language). The sociolinguistic component will help to find jobs as pollsters or in social and educational sphere at large. Practical skills in technologies of linguistic data processing and visualisation and modelling communication will open positions in companies dealing with computational lexicography and artificial intelligence systems of natural language processing.

The graduates are able to:

- do fieldwork and language documentation;
- critically use the methods of modern theoretical linguistics
- teach or assist in teaching courses in theoretical linguistics, Russian linguistics, corpus linguistics, sociolinguistics, typology;
- teach Russian, including Russian as a foreign language, do 'practical' (not linguist oriented) lexical semantics, work on methodological textbooks of Russian grammar;
- critically use modern sociolinguistic tools of the study of language;
- use computer tools for language analysis, electronic natural language resources etc.

#### **THE NEW MA PROGRAMME IN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT**

Russian BA programmes in linguistics, as well as most other BA programmes in Russia are more focused and intensive as compared to extensive and comprehensive nature of BA programmes in Europe and the USA. Our partners from the West note that Russian students are ahead of the students of BA programmes abroad in terms of mere amount of linguistics courses they take, which gives them a good start in MA and PhD programmes abroad.

The situation of MA programmes is different. Some Russian colleges suggest MA programmes in theoretical linguistics, often combined with computer linguistics, at least nominally (Lomonosov Moscow State University, Sholokhov Moscow State University for Humanities, Saint-Petersburg State University, all of which may be considered as our main competitors), other programmes are more narrowly specialized. Thus, the linguistic MA programme already present at the School of Linguistics suggests an exclusively computational profile; an MA programme in applied Russian linguistics is hosted by the Institute of Linguistics of the Russian State University for Humanities. A strong MA programme offered by the European University in St. Petersburg is purely sociolinguistic. There is also a multitude of MA programmes in foreign languages and translation studies, but they are situated in a totally different educational space and targeted at a very different audience and will thus not be considered here at all.

The present programme is different from other linguistic MA programmes in Russia in the following way:

- its focus is on language description and theoretically informed empirical research
- it is focused on linguistic theory as a tool used in language description rather than on the theory per se
- as various other MA programmes, it includes interdisciplinary courses; these are however all grouped around the same core of data collection / mining, such as working with native speaker (e.g. anthropological linguistics) or raw data (e.g. corpus linguistics)

Some of the main components of the programme are in fact methodologically bifocal between theory and research practices, between language specific issues and general linguistics: typology and language documentation, sociolinguistics, theoretical approaches to Russian grammar. Each of these components is present in some other programme, so that the main vantage of the programme is a possibility to combine and follow courses from a variety of domains. Our long term aim is to grow the programme to the size that would allow our students to elect courses from two out of the three pools, building one's own educational trajectory. While each of the three pools is relatively narrowly specialized – Russian linguistics, typology, sociolinguistics – choosing combinations thereof, and making a different choice in the next semester, will allow an MA student to acquire a reasonably wide interdisciplinary perspective on modern linguistics.

As to the international positioning of the programme, we are presently looking forward to students interested in Russian studies and linguistics. Hopefully, however, with the gradual increase of the international visibility of the programme, the rare focus on **language description in interdisciplinary context** will become more and more relevant and attract foreign students interested in human language at large.

#### INTERACTION WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY

The courses read for the programme will involve collaboration with the linguistic convergence laboratory (department of humanities), the faculty of social sciences and the laboratory of neurolinguistics (department of humanities).

Interdisciplinary course may be shared with other faculties and departments. The course of sociology, tailored for linguists, and the course of experimental linguistics may be shared with other departments of humanities – philosophers, historians or philologists. The course in anthropological linguistics may be useful both for other departments of the faculty of humanities – especially for philosophers, as the course will bear a focus on cross-linguistic studies of categorization of various presumably universal categories, such as color or kinship – and sociologists.

#### INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

One of major attractions of the new programme for national students and, to a lesser degree, for foreign students from non-European countries, is a possibility to visit our international partners. This is a visibly strong component for BA students of the School of Linguistics, a major part of who visit one of our partner universities. We plan to put efforts in making half a year study abroad available to as many of our students as possible. Our international partners are listed below; some of them, such as Sheffield University, are interested in MA exchange also because they have programmes of Russian studies or Russian linguistics.

Stockholm University, Sweden (linguistic department).

Our Swedish colleagues at the department, including leading figures in modern theoretical linguistics, especially linguistic typology, such as Maria Koptjevskaja-Tamm, Oesten Dahl, Bernhard Waelchli, welcome this idea. The agreement between the School of Linguistics and the University of Stockholm is currently passing formalities on both sides.

University of Tromsø, Norway (Institute of Linguistics).

Our School has a long history of collaboration with the Institute of Linguistics which, under the world renowned figures in cognitive sciences and Russian linguistics – Laura Janda, Tore Nessel, both of whom visited the School of Linguistics several times – is an important center of Slavic linguistics. The Institute of Linguistics helps to organize visits of the BA students to Tromsø University during the last two years, including financial support. There is an agreement that this will continue and include MA students.

University of Helsinki, Finland (department of general linguistics, department of modern languages)

There are well-established academic relations with various researchers at the University of Helsinki, including Matti Miestamo and Seppo Kittilä, important figures in modern linguistic typology and Ekaterina Gruzdeva, a specialist in typology and language documentation, in the department of general linguistics; and Ahti Nikunlassi, Ekaterina Protassova, Mikhail Kopotev, all important researchers in the domain of Russian linguistics, sociolinguistics and/or corpus linguistics. BA exchange with the department of modern languages started last year, but MA exchange has a potential of expanding to the department of general linguistics, where MA courses are taught in English rather than in Finnish.

Note that not only the University of Helsinki but also the University of Stockholm both have English MA programmes, and at the University of Tromsø most courses are taught in English at both educational levels.

In addition to these positive opportunities of academic visits, prospects of exchange are being discussed with MA programmes of the University of Pavia and the University of Jena, both of which are strong centers of linguistic typology and general linguistics (Sonia Christofaro, Silvia Luraghi, Ekaterina Mauri, Holger Diessel, among others).

#### **TYPOLOGICALLY AND THEORETICALLY INFORMED LANGUAGE DESCRIPTION**

The main content of the programme is linguistic theory and language description. In contrast to other programmes in theoretical linguistics, we focus on the theory as a tool and means to build an adequate description of a linguistic system.

Thus, an important component of the programme is a focus on **linguistic diversity**. We believe that only a typologically informed approach to individual languages may yield adequate outcomes of projects in description of minority languages or qualitatively new results in describing major languages with a long descriptive tradition such as Russian. Hence, one of the important components of the programme, courses in linguistic typology, including (a) methods of typological analysis and typological data mining and (b) interdisciplinary approaches in typology. Typological research in grammar and phonology is also one of the major domains where the School of Linguistics has a long record (Tatiana Nikitina, Aleksandr Letuchij, Yuri Lander, Nina Dobrushina, Michael Daniel, George Moroz). The School's expertise also includes creating and supporting corpora of medium-size languages such as Lezgian, Kazakh, Buriat etc. ([www.web-corpora.ru](http://www.web-corpora.ru)), based on the search engine used in another project in which researchers of the School took part ([www.eanc.net](http://www.eanc.net)), also see below.

Another focus is on **sociolinguistic** approach to analysis of linguistic data. Sociolinguistics use its own methods that are essentially different from the methods used in descriptive approaches and language theory, focusing on social interactions and the role the language play in them. While variationist or contact linguistics are major fields of international research, with a few important exceptions, such as European University in St. Petersburg, the field is virtually unpopulated in Russia. Amazingly, very few things are known about social parameters of linguistic variation of Russian (as compared to sociolinguistic research on other European languages). Today, a course in sociolinguistics is the only external course the School of Linguistics provides outside the department of humanities (in addition to various course of Russian and academic writing). We aim at bringing up scholars with a good training in modern sociolinguistic methods to fill this academic gap. The first step towards this was made in designing a state-of-the-art programme of sociolinguistics (Nina Dobrushina), and the MA programme will continue this line. We focus on **variationist**

**sociolinguistics** of Russian and **contact linguistics**. These two domains of sociolinguistics, although they do not fully cover this discipline, are probably most relevant for language description as they answer important challenges to both a field researcher of minority languages and a scholarly description of major languages, such as non-inherited shared lexicon and structural convergence in contact linguistics and co-existence of different linguistic structures in variationist sociolinguistics. Other potential fields of research, e.g. within the research seminar, include genderlects, sociolinguistics of minority languages, linguistic interference and other. We believe that this component may provide an additional competitive vantage point as compared to other Russian MA in linguistics that focus on theoretical models or computer approaches to language. This component will be supervised by Nina Dobrushina and Michael Daniel.

Third, we believe that traditional approaches to the study of **Russian grammar** need to be complemented with new methods and interdisciplinary approaches. The School of Linguistics is a meeting point of various **corpus linguistics** projects. The head of the school, Ekaterina Rakhilina, is the founder of the world renowned corpus resource on Russian, the Russian National Corpus ([www.ruscorpora.ru](http://www.ruscorpora.ru)), many of the researchers at the school and BA students are strongly involved in corpus projects, both Russian and cross-linguistically oriented. Corpora of many medium-size languages are supported by the School of Linguistics ([www.web-corpora.net](http://www.web-corpora.net), the latter resource being an obvious link back to the first component focused on language diversity). The block includes **experimental** – psycho- and neurolinguistic – and **corpus** approaches to the study of language. Other potential fields of research, e.g. within the research seminar, includes Russian variationist phonetics, interferences in regional varieties of Russian, Russian dialects (cf. another project of the School of Linguistics, the Corpus of Ustja Basin, available at [www.parasolcorpus.org/Pushkino](http://www.parasolcorpus.org/Pushkino)). The component will be academically supported and supervised by Ekaterina Rakhilina, Sergei Kniazev, Valentina Apresian, Aleksandr Letuchij and the Laboratory of Neurolinguistics.

As can be seen above, there are three main components of the MA programme, (a) typology and minority languages, (b) sociolinguistic methods and research and (c) the study of Russian; but these three components are strongly intertwined, as we plan to do sociolinguistic research on Russian and Russian dialects as well as minority languages and to use corpora for both the study of minority and major languages, for sociolinguistic research (cf. the sociodialectal corpus created with the School as one of the two main participants, [www.parasolcorpus.org/Pushkino](http://www.parasolcorpus.org/Pushkino)), to study interference and code-switching between Russian and a speaker's first language etc. This supports our view of the three components not being alternative trajectories but interconnected fields of research. The three components are linked to the laboratories affiliated with the school: the Laboratory of Corpus Technologies and Center for Caucasian Languages.

#### INTERDISCIPLINARY FOCUS

The second most important feature of the programme is a block of interdisciplinary linguistics. Fieldwork, linked to the 'typology and diversity' and language documentation block described above, is always an exposure to the social and cultural context of the language. Admittedly, sociolinguistics is an interdisciplinary research agenda per se. Finally, although Russian linguistics are by no mean traditionally linked to extralinguistic or interdisciplinary studies, it is exactly its contextualization in non-conventional approaches, such as sociolinguistics and regional variation of Russian, and a typologically informed approach to Russian grammar, that will make the Russian components of the programme special as compared to alternatives offered by other institutions.

We thus offer three interdisciplinary courses in linguistics and one course in sociology:

- > linguistic anthropology
- > experimental linguistics, including psycho- and neurolinguistics
- > diachronic linguistics

➤ sociology

A course in linguistic anthropology will cover variation of linguistic structures in cross-cultural perspective. The course covers such aspects of language as linguistic categorization (e.g. the study of color terms, kinship terms, cardinal and relative directions, noun categorization); social functions of proper names; linguistic taboos; genderlects; ethnography of speaking; functions and structural properties of ritual languages. It also covers methods of molecular anthropology in reconstructing the global history of human kind and local histories and language contacts. Although this course is rarely included in MA programmes in theoretical linguistics, some of the above aspects of the study of language are highly relevant for field research, on the theoretical level, to understand and document worldwide variation of linguistic functions and often, on the practical level, to conduct linguistic research and carry out analysis of naturalistic discourse. With time, the borderline between linguistic and anthropological research becomes more and more blurred, and some scholars start describing both grammar and cultural patterns. It is not coincidental that the main provider of shareware software for field linguists, Summer Institute of Linguistics ([www.sil.org](http://www.sil.org)) has recently included, in its range of products, a special utility to document kin systems and lineages. The course will be read together with Andrian Vlahov who will cover social underpinning of anthropology and Dmitry Schepetov (Laboratory of Languages of the Caucasus) who will cover molecular anthropology.

Experimental linguistics is a broad definition which includes any controlled experiment on linguistic data. Although this includes e.g. various experimental sociolinguistics, here we narrow the scope of the course to psycholinguistic and neurolinguistic experiment. Lately, such approaches as psycholinguistic experiment become relevant for the study of minority languages, where experiments start to be carried out in the field in such traditionally descriptive areas as grammatical semantics or syntax. This follows from a tendency for partial 'interdisciplinarization' of some fields of the study of linguistic diversity. A good example is the study of relativization which, if not shifted, at least expanded from the domains of the study of universals or formal syntax towards functional cognitive explanation (processing complexity) and further, logically, to psycholinguistic experiment. The course offered in the programme will be different from the common approach to teaching experimental linguistics in that it will focus on case studies not so much of English but of a wider range of languages. In a sense, while providing the necessary general background to experimental methods in linguistics, in what concerns empirical basis this will be an introduction to the experimental study of language diversity. Note that experimental study of Russian is covered in the Russian linguistics block, as indicated above.

A course in historical linguistics (comparative method) is rarely to never viewed as interdisciplinary and usually comes in one of the first years of the BA programme, which is understandable because this branch of linguistic knowledge was in fact the root from which all or most of modern linguistics burgeoned. Essentially, however, historical linguistics is a study of human history through linguistic data and should couple with such non-linguistic disciplines as archeology or human genetics. The course will introduce the methods of contemporary historical linguistics and its controversies (such as deep reconstruction or the status of contact languages) and provide case-studies in establishing genealogical relations and reconstructing protolanguages for different language families and branches. Understanding mechanisms of linguistic divergence and methods of describing correspondences between related languages, such as distinguishing between inherited lexicon and lexicon shared by horizontal spread, will be vital for research in areas of high linguistic density. In a sense, this course will be complementary to that of contact linguistics and language convergence in the sociolinguistic block and will put the traditional comparative linguistics into a wider interdisciplinary context.

Finally, sociology is a course supporting the sociolinguistic and anthropological part of the programme. We believe that a coherent view and a true understanding of sociolinguistic agenda in linguistics is impossible without a basic knowledge in sociology. Including this introductory course

into the programme has been agreed with Andrej Kozhanov, the deputy dean of the faculty of social sciences, who confirmed that the faculty will be able to provide a lector.

### **THEORETICAL COMPONENT**

Although the programme has a focus different from MA programmes in formal linguistics, either formal syntax or formal semantics, or purely theoretical linguistics, it inevitably has several courses in ‘pure’ linguistic theory. The suggested programme includes two introductory courses on functional, cognitive and formal models in linguistics, introducing students to the state of the art knowledge in the relevant field. These courses are targeted specifically on the audience which does not have a strong background in linguistic theory, such as external BAs and foreign students with BAs in Russian and Slavic studies. While our own BA students had several courses in formal syntax, they lack any background knowledge in theoretical models in phonology and semantics and especially in morphology, the relevant components in BA courses being primarily focused on a non-formal introduction to language diversity. Our challenge here is thus to suggest a curriculum that would be equally relevant for a relatively heterogeneous audience that includes our own BAs, external Russian BAs from various programmes and for foreign students whose primary interest is on Russian language. We will keep these courses as compact and basic as possible, which is an important difference from the respective MA components offered at the Lomonosov Moscow State University.

### **FOCUS ON DATA**

The programme will be positioning itself as empirically oriented. As methods and technologies of data storage and analysis are vital for all kinds of linguistic models fed by empirical data, it must offer courses addressing data collection, storage, analysis and visual representation.

Data collection and storage are most important for the typological component rooted in language documentation and for sociolinguistic research. There is a vast literature on language documentation, on the one hand, and on methods of data collection in sociolinguistics, on the other. In addition to making these issues part of specific courses (blocks), we also offer a course dedicated to methods of statistical analysis of linguistic data, to automatic tools of such analyses, and to visualization tools, from elementary excel functions to R. In principle, these courses may be expanded so as to invite MA students from other departments of HSE.

### **ENGLISH, SECOND LANGUAGES AND THEIR ALTERNATIVES**

English is a prerequisite for the MA programme in the sense that the student must have enough command for smooth academic interaction – be able to attend classes, to read academic literature and to a certain extent to generate their own academic texts. We estimate this requirement to amount to B1 to B2 level. Opportunity to participate in international MA exchange programmes will further improve their proficiency.

Foreign students are allowed to attend courses of Russian as a foreign language, tuition-free. Another major attraction for foreign students could be courses in Russian linguistics if they are at least partly taught in Russian.

In modern theoretical linguistics, proficiency in languages other than English has a very limited academic value. Also, at MA level, many students, especially those that come after a BA programme in linguistics, already have a robust knowledge of German or French, sometimes of both. For descriptive linguists, fluency in languages like French, Spanish or Portuguese may in principle become important only in the (few) cases where linguists start doing field linguistics and have to use these languages as intermediate. On the other hand, including a second language requires a large proportion of the classes to be spent on it in order to reach a visible result within a two-year programme. We think that Spanish may be a good trade-off between the limited time and pragmatic



value; in any case, a foreign language will only be included as an optional course, in addition to the main programme.

Some of our prospective students, however, overtly express unwillingness to spend many hours in their MA programme on an additional foreign language at all. We thus suggest that a second language be a course that stands as an alternative to other optional courses providing practical skills, such as English academic writing, practical language teaching and/or programming for linguistic purposes.

## RESEARCH SEMINAR

The research seminar will include group and individual projects directed by researchers of the School of Linguistics and carried out by MA students. We put a special focus on team projects that help to develop co-operative skills required by most academic and non-academic centers. Such projects will be suggested to and discussed with MA students and will belong to one of the main empirical domains of the programme: typology, language description, sociolinguistics, Russian grammar or corpus linguistics, or form a combination thereof. Although a preference is given to team projects, those students who will express a strong preference towards working individually will be able to suggest their own projects to be calibrated and adjusted to the skills and academic experience of one of the academic participants of the programme. The seminar is aimed not only at introducing to the students modern methods and practices of academic research and automated tools of data analysis and visualization but also, ideally, an independently valuable scientific outcome.

During seminar meetings students will present their current results and research agendas. This will train – or, for more experienced students, will further develop – their skills in presenting their academic results in print and orally. Such meetings are planned as representing all projects in turn and actively involving MA students of both years of the programme; this may be achieved by distributing research materials prior to the meeting, so that all participants are supposed to prepare to interact. The most successful projects, either group or individual ones, will be suggested for publication; while meaningful intermediate results may be presented at conferences. We suggest that a web-page should be supported and regularly updated to reflect stages of all projects, including uploading handouts, ppts and draft papers. MA qualification paper at the end of the second year must not but may represent the outcomes of such project.

Empirical domains of the projects within the framework of the research seminar may vary from a corpus-based study of evolution of a specific construction (corpus linguistics) to a systematic cross-linguistic analysis of a semantic field (lexical typology) to social variation of a linguistic parameter (variationist sociolinguistics) to a fragment of the structure of a minority language (grammatical typology) etc. The following are some more specific examples of what a team project may look like. Academic assets of the School of Linguistics include Active Dictionary, RusGram, Russian WordNet and other in the field of Russian linguistics, various corpora and online dictionaries of minority languages in the field of language diversity and linguistic typology, Atlas of Contact Situations in Daghestan, the study of regional Russian in Daghestan, and many MA projects on sociophonetic variation in the field of sociolinguistics.

An example of a project in Russian linguistics is a thorough corpus-based analysis of a grammatical construction that requires partially manual collection of corpus and internet data for a robust statistic analysis, such as systemic diachronic shifts in meaning and function of aspectual forms. An example of a typological project could be a study of a typological phenomenon based on a vast sample, such as a semantic map of Source. A language description project may cover a phenomenon in a language to which a field trip was made in which the student participated such as subordination in Mehweb (an East Caucasian language of Daghestan). An example of a

sociolinguistic project is an instrumental / perceptual analysis of phonetic variation and its social correlates such as duration of the pretonic syllable in Russian. An example of a corpus project is a statistical study of linguistic features of genderlects which would apply the same methodology to large spoken corpora of different languages (where these are available), such as comparative duration of utterances by male vs. female speakers. Each of these projects requires processing a massive amount of data and will capitalize on team efforts. These are but typical examples; each new year of students will deal with new research agenda.

One of the vantage points of the programme, and of the Russian school of linguistics in general, is the practice of team field work. In Europe or the USA, researchers get access to fieldwork mostly after their MA, e.g. as a part of their PhD or postdoc project. In Russia, students start taking part in field trips to study minority languages as early as at the BA level. In particular, the School of Linguistics organizes or takes part in trips to Uralic, Turkic, Chukchi-Kamchatkan languages as well as to the languages of the Caucasus. For foreign students, entering our MA programme is a next to unique possibility to go to the field so early. Since 2013 we also organize field trips to Russian dialects which may become an attraction for the graduates in Russian and Slavic studies (MA students from Bern have been traveling with us in the first two years of the project, within the framework of international exchange); unlike dialect trips of the Lomonosov Moscow State Universities, our dialect research has a very strong sociolinguistic bias. As a result of field work, papers on and corpora of minority languages and dialects may be prepared.

The seminar may also include invited lectures and workshops by experts in the relevant fields of linguistic theory.

#### **ADMISSION**

To enter the programme, the applicant must confirm his or her competence in English. This may be done either by presenting a B2 certificate or in person during an interview. Competence in other languages is welcome but may not make up for a poor command of English.

The applicant submits an academic portfolio including term papers, qualification papers (such as BA diploma), eventually also publications and conference materials in any format, project participation etc. at her choice. A strong preference will be given to students with a BA in theoretical linguistics and fieldwork experience. Though it does decrease chances of admission, absence of academic portfolio does not however necessarily mean refusal. The applicant's CV includes his or her BA record (a list of courses taken or a transcript), a list of conferences and publications, participation in various competitions etc. Finally, the applicant is invited to present a letter of intention, which should be a vigorous explanation why he or she wants to enter the programme.

#### **ACADEMIC TEAM OF THE MA PROGRAMME INCLUDES:**

Prof. Ekaterina Rakhilina, doctor of sciences, professor – semantics, lexical typology, Russian grammar, construction grammar, cognitive linguistics, corpus linguistics.

Ass. prof. Valentina Apresian, PhD University of South California, candidate of sciences – Russian linguistics, semantics, lexicography

Prof. Natalia Slioussar, PhD Utrecht University – Russian linguistics, experimental and cognitive linguistics.

Dr. Alexander Podobryaev, PhD MIT – formal syntax, syntactic typology, formal semantics

Ass. prof. Alexandre Letuchij, candidate of sciences – grammatical typology, syntactic typology, Russian grammar

Ass. prof. Alexandr Piperski, candidate of sciences - phonology, sociolinguistics, corpus linguistics

Dr. Anna Volkova, PhD Utrecht University - generative syntax

Dr. Dmitri Ganenkov, candidate of sciences - Caucasian languages, generative syntax

Dr. Daria Ryzhova, candidate of sciences - semantic typology

Prof. Michael Daniel, candidate of sciences – grammatical typology, languages of the Caucasus, sociolinguistics.

George Moroz – phonetic typology, formal phonology, Caucasian languages.

This outline has been prepared by Michael Daniel ([mdaniel@hse.ru](mailto:mdaniel@hse.ru)) with participation of Tatiana Nikitina ([tnikitina@hse.ru](mailto:tnikitina@hse.ru)).