



Considerations for Evaluation of Applied Linguists in Language, Literature, and Culture Departments in the UC System

This document was prepared by representatives of the UCCLLT Steering Committee, which includes language faculty from each campus of the UC system, and approved on April 24, 2009. Its purpose is to provide the UC Academic Policy Committee and other curriculum committees with background information to assist them in evaluating applied linguists working in language, literature, and culture departments whose research deals with language pedagogy, second language acquisition, applied linguistics or linguistics. As a response to departments seeking guidance in this area, we offer the attached white paper on "Considerations for Evaluation of Applied Linguists in Language, Literature, and Culture Departments in the UC System" authored by the Steering Committee of the UC Language Consortium (<http://uccllt.ucdavis.edu>).

We realize that each department has its own particular set of expectations for tenure and promotion, and we do not wish to impose external guidelines—especially in the case of departments that already have long experience in assessing the performance of faculty working in language studies. However, we also realize that there are departments that do not have such long experience in this area and that would find it useful to refer to a state-of-the-art statement about language specialist tenure/promotion practices at UC and beyond. It is in this spirit that the attached white paper is offered for your consideration.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this white paper is to provide information and guidelines for faculty members, chairs, and administrators in the UC system with regard to standards for merit, promotion and tenure for language and linguistics faculty in language, literature, and culture departments throughout the system. VanPatten and Williams (2002) reported on "Research Criteria for Tenure in Second Language Acquisition," and we will adapt their findings to the UC context, as the University of California employs different types of faculty members in language and literature departments. Specifically, we will discuss the issues and parameters that must be considered in a principled and systematic way, including (1) the expectations for the different types of positions (tenure-track, PSOE, and SOE), (2) what constitutes research in linguistics, applied linguistics, and language pedagogy, (3) the different criteria by which each type of position should be judged, and (4) the appropriate peer evaluators who should be appointed to promotion committees.

INTRODUCTION

Since most ladder faculty in departments of language and literature in the UC system are predominantly literature scholars, it is often difficult for these departments to evaluate their faculty who teach and conduct research on language and linguistics. In the first place, they are often not familiar with the fields of applied linguistics, second language acquisition and language pedagogy and are not aware of the criteria used in these fields for assessing scholarship and productivity. Sec-

only, they often do not seek advice or input from faculty members outside of their departments who might be better able to provide an evaluation; instead, they prefer to appoint faculty members within their departments to the committees that prepare the merit and tenure cases.

There are numerous examples within the system of difficulties that language and linguistics faculty members have experienced throughout the years, and while we will not list specific names or cases, the problem is widespread. Many of the cases are due simply to lack of familiarity with the field and its expectations rather than actual ill will or malice. We hope that by providing guidelines for the important issues that need to be considered and by recommending a checklist of procedures some of these problems can be avoided in the future.

GENERAL ISSUES

Before discussing the different types of positions, we first address some general issues that are applicable to all of the positions.

Research

Applied linguistics is a so-called “article” field (like linguistics, the sciences) and not a “book” field (like many of the disciplines in the humanities). Unlike literature scholars, for whom a book is usually required for tenure, this is not the case for applied linguists. Through a survey of over 70 tenured second language acquisition (SLA) specialists at major research universities in the U.S. and Canada, VanPatten and Williams (2002) investigated criteria for tenure and promotion for scholars in the field of SLA. The results of the survey determined that:

- A single-authored book is not an expected accomplishment for tenure.
- Journal articles are the expected venue for publication in the field for junior scholars.
- Approximately 7-8 articles or book chapters in respected venues are an estimate of generally accepted standards of quantity for tenure and promotion.
- SLA scholars demonstrate strong consensus on the quality and relevance of journals and academic presses in the field.
- Joint authorship should be encouraged.
- Textbook authorship may be considered in the tenure portfolio, if the audience for the book is graduate students and if it demonstrates expertise in SLA, not just pedagogy (but see discussion below).
- The workloads of language coordinators must be taken into account in evaluating performance.
- Mentoring of junior SLA faculty who are isolated in literature departments should be a departmental priority.
- Language and literature departments need to be educated as to what constitutes research in the field of SLA.

Surprisingly, VanPatten and Williams make no mention of electronic materials, and we will address this issue below. In addition, we believe that textbooks for *undergraduates* also have merit, in particular if they introduce innovative methods and are published by a major or reputable publisher.

As noted above, co-authorship and multi-authorship of publications is very common in linguistics and applied linguists, but not as common in literature scholar-

ship (see Anderson & Lord, 2008; Katz & Watzinger-Tharp, 2005; Kramersch, 2000; VanPatten, 1999). Anderson and Lord selected ten top journals in applied linguistics and found that in the period 2000-2006, between 35-40% of all articles published in these journals are co-authored by two or more collaborators. (For a list of the top journals and academic presses in the field, please see Appendix A; other journals publish in languages other than English will have to be supplied by each department.) Magnan (2007), the editor of one of the most prestigious applied linguistic journals, notes

“In SLA research, we have relied on coauthorship for some time now. For example, in *The Modern Language Journal*, which I edited for fourteen years, it is now more common to find coauthors or multiple-author teams than it is to find articles by single authors. This trend developed steadily over my editorship, in line with the growing interdisciplinary nature of research” (p. 152).

Turning to the issue of digital scholarship, Magnan’s (2007) “The Promise of Digital Scholarship in SLA Research and Language Pedagogy” discusses that it is now well established in academia, yet there is no consensus about how it should be evaluated for tenure and promotion. Of particular interest is the question “To what degree does creating digital materials –from research instruments to pedagogical materials– advance knowledge and thereby constitute scholarship?” (p. 152). Not only is creating digital materials enormously time-consuming, but, as Magnan points out, “Authors need as much or more expertise in SLA to prepare digital materials– with their rich interlacing of print, visual, and aural material– than even to create the print textbook” p. 153). It must be remembered that even for the commonly taught languages, creating digital materials requires a great commitment of time and effort. For Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTLs), if there is a dearth of or absence of materials, it is imperative that modern new materials be created, and this is another issue to consider when evaluating language teaching materials, digital or otherwise. This area of research is most often referred to as computer-assisted language learning or CALL research (see Smith & Lafford, 2009).

Magnan proposes redefining scholarship in SLA research and language pedagogy and offers criteria to evaluate digital scholarship. For example, she states “For language teaching materials, co-authorship is even more common than in SLA research. Major textbooks have many components, the majority of which are now digital (e.g., websites, electronic workbooks, companion electronic textbooks, interactive exercises, guided chat rooms, and blogs.)” (p. 152). In fact, one of the current trends is for textbooks to be entirely in digital form, e.g., the award-winning *Français interactif* (2006), a French course at the University of Texas at Austin whose materials are entirely online. The first implementation of *Français interactif* constituted the principle CALL research for its author at the University of Texas, Austin.

With regard to the evaluation of language textbooks in the scholarly dossier of SLA researchers, the American Association of University Supervisors, Coordinators, and Directors of Foreign Language Programs (AAUSC) issued a statement over 20 years ago urging that textbook authorship be valued. This same recommendation

also appears in the 2006 Modern Language Association (MLA) Task Force report: "it is no longer unusual for a language department to include textbook authorship as a substantial part of a dossier for tenure and promotion" (p. 153). This should be the case for e-textbooks as well, provided that they have been vetted and reviewed (see below).

As with traditional scholarship, the criteria for evaluating digital scholarship must be centered on academic peer review. In assessing the value of a digital publication, digital venues that require peer review should be treated no differently from refereed print publication. With digital media, the task of estimating the impact of an author's work is easier in some ways than relying only on print reviews of a monograph or circulation and acceptance rates of journals. For example, for electronic journal publications, the number of hits to or downloads of an article and the digital tracking of citations provide quick and reliable ways of determining impact factors of journals.

Directing Language Programs and Other Major Administrative Responsibilities

Depending on the language and the campus, administrative responsibilities can vary greatly. For example, directing a language program is an especially time-consuming task when there are many sections of language courses and lecturers, graduate student instructors (GSIs) and teaching assistants (TAs) to coordinate, mentor and train. The director usually conducts an intensive workshop prior to the start of the fall term and then regular meetings throughout each quarter or semester. Some campuses have a so-called "practicum" course for graduate students, and it is imperative that language directors be given course relief and credit for teaching these courses. Other campuses do not have such a course, but the language program director is still responsible for training and mentoring both graduate students and other lecturers *on a regular basis*, as long as they are instructors.

Other types of major administrative responsibilities include serving as chair of a language center, chair of a language department, chair or member of an important Senate committee, member of campus-wide and system-wide steering committees and task forces, undergraduate faculty advisors to major, minors and language clubs.

Jury of Peers

In the spirit of insuring that one is evaluated by a jury of peers, it is strongly recommended that chairs invite "peers" of the candidate from other language departments to serve on the committee that puts together and presents the case. The committee does not need to consist exclusively of "peers," but it is too often the case that the committee consists only of ladder faculty literature scholars. In this same vein, when a candidate's teaching is evaluated by a "peer," the peer should be an expert in the candidate's field, e.g., language pedagogy, and not simply a departmental member who knows the language. Serious consideration must be given to the candidate's personal statement, and peers in the field who serve on evaluation committees may be able to highlight items in a personal statement that may be unclear to literature faculty.

EXPECTATIONS: TENURE-TRACK FACULTY***Research***

In general, in accordance with the recommendations of VanPatten and Williams (2002), most campuses appear to be using the following criteria, though there is often uncertainty in this regard.

- A single-authored book is not an expected accomplishment for tenure.
- Journal articles are the expected venue for publication in the field for junior scholars.
- Approximately 8-10 articles or book chapters in respected, peer-reviewed venues (including online journals) are an estimate of generally accepted standards of quantity for tenure and promotion. The exact number will vary from department to department, and the quality of the articles, and their placement in top journals—including journal published in language other than English—are more important than the number. Evidence of a productive and creative mind should be sought in the candidate's published research or recognized production. There should be evidence that the candidate is continuously and effectively engaged in creative activity of high quality and significance.
- Textbook authorship and joint authorship, including e-textbooks, content-based textbooks, and language teaching textbooks, are considered in the tenure portfolio, if they demonstrate expertise in SLA, not just pedagogy.
- The workloads of language coordinators are taken into account in evaluating performance.

Teaching

The teaching load for tenure-track faculty members varies across the languages and across the campuses, depending to some extent on whether or not the faculty member is directing a language program. Excellence in teaching is a requirement at all campuses.

Professional Activity In addition to directing language programs, tenure-track faculty members publish textbooks, digital materials, and research articles; they attend workshops and conferences, give conference presentations, and serve as standardized test readers and on editorial boards of journals and book series.

Service

Similar to many SOE faculty members, tenure-track faculty also often serve as language center directors, as language program directors, as permanent members of departmental curriculum and personnel committees, as chairs of important Senate committees (such as the Committee on Committees), as members of campus-wide and system-wide steering committees and task forces, as undergraduate faculty advisors to majors, minors, and language clubs, and as organizers of film series and "coffee hours."

EXPECTATIONS: PSEO (POTENTIAL FOR SECURITY OF EMPLOYMENT) AND SOE (SECURITY OF EMPLOYMENT) FACULTY

The criteria stated in the APM 210-3 are: "The review committee shall judge the candidate with respect to the proposed rank and duties considering the record of the candidate's performance in (1) teaching, (2) professional achievement and ac-

tivity, and (3) University and public service.” (see <http://www.ucop.edu/acadadv/acadpers/apm/apm-210.pdf>)

Teaching

The teaching load for PSOE and SOE faculty members varies across the languages and across the campuses, depending to some extent on whether the faculty member is directing a language program. In addition, excellent teaching is high on the list of expectations for PSOE and SOE faculty.

Professional Activity

In addition to directing language programs, PSOE and SOE faculty members publish textbooks, digital materials, and research articles; they attend workshops and conferences, give conference presentations, serve as standardized test readers, and serve on editorial boards. There should be evidence that the candidate is continuously and effectively engaged in professional activity of high quality and significance.

Service

This is an important area for PSOE and SOE faculty members. It is often the case that their files are judged only for teaching and service. In addition, Human Resources staff sometimes have their own interpretation of the expectations for SOEs and have told them (SOEs) specifically that only serving as Chair of a department or on a major Senate committee are of value. However, PSOE and SOE faculty members serve in a variety of different capacities, including as language center directors, as language program directors, as permanent members of departmental curriculum and personnel committees, as chairs of important Senate committees (such as the Committee on Committees), as members of campus-wide and system-wide steering committees and task forces, as undergraduate faculty advisors to majors, minors, and language clubs, as organizers of film series and “coffee hours.”

Senior SOE faculty members are faced with higher expectations, including teaching ability of exceptional quality and recognition at the national level, e.g., as professional leaders in education.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, we see that all of the different areas (research, teaching, professional activity and service) are each important in their own right, with different weight accorded to each, depending on the faculty member’s position, the program or department, and the campus. However, these areas complement each other and should be viewed in their totality to build strong cases for merit and promotion. In some cases, an extraordinary record in one area can considerably strengthen a faculty member’s overall profile if another area is not as strong.

We recommend that departments in the UC system review this white paper before conducting reviews of the language and linguistics faculty in order to ascertain (1) what the expectations and standards are for each of the different types of positions (tenure-track faculty, PSOE, SOE), (2) the reputable publication venues (journals and presses), (3) the appropriate “peers” to invite to promotion and tenure committees.

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APPENDIX A. TOP APPLIED LINGUISTICS JOURNALS AND ACADEMIC PRESSES

Journals: (from VanPatten & Williams, 1999; *from Anderson & Lord, 2008; ^not in VanPatten & Williams, 1999; +CALL preferred venues from Smith & Lafford, 2009, Table 8)

<i>Applied Language Learning</i>	<i>Journal of Computer Mediated Communication</i> ⁺
<i>Applied Linguistics</i> ^{**}	<i>Journal of Second Language Writing</i>
<i>Applied Psycholinguistics</i>	<i>Language Awareness</i>
<i>Bilingualism, Language and Cognition</i>	<i>Language Learning</i> ^{**}
<i>CALICO Journal</i> ⁺	<i>Language Learning and Technology</i> ^{* ^ +}
<i>CALL</i> ⁺	<i>The Modern Language Journal</i> [*]
<i>Canadian Modern Language Review</i>	<i>ReCALL</i> ⁺
<i>Computer Assisted Language Instruction Consortium</i> ^{* ^}	<i>Second Language Research</i>
<i>Canadian Modern Language Review</i> [*]	<i>Studies in Second Language Acquisition</i> [*]
<i>Foreign Language Annals</i> [*]	<i>System</i> ^{**}
<i>International Review of Applied Linguistics</i> ^{* ^}	<i>TESOL Quarterly</i> ⁺

Presses:

Ablex	Heinle
Benjamin	Longman/Pearson
Blackwell	MIT
Cambridge	Multilingual Matters
Cascadilla	Oxford
Erlbaum	University Presses

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