

## A History of the UMass Linguistics Department to 1999

Barbara H. Partee  
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### 0 Personal preamble.

I was happy to be asked to write a "historical preface" for the UMOP volume of papers from the department's "25th anniversary" conference of September 1998. I would like to dedicate this preface to Don Freeman, who with vision and energy brought the department into existence and set the direction for its spectacularly rapid rise from almost nothing to one of the finest departments in the world. At the 25th anniversary celebration last fall, Don expressed how happy he was that his hopes and dreams for this department had been so fully realized, and his wishes that we go on for another 25 years and more of continued growth, collegiality, and achievement.

Everyone who has spent any time here could write an interesting historical memoir, and there would doubtless be as many different perspectives as there are participants in this story. I suppose I get to write my version because I've been here longer than anybody else. I will mostly stick to facts, but let me in this personal preamble summarize what I think has been so wonderful about this department, and why I am so glad to have chosen it as the place to spend most of my academic life.

One of the lessons that emerged from the formation and growth of this department is that it is easier to build a first-rate department from scratch than to try to turn a middling department into a top one. Overcoming the status quo is never easy; but when there is no status quo to overcome, then if you can get a good bunch of people together and give them the support they need to get going, and if everything clicks, then there's no limit to what you can do. And some of the early decisions in how to proceed helped make things "click". Don and Dick Demers were here first, and Don then recruited some outstanding junior people to help get things up and running: foremost among the new young faculty were Adrian Akmajian and Frank Heny, who put enormous amounts of effort into developing both the undergraduate and the graduate curriculum. They accomplished a great deal very quickly; and that made it easier for them to convince their "senior" recruits that this hitherto unknown place, "in the shadow of MIT", really did have the potential to become a top department.

When I was being recruited in 1971, my colleagues at UCLA were quite surprised that I should imagine that this place had a chance of becoming anything. "Ask Don", they said, "how he expects to build a top department so close to MIT." I asked Don, and his reply was "Look up and down the whole East Coast, and tell me whether there shouldn't

be room for two great departments in the East." And it was true; since the Ivy League schools had had the strongest linguistics department in the pre-Chomsky years, they were the ones slowest to convert to generative grammar, and were clearly suffering a kind of stagnation in the late 60's and into the 70's. The emergence of a good number of very strong departments in the East did not come until a decade or two later, after the anti-Chomskian leadership had mainly retired, or in other newer departments in state universities like Maryland and Rutgers.

And there were other reasons that UMass could be seen as complementing and not competing with MIT. MIT, as a private institution, has very high tuition, and the number of students and their financial support always had to be very tightly capped. UMass has always had relatively low tuition, plus a very important policy of waiving tuition for any graduate student with inside or outside financial support of a certain amount. So we could be considerably more flexible, and in the early years when we couldn't assure full support for all admitted students, it was not absolutely impossible for students to come here on a bit of a financial gamble. And besides, both MIT and UMass admitted very small entering classes of Ph.D. students - the two combined admitted considerably fewer graduate students than UCLA (which had an M.A.-Ph.D. program) then did. A further advantage was and is the potential for cooperation; faculty and students can travel between the two institutions, and have often done so, whether to attend Chomsky's classes, conduct joint workshops, or jointly author papers or edit journals. The danger, of course, was the potential for seeing UMass as a satellite of MIT, or a "farm team", and some of our own faculty did seem to see it that way, but mostly we just shrugged that idea off and did our own thing, which was generally no more and no less independent of MIT than most of the rest of mainstream American linguistics was.

Another part of the winning strategy that really surprised me became apparent when I was first approached about coming here. It was a very small department, but they already had two syntacticians in Adrian and Frank (I was a syntactician then, just beginning to get seriously into "semantics and \_\_".) (We didn't have the word "interface".) I asked how they could possibly hire another syntactician into such a small department when they already had two. The reply was that they weren't trying to "cover everything", they were instead trying to get a group of people together who would talk to each other, sometimes team teach, and work together with students. They were trying to build a stimulating and productive environment for exciting research to happen, and for students to be part of that research from early in their careers. At the beginning it was just syntax, phonology, and historical, then some semantics, then language acquisition; that was it until the later addition of language processing and much later phonetics. (There was always morphology, too, but it never had a distinct "slot" in the curriculum.)

All of these features of the department were in place when I arrived in 1972, and all have remained great strengths. The department is its people, and there have always been great people here, and a remarkable degree of collegiality which is palpable even to visitors, who often remark on it. Good and dedicated faculty attract good graduate students, and good graduate students attract good faculty. And a well-functioning department can attract and keep wonderful secretaries who then make possible a

well-functioning department. We have been fortunate to be locked into a "virtuous circle" of strength leading to strength, which has continued to build on itself as we have evolved. Not everyone is comfortable with the metaphor of a "happy family", so I try to tone down my manifestations of feeling that way about the department; but it probably isn't a secret.

Now on to the history itself. It happens that I had written historical sketches at the times of two different program reviews, conveniently spaced about a decade apart. So now I am presenting the history in three parts, and with three correspondingly different "present tense" perspectives.

Part I, Prehistory and Early Years, 1967 - 1978, is something I wrote (as "A Brief History of the Department of Linguistics") for a Graduate Program Review of the department in Spring 1978. It itself was divided into three phases: (i) the prehistory of the department the late 1960s; (ii) the establishment of the department in 1971 and its rapid growth and development in the early 1970s; and (iii) the emergence of a more or less stable 'steady state' as a highly regarded and successful program by the second half of the 1970's. I present that part verbatim as I wrote it from the perspective of 1978, and I don't see anything that would need to be changed now.

Part II, The Middle Years, 1978 - 1988, is not a separate "period" in departmental history - indeed, developments have been more or less smoothly continuous ever since the mid-1970s - but there also happens to have been a departmental review in 1988 for which a departmental self-review was prepared. This time there wasn't a separate "history" piece, but Lynne Ballard has helped me collect the historical bits scattered through the document. Partly this is a present-tense snapshot of the department and the graduate program in 1988, and partly it describes the changes over the previous ten years. In this section I have done some editing to omit irrelevant parts and then smooth out the holes, and I have added a number of notes from the perspective of 1999, clearly marked.

Part III, Recent History, 1988 - 1999, is new for this occasion. It is more informal in style because it was written for "us", rather than for an outside review team. And it is also a bit vaguer in terms of specific dates for specific changes, because I am writing it in Leipzig where I don't have drawers full of administrative folders to consult. I'm getting Lynne to help me fill in the most important specifics, and otherwise leaving it slightly vague.

These three main sections are followed by two supplementary sections. Section 4 is a brief history of space and facilities in the department, and Section 5 is a personal reflection on some of the inevitably painful aspects of the transition the department went through in the first few years of its existence.

There is also an Appendix prepared with the help of Lynne Ballard with a list of all regular and visiting faculty in Linguistics from 1970 to the present, and of Department

Heads and (with Kathy Adamczyk's help) of Graduate Program Directors. For lists of alumni and current students, see the departmental web page, [www.umass.edu/linguist/](http://www.umass.edu/linguist/), and please help us to keep that list updated!

Of course the credits and caveats that need to go with an endeavor of this sort are too many to itemize. And since I know that this document is likely to have some inaccuracies and certainly has various lacunae, let me invite feedback so that the next version 10 years from now can be better. This is mostly a rather "dry" history (except for section 5), not a memoir, because of the "program review" style set by the first two parts and largely maintained in the third. There are of course many stories between the lines, which we could all sit and tell each other long into the night.

The biggest omission from this document is mention of individual students and their roles in the history of the department. As we were reminded at the reunion, there have been different "cohorts" with different vivid "characters" at different times, groups that got involved in particular lines of research together, or in putting on a NELS (Peter Sells and Charlie Jones really knew how to make a NELS party happen, and there were two other great NELSES here as well) or a workshop. Groups that gave a real boost to GLSA, and the cohort that sponsored a series of GLSA auctions (of everything from autographed manuscripts to breakfast in bed) that were hilarious as well as fund-raising. And there have been different department sports. In the very beginning, Dick Demers used to lead departmental cross-country skiing days in the Pelham hills, ending with pizza in his living room in Echo Hill. When Mike Flynn was here we played some football and a lot of softball, usually against Philosophy. There have been periods of basketball, and for many years there was always volleyball at department picnics if they were at 50 Hobart Lane, and there still sometimes is. Soccer has been the sport of choice for so long now that the current students were surprised to see the softball pictures from the 70's at the reunion. But these are just tips of some icebergs; I realized that I couldn't tell about individual students or groups of students without making this into a book. But I also haven't tried to talk about individual faculty, except with respect to recruitment or certain historical events. What I have tried to do, just to provide memory-triggers and landmarks, is to fill in snapshots of what faculty were here at various points and of who the entering classes of students were at the same points. Just looking at the names will probably call up all kinds of memories for those who were here in the various periods, and be a story in itself for anyone who didn't already know how many of the wonderful linguists (or ex-linguists) in the world today were students here or have been part of our faculty at one time or another. (Our undergraduate students are unfortunately not discussed or listed here at all; that omission needs to be corrected in future histories.)

It did not occur to me to put "acknowledgements footnotes" into the earlier program review documents, and it is too late now to try to reconstruct all the help I had. But let me at least take this as a moment of special thanks and appreciation to the wonderful departmental secretaries this department has been blessed with from the beginning. Without Marty, then Sally, then Lynne, then Lynne and Kathy, no department head, no Personnel Committee chair, no Graduate Program director, no departmental committee, and no one preparing for a departmental program review could have begun to

do such a good job as we have all managed to accomplish over all these years. And because the program reviews weren't designed for reminiscing and thanking and patting each other on the back, I don't think the secretaries got as much credit in those historical sketches as they deserve. (Somewhere in some files there are documents that various of us wrote when working to get raises or classification upgrades or service awards for our secretaries, and many, many documents written before we managed to get the second secretarial position approved; those would be the places to look to find some proper words of appreciation.)

As far as my memory goes back (to 1972 first-hand, and a little farther via conversations with Don Freeman, Frank Heny, Adrian Akmajian, and Dick Demers), the first secretary was Marty Bowers, assisted by the graduate student and secretarial helper Jeanine Langdoc. Those two carried the bulk of the administrative assistance work for the establishment of the department, of the Ph.D. program and the joint undergraduate majors, and of the proposal for and preparations for the 1974 Linguistics Institute. Jeanine then left and moved to the Netherlands with her by-then husband Frank Heny. I think Marty also left just after the 74 Institute, and became a graduate student in history at the University of Iowa. Marty overlapped with Sally Hollens (I remember that they both took my "Math for Linguists" course one year, and both surprised themselves by doing very well in it), who was here from 1973 (I think) to 1976, when she left to begin a degree in Accounting at UMass (after realizing she could do math!). Sally and Marty both did a wonderful job in the growth period.

Lynne Ballard came on board in August 1976, and had had a year of experience by the time Jay Keyser left and Emmon was asked to take over the Headship. Emmon had been away on leave in 76-77 and had to return straight from leave into the Headship; Emmon and Lynne had not been acquainted before the fall of 77, and Jay was gone when Emmon got back, but the transition went beautifully, for which Emmon gave Lynne a great deal of the credit, and Lynne has been proving her indispensability in countless ways since.

Kathy Adamczyk started as a part-time Cognitive Science secretary in 1980, funded by the interdepartmental Sloan Grant in Cognitive Science. Kathy was "housed" in Linguistics, because the other participating departments, initially just COINS [now Computer Science, then Computer and Information Science] and then COINS and Psychology, recognized how badly Linguistics needed a second secretary and how difficult it is in the Humanities to get one, since we generally have far too little soft money and our Dean also never has enough resources to meet all the recognized needs. Kathy remained on "soft money" as long as the Sloan Grants lasted, then had additional appointments funded in part by the three cooperating Deans for the Cognitive Science Program and in part by grants which Lyn Frazier and I had in the 1980's. Finally after a great deal of effort a regular position was given to the department for her, and she became a state funded employee in July 88.

So Lynne has been here now for more than 20 years and Kathy close to 20; the

large majority of the faculty, students, and visitors to the department don't remember the time before we had them, and by now none of us can imagine the department without them. I won't embarrass them by turning this into a mushy preface, but I'm sure I speak for everyone who is actually or in spirit represented in this anniversary volume in saying that even though we often act as if we take them for granted, we are collectively conscious of an immense debt of gratitude to them (and to their predecessors) for making everything else the department has accomplished possible, and for their very large share in giving the department the reputation of being a friendly and welcoming one.

## **1. Part I. Prehistory and Early Years, 1967 - 1978**

Source: "A Brief History of the Department of Linguistics", written by Partee (with assistance from Lynne Ballard and others for a Graduate Program Review in 1978.) The review team was Morris Halle, Janet Fodor, and Ed Klima. The favorable review helped pave the way for the subsequent growth in faculty size and financial aid support from the administration.

Those pages are reproduced verbatim below. I will only add to them a series of "faculty snapshots", illustrating the high turnover that parts of our faculty went through during those years, and lists of the entering classes during those years. I append those to the end of this section.

### **A Brief History of the Department of Linguistics**

The history of the Department of Linguistics at the University of Massachusetts can be divided into three phases. As in many institutions, the department grew out of a non-departmental program established under the impetus of individuals in various departments who were interested in linguistics; this phase culminated in the establishment of an independent department. In the second stage, the nature and special aims of the department were clarified. During this period there was rapid growth but also a considerable amount of instability due to turnover in the faculty and student body. The third period represents a certain stabilization marked by more continuity and by the awarding of degrees to the first "class" (as opposed to isolated individuals).

In 1967, Peter Salus (Department of Germanic Languages and Literature) requested approval for the establishment of a Committee on Linguistics, whose task was to establish a Program in Linguistics. The program was to be a semi-autonomous unit without departmental status but with the understanding that two faculty members would be appointed with primary responsibilities in linguistics (see Appendix I). In the academic year 1968-69, the first courses were offered, Richard Demers (German) and Don Freeman (English) having been appointed. In 1969, Salus resigned and Freeman was appointed Acting Chairman of this semi-autonomous program. During 1969-70, Freeman suggested a number of changes in the Salus proposal, most of which were aimed at reducing the number of 'survey' courses and focusing more on research seminars and in-depth courses. It was during this time that the aim of the program to concentrate on the

central aspects of linguistic theory began to be evident. The program was approved under Dean Seymour Shapiro. From the outset it was decided that there would be no undergraduate major in linguistics as such, although it was hoped that a number of joint majors would be developed, (see section on joint majors). From Freeman's correspondence it can be seen that the goal was to develop a first-rate graduate program with 8-10 full-time members. This period culminated in the proposal by Freeman to revise the M.A. and Ph.D. programs and make the change to departmental status (see Appendix II). In December 1971, the Board of Trustees approved the establishment of a Department of Linguistics.

A number of additional appointments had been made during his initial period: Adrian Akmajian (1970), Frank Heny (1970), David Vetter (1970). The first Ph.D. was completed in September 1970, by Gary Bevington, who was appointed on a one-year basis.

The second phase began with departmental status and a commitment from the administration to support the development of the department. (It was also at this time that Freeman secured approval and backing for hosting the 1974 Linguistics Institute of the Linguistic Society of America here, see below). The plan was to continue to rely heavily on junior appointments but to begin a search for one or two senior faculty members. Two Assistant Professors, Jim Heringer and Tom Peterson, were appointed in 1971. This search for senior additions culminated in two appointments: Barbara Hall Partee and Samuel Jay Keyser, who joined the department in 1972, the former with a joint appointment in Philosophy and Linguistics, the latter agreeing to take over the headship, Freeman having agreed to serve as Associate Dean of the School of Humanities and Fine Arts under Jeremiah Allen. (In 1976 he was made Adjunct Professor of Linguistics.) The appointment of Partee coincided with the appointment of Terence Parsons in the Department of Philosophy. Largely because of the efforts of Heny, who played a major role in shaping the department, strong connections had been established with Philosophy (as well as other departments). The appointment of Partee and Parsons continued this direction. A number of candidates for the Ph.D. had joined the program in 1971, but 1972 was the first year in which the present rate of admissions was reached (i.e. six or seven admissions per year, special students excluded).

During the transitional period, which was marked by a strong recruiting effort both for faculty and students on the part of Heny and Freeman, there was considerable turnover in faculty (Vetter, Heringer, and Peterson left the department) and students. The end of the period saw a dramatic increase in the number and quality of applicants and a sharp decrease in the number of students dropping out of the program.

The Department hosted the 1972 North Eastern Linguistic Society conference in the fall. During this year additional recruitment went on for faculty. In 1973 Joan Bresnan and Thomas Roeper (who had been appointed a year earlier) joined the faculty, and Emmon Bach was a Visiting Professor (half-time, with a half-time appointment at Hampshire College, both appointments subsequently made regular). In 1974 Lisa Selkirk

joined the department, and during the year 1974-75 Akmajian and Demers accepted appointments at the University of Arizona, and Bresnan at M.I.T., and Heny accepted an appointment at the University of Groningen.

During the summer of 1974, the Department and the University hosted the Golden Anniversary Linguistic Institute of the Linguistic Society of America, with Keyser and Freeman as Co-directors and Bach as Associate Director. The Institute was, in our opinion, one of the most successful of recent years. About 600 students and scholars from all over the world participated. Among the activities were a series of Golden Anniversary lectures by internationally known scholars held in connection with the summer meeting of the LSA.

In 1975, Bach (having resigned his Hampshire position) took on full-time duties in the department and two new appointments were made: Alan Prince and Edwin Williams. At this point, although a number of changes occurred, the basic present personnel of the department was established. During the academic year 1976-77, Bach and Partee were on leave at the Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences (Stanford) and two visitors (Roger Higgins and Robin Cooper) took their place. During this year, Keyser accepted an appointment at M.I.T., and Bach agreed to take on the headship on his return. During this year also two appointments were made (to start in 1978): Richard Kayne and Jean-Roger Vergnaud and two visiting appointments were made for the current year: Daniel Kahn and Wendy Wilkins. The Department is currently engaged in a search for a person either to fill the gaps in diachronic studies which arose when first Demers and then Keyser left the department, or to enhance the psycholinguistic part of the program, which has grown considerably under the leadership of Roeper.

Throughout the history of the department a major influence has been provided by the students (see separate sections on the Graduate Student Linguistic Association). Students take part in the governance of the department in all matters except the granting of financial aid to particular students. In the current year the students organized and hosted another highly successful NELLS meeting.

A number of visiting scholars have elected to spend time here. Many come from abroad. They have included Marcelo Dascal (Israel/Brazil), Jurgen Meisel (Germany), Olga Tomic (Yugoslavia), Frank Vlach (Australia). In addition, a number of graduate students from other institutions have come as visitors for a year, either as 'official' students or under formal arrangements with the department. Several have stayed on to work toward a degree here.

The Department has maintained fruitful contacts with individuals in other departments, especially Philosophy, Psychology, and most recently Computer and Information Sciences, as well as other sibling institutions in the Five Colleges, especially Hampshire College.

During Keyser's stay, the Department was the home for Linguistic Inquiry under Keyser's editorship. Partee was editor of the 'squibs' section for two years, at present Prince and Williams are doing this job. Students have been active in putting together the 'semi-publication' University of Massachusetts Occasional Papers, of which the twenty third issue is about to appear.

A number of grants have been given to individuals in the department: Partee and Parsons, Keyser, Prince and Roeper. During the 1974 Institute, Partee organized and conducted an MSSB workshop on problems of non-extensional languages and during the past summer Williams organized and conducted a workshop on discourse grammar.

Faculty snapshots: In 1970-71, the regular faculty were (to the best of my knowledge) Akmajian, Demers, Freeman, Heny, Vetter.

In 1972-73: Akmajian, Demers, Freeman, Heny, Heringer, Keyser, Partee, Peterson.

In 1974-75: Bach, Bresnan, Demers, Freeman, Heny, Keyser, Partee, Roeper, Selkirk.

In 1976-77: Bach, Keyser, Partee, Prince, Roeper, Selkirk, Williams.

Student entering classes: 1969: Gary Bevington, Linda Thomas

1971: Robin Cooper, George Horn, Cathy Lee, Jeannine Langdoc

1972: Ellen Broselow, Mary Clark, Elan Dresher, Muffy Siegel, Joe Sullivan, Barbara Stack, Douglas Sutherland, Charlotte Tsoucalas

1973: Cynthia Allen, Tim Austin, Nancy Chinchor, Jane Grimshaw, Nikki Keach, Michael Rochemont, Richard Schmierer, Justine Stillings, Susan Tavakolian

1974: Janet Bing, Greg Carlson, Helen Goodluck, Paul Hirschbuhler, Renate Krug von Nidda, Jean Lowenstamm, Ed Matthei, Satoru Nakai, Debbie Nanni, Angela Pereira, Larry Solan

1975: Tah Asongwed, Michael Flynn, Ken Hinomizu, Steve Lapointe, Anke de Rooij, Ken Ross, Rick Saenz

1976: Wynn Chao, Panit Chotibut, Paloma Garcia-Bellido, Marianne Phinney, Janet Randall, Mark Stein, Deirdre Wheeler

1977: Lisa Crawford, Elisabet Engdahl, Irene Heim, Jonathan Mitchell, Mary Sparkes, Lori Taft, Martha Young (Martha Wright)

## **2. Part II. The Middle Years, 1978 - 1988**

The regular faculty at the start of the 1978-79 year were: Bach, Frazier (in her

first year), Kayne (his first and last year, by his choice, since he wanted to be able to spend half of each year in Paris and the department was too small for that; we needed everyone to be available for full-year advising of students), Partee, Prince, Roeper, Selkirk, Williams, Vergnaud. We were without a historical linguist, but got permission for a search and persuaded Roger Higgins to come back permanently starting in 1979 (he had been a visitor in 1976-77.) In fact, if we look at the list of regular faculty at the start of 1979-80, when Higgins had arrived and Kayne had left, we can see even more clearly that we were indeed into a period of relative stability, as claimed in the 1978 report: Bach, Frazier, Higgins, Partee, Prince, Roeper, Selkirk, Williams, Vergnaud. Of the 9 regular faculty at that time, 6 are still here (I'm counting Emmon, who is now Emeritus but still active and will be co-teaching a Structure of Algonquian course with Roger Higgins in Fall 1999.)

By the 1987-88, the number of regular faculty had grown from 9 to 10 with the addition of Angelika Kratzer in a new semantics position, and the regular faculty that year were Bach, Frazier, Higgins, Kratzer, McCarthy, Partee, Pesetsky, Roeper, Selkirk, Williams. The overlap between 1979-80 and 1987-88 is 7 of the 9/10. Major changes: Prince left in 1984, McCarthy came in 1985. Vergnaud was on the faculty from 1978 to 1982; Pesetsky was hired in 1983, and stayed until 1989.

Entering classes 1978-88: 1978: Yasuaki Abe, Toni Borowsky, Davida Charney, Shinsho Miyara, Mats Rooth

1979: Mieko Abe, Victoria Burke, Gennaro Chierchia, Dan Finer, James Pustejovsky, Betty Schlermann, Marcia Walter (Marcia Carlson)

1980: Mark Cobler, Charlie Jones, Taisuke Nishigauchi, Carolyn Quintero, Craig Roberts, Peter Sells

1981: Nina Dabek, Alison Huettner, Junko Ito, Nirit Kadmon, David Lebeaux, Ralf-Armin Mester, Scott Myers

1982: Jae-Woong Choe, Yoshi Kitagawa, Kiyoshi Kurata, Masanobu Ueda, Allesandro Zucchi

1983: Stephen Berman, T. Daniel Seely, Gautam Sengupta, Tong Shen, Karina Wilkinson

1984: John Boyd, Joyce McDonough, Bozena Rozwadowska, Xiaoping Teng, Michiko Terada, Anne Vainikka, Gert Webelhuth, Alessandro Zucchi

1985: Virginia Brennan, Molly Diesing, Elaine Dunlap, Maire NiChiosain, Jaye Padgett, Bernadette Plunkett, Koichi Tateishi, Changsheng Xi

1986: James Blevins, Ilan Hazout, Gregory Lamontagne, Victoria Liptak, Linda Lombardi, Yutaka Ohno, Roger Schwarzschild, Mari Takahashi, Alison Taub

1987: Juli Carter, Rose-Marie Dechaine, Jinqgi Fu, Lisa Green, Noriko Kawasaki, William Philip, Paul Portner, Sylvie Robidoux, Timothy Sherer

What follows is drawn principally from the materials we prepared for the 1988 Departmental Program Review. The reviewing team that time was Morris Halle, Vicki Fromkin, and C.L. (Lee) Baker. "Our main agenda" for that review was our felt need for a new position in phonetics, and a phonetics lab to go with it, and a need for an additional

position in syntax. The review committee supported our assessment of that need, and we were able to hire Peggy Speas in 1989 and John Kingston in 1990. Another item for discussion in the 1988 review was the possibility of adding a "straight" linguistics undergraduate major to supplement our 7 joint majors, since the long-discussed possibility of a 5-College linguistics B.A. program had clearly died by then. But on that item there was less consensus about whether we could do it with our faculty size without cutting into the quality of our Ph.D. program, something we would not want to risk. So that change did not come about until ten years later.

Note: in what follows, the present tense refers to 1988. I have inserted some 1999 notes, marked as such.

## **2.1. GLSA.**

The Graduate Linguistic Student Association, GLSA, is an organization whose members are all the registered graduate students in the Linguistics Department. It was established in the early 1970's, soon after the founding of the department, and under the enterprising leadership of Timothy Austin in the mid-1970's it was incorporated as a registered non-profit tax-exempt organization.

Elections are held at the beginning of the fall semester for president, secretary, and treasurer, and again at the beginning of the spring semester for president and secretary. Those students elected to these two positions also serve as student representatives at all faculty meetings, providing student input and taking part in all departmental decisions except those concerning financial aid to particular students.

[Note added 1999: Although we did not publicize it in official documents, the two student representatives had full voting rights on the Personnel Committee as well as in department meeting. That continued until the university expressly and explicitly prohibited it on the advice of University Counsel (for fear of lawsuits by faculty denied tenure or promotion, given the wording of official personnel policy.) Students continued thereafter to participate in Personnel Committee but as non-voting members. Also note that the present paid "GLSA Manager" position was in 1988 still an unpaid "treasurer" position.]

In addition to providing a forum for discussion of graduate student concerns, the GLSA sponsors colloquia, which generally meet on a weekly basis and feature speakers from both within the department (both students and faculty) and from outside. [1999 note: the number of student volunteers for colloquium presentations had already dwindled greatly by 1988, and the ratio of outside to inside speakers had climbed close to its present very high level. Colloquia remained weekly until just a few years ago.]

The GLSA also elects one of its members to manage the "Node", which contains the Departmental reading room and its library holdings. [1999 note: The Node has moved several times over its history, from the tiny cubicle under the tower stairs, to Room 319, the present Computer Room, to the more spacious "Ballroom" on the ground floor, (Room 126) which Lisa Selkirk managed to get converted into Node plus meeting-room some years after the 1988 report.]

Among the primary activities of the GLSA are its Publications series, which provide an important service to the field and have a wide national and international market. There are three different regular series:

(i) The University of Massachusetts Occasional Papers in Linguistics (UMOP), which have been published since UMOP I in 1974 and are now [1988] up to UMOP 12.

(ii) The Theses service: since 1977 all doctoral dissertations written in the department (including those completed before 1977) have been duplicated and bound by the GLSA and made available to the linguistic community. Orders were first taken at the November 1977 NELS meeting and thousands of copies of theses have been purchased since. All the theses ever written in the department are available through the GLSA.

(iii) NELS volumes: for the first several years of the existence of NELS (North Eastern Linguistics Society), whichever institution hosted the annual fall NELS meeting was also responsible for publishing the proceedings. In 1980 the UMass GLSA was invited to take over the production and sale of all subsequent NELS volumes, which it has done ever since.

The GLSA may be the most active and successful departmental graduate student of its kind; its nearest rivals, which have existed longer, are CLS at the University of Chicago, BLS at Berkeley, and the IULC at Indiana. [1999 note: IULC for a great many years played an extremely important service role in making unpublished works, ranging from unpublished papers to bibliographies to dissertations, available through a xeroxing and distribution service. That was where I offered my first "bibliography of works in linguistics and logic", which was subsequently updated twice by IULC volunteers; that was where we "semi-published" the Bennett and Partee paper when we realized we were never going to get it revised for publication but we did want to make it publicly available. They continue to have an active publications program, and continue to offer a diverse array of 'publications' ranging from short papers for \$1 to real books, but are no longer so highly visible and indispensable as they once were.] It is certainly an organization which reflects well the commitment, energy, independence, and professional maturity of our graduate students.

## **2.2. The Graduate Program 1978-1988.**

The objectives of our graduate program, primarily a Ph.D. program, have not changed substantially since inception, although our offerings have become richer. From its inception the objectives of the program have been defined in terms of developing quality and depth of research rather than breadth of coverage. Most of our Ph.D.'s go on to university careers, but the possibilities for non-university careers are increasing. We aim to help our students develop theoretical foundations and research skills of broad relevance while allowing them to choose and develop their own more specialized directions. [1999 note: This language, like the language found in the graduate program brochure, did not change much from 1972 to 1999. Frank Heny was the author of much of the original 'vision statement', particularly of much of the language which survived over the decades, and in recent years John McCarthy has been doing the most to upgrade and update our brochure (and our web pages) while preserving the continuity of expression of our core values.]

During the last years, our Ph.D. program has undergone a number of changes. The Ph.D. program used to be a four-year program. We now consider it a five-year program. The change seemed desirable for several reasons:

- (i) the rapid increase of "standard knowledge" in all subdisciplines of linguistics,
- (ii) the desirability of encouraging our students to enrich their training with related work in other departments where appropriate, e.g. in Philosophy for work in semantics, in Psychology for work in psycholinguistics; and
- (iii) the fact that four years had already become the exception rather than the norm for completing the Ph.D. coupled with the fact that TA-ships and other resources had become sufficient to allow a normal expectation of five years of support for Ph.D. candidates in good standing.

Similar considerations led to a restructured and very intensive first-year program and to the introduction of "proseminars" for the second year. The new first-year program could only be realized with the help of new assistantships for all first-year students. These special assistantships [1999: For many years now, these have been referred to as First Year Fellowships. They were still quite new in 1988. Emmon had persuaded Dean Murray Schwartz to institute them some time after we learned that Philosophy had persuaded Provost Puryear to institute a few of what are still called Puryear Fellowships for (one or two selected) first-year philosophy Ph.D. students.] free first-year students from time-consuming teaching obligations. The new broadly conceived first-year program, with 13 credits of coursework in the fall and 12 in the spring, led naturally to a change in our generals paper policy as well. Rather than having to write one generals paper in syntax or semantics and one in phonology or historical linguistics, students can now choose their paper topics from all five core areas offered in the department (plus field work).

The First Year curriculum in 1988 (normally expected of all students):

Fall:

LING 601, Intensive Intro to Generative Grammar (6 credits)

LING 603, Generative Phonology (3 credits)

LING 610, Semantics and Generative Grammar (3 credits)

LING 414, Phonetics (1 credit)

Spring:

LING 604, Syntactic Theory (3 credits)

LING 606, Phonological Theory (3 credits)

LING 611, Psychological Background to Linguistic Theory (3 credits)

LING 620, Formal Semantics (3 credits)

The first-year curriculum gives priority to syntactic theory (9 credits). This acknowledges the special place of syntax within generative linguistics. Out of the five core areas represented in our department, four are introduced to students in their first year: syntax, phonology/phonetics, semantics, psycholinguistics. An introduction to diachronic linguistics and typology is normally taken in the first semester of the second year. Introducing all five core areas of the department early on in the program makes it possible for students to choose any one of those areas as an area of specialization even if they initially lack some necessary additional skills (e.g. statistics, experimental methods, logic, philosophy of language, Old English, field methods, etc.)

The Second Year in 1988:

A normal course load in the second year (and thereafter) is 9 credits per semester. Students are expected to take LING 605, Language Change and Language Typology, in the fall. Apart from that, students may choose any suitable courses offered in the department or in other departments. We offer three courses that are especially geared toward second-year students:

LING 720, Proseminar in Semantic Theory

LING 730, Proseminar in Phonological Theory

LING 791A, Second Year Seminar.

[1999: This system of proseminars and the second and third year seminars still continues, as do the general papers requirements as described in the 1988 document. The curricular revisions described in the 1988 document occurred shortly after our faculty grew with the 1985 addition of Angelika Kratzer and concomitant increased strength in semantics. A new round of curricular revision, particularly affecting phonetics and the "menu" of required breadth courses in the first two years, took place after the addition of John Kingston to the faculty in 1990.]

Our Ph.D. program is in the midst of a modest growth period right now, from a nominally 4-year program with an entering class size average of 7 (30-35 students in residence at a time) to a nominally 5-year Ph.D. program with an average entering class of 8 (anticipating about 40 students in residence at a time.) No further growth in the program is presently contemplated, though once we succeed in making the two new faculty appointments we need, we may feel ready for slight further growth. But financial aid demands and the narrow job market for Ph.D.'s are more of a limiting factor than the number of faculty, so no major changes in size are foreseen or desired.

### **2.3. The undergraduate program 1978 - 1988.**

At the undergraduate level, we have several objectives, and several kinds of courses. On the one hand, we have two different introductory-level courses that can serve two different roles in a good liberal education for any student. Our two large multiple-section introductory courses, 101 and 201, fulfill two different General Education requirements - one in "social and behavioral sciences" and the other in "analytical reasoning" - and both are oversubscribed every semester, apparently no matter how many sections we add. The fact that these two quite different introductory courses fulfill two quite different General Education requirements reflects our conviction, largely shared across the field of linguistics, that linguistics occupies a uniquely pivotal role in its relation to the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Mathematics and Natural Science, and similarly bridges several of the classifications in the University's new General Education requirements.

[1999 note: Linguistics 201 has always been taught in multiple autonomous sections. In the 1970s one of the sections was usually taught by a faculty member who also served as T.A. advisor for the student-taught sections. Later it became common for all of the sections to be taught by students, with a single faculty advisor for TAs of 101 and 201, though this still varies somewhat from year to year. In fact, students very often get much of their TA advising from more senior students. The less technical introduction, 101, started as a large lecture course with TAs taking once-a-week discussion sections. At the beginning the reasons for that form of teaching were that there were not enough well-qualified post-first-year Ph.D. students who could autonomously teach all the sections that would be required, and that the conducting of discussion sections was one of the sources of support for first-year students. And there were some very successful teachers of large lecture 101 classes in the early years, including Don Freeman, Frank Heny, and especially Jay Keyser. Later when Freeman, Heny, Akmajian, and Keyser had all left, and none of the faculty felt very comfortable with the large lecture format, Emmon Bach as Head instituted the change of 101 from large lecture to autonomous sections (like 201). That format continued successfully until a few years ago, when a few ambitious faculty members, starting with Peggy Speas, volunteered to start up the large-lecture practice again. Peggy was followed by John Kingston and John McCarthy; all 101s are now done in the large-lecture format. Peggy Speas is now experimenting with the development of web-based materials to enrich 101.]

Beyond 101 and 201 we have a range of more advanced undergraduate courses that have roles to play both as service courses for other majors and in our own broad selection of joint majors. We don't have a straight undergraduate linguistics major, for the historical reason that in the early 1970's when the program was being designed, a majority of us felt that linguistics was still an inherently interdisciplinary field, and that it was a mistake to encourage students to specialize in it too soon. A majority of us would now defend the value of permitting such an option, and there has been under development for several years a proposal for a 5-College B.A. Program in Linguistics, designed to be accessible to students in any of the 5 colleges in the area (Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mt. Holyoke College, Smith College, and the University of Massachusetts). It might be desirable to develop a straight Linguistics major at the University.

Our more advanced undergraduate offerings not only prepare our majors and contribute to related majors, but have turned out to be one of the vehicles by which undergraduates in this very large university can have an experience which is more common at the best smaller schools, namely small classes with exceptionally talented fellow students, challenging material, and a dedicated teacher. Our advanced undergraduate courses have the reputation of being very hard but very good, and we certainly find that the students who sign up for them are almost without exception extremely bright, hard-working, and highly motivated, while very diverse in their backgrounds and other interests. We have thus come to see the upper end of our undergraduate program as fulfilling a mission akin to that of the University Honors program, a mission quite different from the broad service and general education mission of our introductory courses, and one for which small classes are part of the attraction and not a sign of underenrollment. [1999 note: That's what we tried to convince ourselves and the administration of, at least. But the next paragraph was later in the same report.]

Our undergraduate program is still not fulfilling its full potential at the upper division level. Our graduates have very positive things to say about their courses, the faculty, and the quality of their fellow students, but they note the small numbers and the relative lack of attention put into the undergraduate majors. Earlier plans to institute a Five-College B.A. in Linguistics were intended to address that issue, but it is not obvious that those plans will ever come to fruition.

A more likely change would be the addition of a straight Linguistics B.A. program here at the University. That will require additional faculty resources and additional secretarial resources as well. The objectives of such a program would be much like those of our current joint majors but with a richer range of upper division offerings in Linguistics than we can now provide. The two additional faculty positions that we need anyway could serve these needs as well if sufficient secretarial support is also added.

#### **2.4. Five-College cooperation in the 1980's.**

The School of Communications and Cognitive Science (formerly School of Language and Communication) at Hampshire College is very strong in undergraduate linguistics. Smith College is strong in psycholinguistics and philosophy of language. We have strong ties with both these institutions, somewhat weaker ones with Amherst College and Mount Holyoke College. The Five College Linguistics Group as an entity has become quite inactive except for publishing an annual listing of Linguistics courses available at the five colleges. Individual ties and communication remain good, and undergraduate students cross-register with some frequency. Plans for a Five College major in Linguistics have made no visible progress in over eight years.

[1999 note: 5-college cooperation was stronger in the 1970s and early 1980s than it was later, for several reasons. Elizabeth Bruss at Amherst College was an active advocate of 5-College cooperation and helped work with Five Colleges, Inc., to make things happen - 5-college colloquia, discussions of plans for a major, occasional conferences, and other activities. There were a number of energetic and outreach-oriented linguists at Hampshire College, and Murray Kitely in Philosophy at Smith College was always ready to be involved. The cooperation with Smith College became even stronger when Jill and Peter de Villiers moved there. Mt. Holyoke was only marginally involved but friendly. But the plans for the 5-College major moved very slowly. Alan Prince and Liz Bruss were in charge, and plans reached the stage of several serious drafts. But one drag was the knowledge that a major roadblock loomed ahead: Amherst College has always been extremely reluctant to approve any major for its students which is dependent on a critical mass of courses taught outside Amherst College, particularly at the University. (And this major would certainly require a substantial number of courses to be taken at UMass.) Then Liz Bruss died suddenly, very young, and after that the proposed major was clearly doomed, because without a committed, energetic, and forceful advocate at Amherst, it was known to be a hopeless cause. And the hole left by Liz's loss, plus the increasing growth and self-sufficiency of our department, gradually led to the replacement of general 5-College linguistics activity by specific loci of cooperation, such as cooperation between Roeper and de Villiers, and considerable involvement of Hampshire College faculty in the Cognitive Science projects funded by Sloan Foundation grants in the late 1970's and early 80's and continued in various lower-key forms since then. The Five College environment continues to be a great advantage for all the institutions, and there are vital specific cooperative activities and numerous specific cases of cross-institutional shared advising of students.]

## **2.5. Some indications of success as of 1988.**

The department was ranked as clearly among the top 5 Ph.D. programs in the country in the 1982 Assessment of Research Doctorate Programs in the United States, perhaps higher. (The rankings were not unambiguously linear.) Assessments solicited at the time of our 1980 Long Range Planning Status Report ranged from "among the top

two" to "among the top five".

Our Ph.D.'s have an excellent record of placement in leading universities in the U.S. and abroad as well as in research and technology industries, and our undergraduates have generally gone on to success in graduate school and/or careers.

Department faculty have received a variety of research and training grants from a variety of sources. Recent grants include:

(i) NIH Research grant to Frazier and Clifton (Psychology) 1986-89, Comprehending Sentences with Long-Distance Dependencies.

(ii) SDF Research grant to Partee, 1984-88, Formal Foundations of Semantics.

(iii) NSF Research grant to Selkirk and McCarthy, 1987-89, Domains of Sentence Phonology.

(iv) NIMH Training Grant to Frazier, Roeper, Rayner, Clifton, Mervis, (all UMass) and J. and P. de Villiers (Smith College), 1987-92, Training in Psycholinguistics.

Less recent but very important were two major interdisciplinary Sloan grants for the development of Cognitive Science. First was a Sloan Foundation grant on Language and Information Processing to a team from Linguistics and Computer Science, 1978-80. That was followed by a Sloan Foundation Grant in Cognitive Science to an expanded team from Linguistics, Computer Science, and Psychology, 1980-85.

It was the Sloan Grant that first supported the new secretarial position filled by Kathy Adamczyk as a Cognitive Science secretary, housed in Linguistics but serving the interdisciplinary grant activities. After the ending of the Sloan grants, Kathy was supported in Linguistics in part by Partee's SDF grant and in part by Lyn Frazier's psycholinguistics grants; and after that, we went through several nervous years in which we had to persuade three Deans to jointly continue to support Kathy's position, until finally we were able to get approval to make the position permanent.

### **3. Part III, Recent History, 1988 - 1999**

#### **3.1. Faculty.**

In syntax, we lost David Pesetsky to MIT in 1989 and Edwin Williams to Princeton in 1992. We hired Hagit Borer in 1990, Ellen Woolford in 1992 and Kyle

Johnson in 1993. Hagit left in 1997, and a syntax search has finally been approved for next year. In semantics, Emmon retired in 1992 and since then it has been virtually impossible to have any team-taught seminars or other "extra" offerings in semantics or across its various interfaces. Partee began a de facto permanent arrangement of spending one semester per year in Moscow starting in 1996-97. Semantics visitors Orin Percus in 1997-98 and Yael Sharvit in 1998-99 helped to fill the gap, and Lisa Matthewson will join the department as a regular faculty member in semantics, with strength in field linguistics, in the fall of 1999.

Perhaps the biggest change in the last ten years was the addition of John Kingston in phonetics and the phonetics-phonology interface in 1990. Along with the new phonetics lab, research grants, and the integration of phonetics into the Psycholinguistics Training Grant, the addition of Kingston also led to the reworking of the curriculum to make phonetics an integral part of training in phonology and to recognize phonology-related phonetics as a new specialty of the department on a par with the five previously recognized. Further strengthening of phonology is coming with our recruitment of Joe Pater to start in the fall of 1999; his areas are phonological theory and first and second language acquisition.

We also added Lisa Green to the faculty in 1997 in syntax and African-American English, but lost her to the University of Texas in 1999.

At the beginning of the fall of 1999, the regular faculty will be Frazier, Higgins, Johnson, Kingston, Kratzer, Matthewson, McCarthy, Partee, Pater, Roeper, Selkirk, Speas, Woolford, for a total of 13, and with plans to recruit for a 14th position in syntax next year.

### **3.2. The Graduate Program 1988 - 1999.**

The growth foreseen in the report written in 1988 was overoptimistic. Tight financial aid and a tight job market have kept our incoming classes down to an average of 6 in the last decade. On the other hand, it has become normal for students to be able to petition to be approved for a six-year program if their specialty demands it, so that for instance a psycholinguistics student may have an additional year of normal priority for financial support in order to take a full year of statistics and related courses in psychology.

When Kingston arrived and phonetics was added to the program, the first year course plan was revised to put in more of a "menu". In place of a fixed set of four courses in the second semester and one obligatory "foundation" course in the fall of the second year, students now have a "three out of four" choice in the period including the second semester of the first year and all of the second year. Comparing to the program in effect at the end of the Middle Years, the first semester is unchanged, but in the second

semester only phonology and syntax are "normally expected of everyone". The "three out of four" choice concerns the following four:

LING 605 Language Change and Language Typology

LING 611 Psychological Background to Linguistic Theory

LING 620 Formal Semantics

LING 614 Introduction to Phonetic Theory

The Generals paper policy did not need to be changed to accommodate phonetics, since it had already been changed to "any two distinct fields". It just needed to be agreed that phonetics was henceforth to be counted as a distinct field, which was indeed agreed.

One "constant" throughout the history of the program has been a certain degree of discontent with the generals paper procedures, and a problem with getting generals papers done by the announced deadlines. We have always been faced with a certain number of petitions for extensions of deadlines at every Graduate Student Progress Review meeting, and there are usually a few petition problems that occupy the majority of the time at those meetings. Every four or five years, with a new set of students, there seems to be a Town Meeting to discuss possible changes to the generals paper policy or to some of the timing involved. And every four or five years some change is introduced which seems to help somehow, at least for a year or two.

Our graduate students seem to be increasingly active in presenting papers at major regional and national conferences, as well as at organizing workshops and conferences themselves. One highly successful recent tradition is the annual "RUMJCLAM" (Rutgers-University of Massachusetts, Amherst Joint Class Meeting) conference/class jointly organized by Rutgers and UMass in Phonology. And just last year, in the fall of 1998, a new semantics MIT-UCONN-UMASS workshop was launched, organized mainly by graduate students; it was held at UConn the first year, will be held at MIT in fall 1999, and at UMass in 2000.

### **3.3. The Undergraduate Program 1988 -- 1999.**

After an unsuccessful attempt by Partee as Head to persuade the department to institute a straight (non-joint) linguistics major in approximately 1991, the subject was reintroduced in the late 1990's. This time there was agreement, and a proposal for the new major was submitted in the fall of 1997 and approved in the spring of 1998. Additions to the curriculum are being gradually introduced, and undergraduate "topics" seminars are also beginning to be offered, both with and without prerequisites. For the fall of 1999, for instance, there is a no-prerequisites Special Topics course in Discourse Analysis being offered in our department by Bob Rothstein (formerly of the recently abolished Slavic Department, now of Comparative Literature), and a mixed undergraduate-graduate course on Algonquian languages offered by Roger Higgins and

Emmon Bach.

### **3.4. Budgetary ups and downs.**

The earlier documents did not say much of anything about some of the extreme budgetary ups and downs this university, and with it the department, have been through. Lyn Frazier was hired just in time to encounter a three-year salary freeze, part of the extreme budgetary cuts of the 1970s imposed by the Dukakis administration. Those cuts brought to a screeching halt the remarkable growth spurt of the university that had started in the late 1960's and which Don Freeman and his "team" of young faculty had capitalized on in persuading the administration to commit itself to building up a linguistics department. Our department, like several others, was built or greatly transformed during that great growth period, when Massachusetts was out of synch with many other states and therefore able to attract top young people to a not yet proven but seemingly up-and-coming university. But the cuts of the second half of the 70's put at great risk the university's ambitions to become a first-rate research institution.

Even as early as the 1974 Linguistic Institute, the administration had become very nervous about putting up risk capital to hire the faculty needed for the Institute courses before the amount of tuition income needed to cover those costs could be guaranteed. The "senior" team of Freeman, Keyser, Bach, and Partee went to Provost Gluckstern offering to risk our own summer salaries to help guarantee the salaries of visiting faculty. Luckily, the administration decided to take the risk on itself then, and in the end the income to the Institute was indeed sufficient anyway.

One of hardest things about the budgetarily lean years in the late 70s was the uncertainty of financial support for our students. In those years we could not yet 'de facto guarantee' financial support for the full four years of the Ph.D., and students often had fractional TA or RAships. During the worst budget years, our students organized themselves on the model of the Economics students and took an active hand in collectively formulating policies for sharing scarce financial aid. The most poignant moment came when the continuing students voted to tell the department to offer the two or three TAs that we had "in the hand" to incoming students, trusting to our ability to come up with additional sources of aid for the continuing students before fall. But Parsons and Partee's 1973-75 NSF grant was not renewed for 1976, and Muffy Siegel, who should have had an RAship for her dissertation year, instead spent that year commuting to Hartford, Connecticut to teach linguistics in the Hartford School for training teachers of the deaf.

When Emmon obtained the First-Year Fellowships for incoming students from the Dean soon after the beginning of the financial upswing in the early 80's, it marked a major turning point in the stability of the department. That freed up a great deal of faculty and student time for more constructive purposes that had previously been spent in an

annual spring scramble to scrape together enough resources to support our students for one more year. And as noted in the description of the graduate program in 1988, that had a cascading effect in making possible a five-year program and an enriched first-year curriculum, something that could not happen in a program as egalitarian as ours if any of the first-year students had to teach.

That first major downturn in the mid 1970's came as a shock, and the inability of our administration to persuade the legislature to restore our budgets was one of the main reasons for the success of the faculty unionization drive at that time. Many of us voted for unionization in the belief that only the clout of a major union could give the university an effective voice in the Massachusetts legislature. (Counterfactual arguments about whether that was so and whether the university has thrived under unionization better than it would have without it have continued ever since.)

But there was a financial upturn after the downturn, and faculty salaries were relatively well restored and the financial support situation for students improved to the point that our students almost completely stopped having TAs in the Rhetoric Program (predecessor of today's Writing Program), long a staple source of support but with heavy teaching loads and not in linguistics. Our growth from 8 to 10 faculty happened from 1978 to 1985, the first helped by the Sloan Grant which seeded Lyn Frazier's position.

Another major downturn came in the late 1980's with the collapse of the "Massachusetts miracle" so loudly trumpeted during Dukakis's failed presidential bid. I was department chair then, and a large part of the job was working to keep up morale among graduate students and younger faculty, to persuade them that linguistics would be protected from feeling the effects of the worst of the cuts. And it was; by then the administration for the most part seemed to appreciate that we were something it could point to with pride and that it really didn't cost too much to maintain us so that we could keep trying to do our job with excellence. It was a period when we could not hope for growth, but at least we did not have the kinds of catastrophes experienced with the drying up of student financial support in Muffy Siegel's generation of the mid-70s. The number of incoming students was once or twice reduced as low as 5, and the norm began to be 6 or 7 rather than the buoyant 8 or 9 we had briefly experienced during the Sloan grant years. The graduate students unionized during that second financial downturn; that was the beginning of GEO. During the worst year of that period, the administration forced the departments to give back money out of budgets that had already been approved and allocated, several times during one year, and faculty and staff had to absorb some actual non-payment of salary days (eventually won back again after lengthy court fights led by the union.)

But times improved again, merit raises reappeared, graduate student stipends gradually began to improve, and our faculty grew again, although modestly: the administration was determined to reduce the overall size of the faculty, and it has done so.

Then came another downturn, and for those who had weathered the first two, it finally became really difficult to see downturns as aberrations, as temporary dips in a steady upward climb. Instead it felt as though we were doomed to constant cycles of good years and lean years. (Perhaps I was just allowing myself to feel pessimistic because I was no longer head and no longer had the responsibility for keeping up everyone's morale.)

But it was followed by a general upturn in the economy which we are in the midst of (or perhaps near the end of?) right now, and although the university budget has not recovered at a pace comparable to that of the state and of the general economy, Lisa has recently secured for us some major increases in student support that will enable us to increase the student stipends to a more competitive level and also for the first time to begin to have regular departmental student stipends for summer projects.

And the regular department faculty at the beginning of fall 1999 will include two new positions, one in phonology and one in semantics, bringing the current total to 13.

### **3.5. Some indications of success as of 1999.**

In the latest national rankings, which I think came out in 1994, the UMass Linguistics Department was ranked #4 nationally in quality of faculty and #1 nationally in quality of the training of graduate students. This has made us proud, (and we appreciate the sympathy of our students who concluded that we must be hard-working overachievers.)

We have continued to do well in research grants, teaching awards, fellowships and awards of various kinds to both students and faculty, excellent placement of our graduate students and good graduate school admissions results for our undergraduates, as can be seen by a perusal of the department's web pages. The new semantics journal *Natural Language Semantics* is co-edited by our faculty member Angelika Kratzer and our alumna Irene Heim. Our earlier Ph.D.'s are now in leadership positions around the country and around the globe. Interesting visitors continue to come to the department and enrich our environment. Partee and Bach both served terms as President of the Linguistic Society of America (1986 and 1995 respectively). I believe that our department must have set some records both within the university and within the field of linguistics for the number of NSF Fellowships our students have received over the years; I don't know exactly what statistics to look for, but that would be a nice project to work on sometime.

## **4. A Brief History of Space and Facilities.**

When the program first became a department, its first location was in Thompson Hall. In 1972, the department moved into South College. Initially, we had just the offices on the second floor. In 1972-73, Adrian Akmajian and Frank Heny shared what is now Lynne Ballard's office (233), Jay Keyser was in 224, which Emmon moved into when Jay left and which is now John McCarthy's, I was in my office (222), Dick Demers was in Lisa Selkirk's office (231), and both the regular secretary Marty Bowers and the graduate student/secretarial assistant Jeannine Langdoc had their desks in the main space in between, similar to where Kathy Adamczyk's desk and our work-study student's desk are now. There was a much-used ditto machine near the main office door – I think it was even electric. No such luxury as a xerox machine then. (I can't remember whether they had been invented yet; probably, but probably too expensive.) I think we also had, or soon thereafter acquired, a thermal master-maker: you could feed in a printed or typed page and it would make a ditto master from that. That was a great luxury.

It's harder for me to remember who was in which office of the four offices out by the "Lounge" (218, 220, 225, 227); collectively they must have been occupied by Jim Heringer, Tom Peterson, and Don Freeman (who also had an office in the Dean's office, where he was serving as Associate Dean). Maybe I'm wrong and Jim Heringer was in Lisa's office and Dick Demers didn't move into that office until a little later. Maybe there was student space in one of those offices; I can't reconstruct why it was necessary for some faculty to double up in offices, which it definitely was, unless possibly we didn't even "own" all four of the offices off the "Lounge" then. The "Lounge" was not yet a lounge then; we had not yet inherited our first round of secondhand furniture from the Dean, and there was no refrigerator, and I think we didn't get our first coffee machine until several years later. I think the Lounge began to be a Lounge while Emmon was Head and Debbi Nanni was a student; Debbi organized the painting of the lounge walls a creamy buff color with a nice orange stripe, which together with the Dean's donated furniture made a very noticeable difference in the "livability" of the department space.

The "Node" already existed in 1972, I believe, but it was a relatively small (but vital!) collection of books and journals in the tiny dark office under the stairs to the tower. We didn't have any offices on any other floors, I don't believe. The Node later expanded partly into room 319 (next paragraph), and several years ago moved down into the Ballroom (126), where it is now.

Lynne has filled me in with the following data about additions and changes in the subsequent years. She thinks, and this sounds right, that we got our T.A. offices on the 5th floor (in the tower) in 1976, and what's now the computer room, 319, at the same time. 319 has had many different uses over the years: it was an extension of the Node and a GLSA office for a long time, then a departmental meeting room and journal room, then partly a computer room and partly a place for language acquisition research, now entirely a computer room. We acquired the various small 3rd floor offices near that room at various times since then, including 317 (used these days for visiting faculty) in 1985.

In 1985, we got 317 and two rooms down under the Dean's offices, 103 and 105.

In 1986 we gave back 103 and 105 but got all the former Debate Club space underneath the main office (the “Ballroom”, 126, and the four offices surrounding it, 122, 124, 131, 133.) We also got the GLSA vault in the basement of South College in 1986. I don’t know when we first got the Mobile Units out in back of South College near Dickinson Hall, but I remember when Lisa Selkirk organized a clean-up, paint-up, haul-things-to-the-dump day just before the start of school in 1990. I’m pretty sure that’s the right year because I think John Kingston, who had just arrived, painted the little office, 321, that he was about to move into as his South College Space (to supplement his lab space in Bartlett 6). That work day, a Saturday, included a lot of work on the 5th floor offices and on the Mobile Units, which Lisa correctly figured might be used more if they were a bit more hospitable and comfortable. We lost the Mobile Units in 1993.

We got the phonetics lab in Bartlett and its initial furnishings in 1990, as part of the negotiated package that came with hiring John Kingston. We got room 08 (I’ve never seen it!), now used for visitors, in 1994, John McCarthy’s research space in 104 in 1996, the Language Acquisition Center in Herter 440 in 1997, and room 401 in 1998.

Every time there has been a review of our space and our space needs, the administration has agreed that our space situation is terrible, both in quantity and quality. And as the list above demonstrates, we keep getting little bits of additions; but the whole University suffers terrible space problems and new buildings tend to go to groups like Polymer Science and engineering that have ways of raising serious money. Lisa Selkirk has been the most persistent at working on space issues, both in terms of finding ways to improve the space we have and in working on finding ways of acquiring more. For every Head, space has been a problem. We constantly feel embarrassed at not being able to provide better space for students and for visitors, not to mention the poor first impression the physical condition of South College makes. Even I have long since lost my appreciation for the quaintness of the building (I think that happened when a piece of my ceiling almost fell on my head about 18 years ago), having seen other buildings at other universities (like the one Linguistics occupies at Ohio State) which are as “charming” as South College on the outside but have been renovated into modern functional buildings on the inside with proper electrical wiring, a reasonable heating and cooling system, good infrastructure for labs and computer facilities, and toilets that don’t need posted instruction sheets or “Head’s Head Memos” to stop them from running perpetually. (I hope Emmon’s Head’s Head memo is preserved somewhere for posterity.)

## **5. A postscript about the early transition years.**

To supplement the factual description of the early period of the department, I want to add a few words about some of the unavoidably painful aspects of that early transition.

As I mentioned in the opening paragraphs, it is much easier to build an excellent new department from scratch than it is to turn a second-rate department into a first-rate one, for many human reasons. But building an excellent new department from scratch is not simple either. How do you recruit the best students and faculty to a department which

is not yet fully established and whose future is therefore not at all assured? Don's strategy was to start by recruiting some outstanding junior faculty, get the administration to help provide some funds for attracting some outstanding graduate students, then bring in a couple of senior faculty members, all the time keeping the standards very high and 'working like hell' to make the dreamed-for future become the present reality as quickly as possible. And basically that was how it happened, and it worked, with the 1974 Linguistic Institute ideally timed, it turned out, to "show off" to the world what a great department we already had here by then. Starting even before 1974 we had a superb applicant pool for every entering class of Ph.D. students and outstanding applicants for every faculty position.

One factor that had helped Don's early strategy, and helped many other units at UMass in the University's big growth spurt in the late 60's and beginning of the 70's was the accidental fact that the Massachusetts State Legislature had been persuaded to invest in the development of UMass as a major research university just at a time when the national economy was in a slowdown and the academic job market was much worse than it had been during the early and middle 60's. That made top-notch new Ph.D.s like Demers, Akmajian and Heny more willing to risk the important early years of their academic futures on this institution.

But of course, the quality of faculty and students was not uniformly high instantly; one can never move instantly from zero to a full-blown top-notch department. And as a result, there were difficult decisions that had to be made in the very first few years. There was not enough assistantship money to support everyone, and some students received only partial funding. There were a number of M.A. students in the program who went through its transition from a small "Linguistics Program" to an aspiring department; M.A. students mostly did not receive any financial aid, if I remember correctly. So when there were student review sessions and meetings to discuss and decide the distribution of financial aid, and decisions to be made concerning M.A. students who wanted to go on to the Ph.D., the meetings were often protracted and "heavy". (For many years now financial aid has been left in the hands of the Head; that began to be possible only after we reached the point where we had enough sources of financial aid so that the decisions concerned who would get what assignment rather than who would get full, partial, or no funding. That change occurred during Emmon's Headship.) On the one hand, it seemed unfair to raise the standards in the middle of some student's program, in effect pulling the rug out from under them. On the other hand, it would seem unfair to be judging, say, second-year and third-year students by different standards at the same time. And yet without one or both of those things occurring, standards could never go up.

One striking and traumatic case concerned a Ph.D. student who took what he intended to be a year's leave of absence in 1972-73 after one or two years in the program, but failed to file for "Program Fee" to hold his place in the program, and therefore had to be considered for (re-) Admission for Fall 1973. That happened to be my first year here, when I was Graduate Program Director and therefore automatically Admissions Director. We considered his application together with other applications for Fall 1973, and his was not judged one of the best, given the rapidly rising strength of our applicant pools in

those first years. So after a long and searching discussion, he was not admitted. He then sued us, alleging that there was some non-academic reason involved (I can deny that), and claiming that his academic record was clearly strong (that was more problematic for us; it was after that experience that we realized it was dangerous to give only A's and Incompletes as grades.) That court case went on for several years "without a finding" (meaning his petition was never granted, but neither were we ever totally exonerated.) It was unpleasant both as an experience and in some of the associated newspaper publicity (since only the student's side was willing to talk to the newspapers). Even without the lawsuit, it was a very unhappy experience, as was every instance when some student who had been judged to meet the prevailing standards in 1970 or 1971 was judged not to be making sufficiently strong progress to receive financial support in 1972 or 1973 or 1974. We had to constantly remind ourselves that such decisions were necessary if we were to attain our goal of excellence, and we had to keep convincing ourselves that achieving such a goal would do more good in the long run than being fair (that's what the alternative felt like, really) to the students who were caught in the transition.

There were some very difficult decisions involving junior faculty as well. Fritz Newmeyer's book about the first 25 years of transformational grammar documents one of our firings (technically a non-renewal of contract), with remarks about it that represent the reaction of quite a few linguists around the country at the time. Since it's in that book, I won't repress the name. Jim Heringer came up for renewal of his contract in 1972-73, my first year, when I was also Personnel Committee Chair. Heringer was well liked by all and had made some important contributions in the framework of generative semantics. But after a painstakingly thorough review, and with a Personnel Committee that at that time included the two student representatives as voting members, it was decided that the Department could not recommend renewal of Heringer's contract. There was a whole series of appeals and grievance hearings, but the decision was upheld at all levels. Tom Peterson, whose renewal decision was due to be made at a meeting a week or so after Heringer's, resigned preemptively before the meeting was held. As Newmeyer's book reports, many linguists around the country interpreted our action as a signal that we were choosing sides in the generative semantics/ interpretive semantics controversy. I can vouch that that had nothing to do with the decision, but of course there was no way to make a public response to an opinion that was circulating in the non-public conversations of individual linguists. It was painful to know that some people could have such an opinion of our department's integrity in decision-making.

But I would say that we got through the painful parts of those early years in a principled and honorable manner, and I believe that there is no part of the record that we ever were or ever needed to be ashamed of or embarrassed by. It was not pleasant to make the hard decisions, but it was necessary, and I developed the very highest admiration for the wisdom, character, and humaneness of our core junior faculty in the year of the hardest decisions (1972-73), Adrian Akmajian, Dick Demers, and Frank Heny, as well as for the first two Heads, Don Freeman and Jay Keyser.

In the case of the students, by about 1973 or 1974 we had achieved the standards for meriting continuing financial support that we have stayed with ever since, standards

that were set with the classes that entered in 1971 and 1972. (Gary Bevington and Linda Thomas were the two students who entered before 1971 who obtained Ph.D.s in the department. A substantial number of students from before 1972 did receive MAs but did not go on to the Ph.D.)

And in the case of faculty, we have never had to make a single negative reappointment or tenure decision since the one (potentially two) in 1972-73. One silver lining to the cloud of having to make those first negative decisions was that the reputation we got then for being able to make tough decisions was extremely valuable in giving credibility to our subsequent string of uniformly positive decisions. And it may well be the case – I hope so -- that the pain that we subjected ourselves and our students and colleagues to in the first few years was like an inoculation and helped (together with good hiring and admissions decisions) to make it unnecessary to experience that kind of pain in the more than 25 years since.

**APPENDIX: Faculty, Department Heads, Graduate Program Directors 1970-1999.****Faculty**

Akmajian, Adrian	70-74	Keyser, Samuel J.	72-77
Aoun, Joseph	81-82 (Vis.)	Kingston, John	90-present
Bach, Emmon	73-present	Kratzer, Angelika	85-present
Beck, Sigrid	96-97 (Vis.)	Lamontagne, Gregory	96-97 (Vis.)
Bevington, Gary	70-71	Matthewson, Lisa	99-present
Borer, Hagit	90-97	McCarthy, John J.	81-82, 85-present
Bresnan, Joan	73-75	McDaniel, Dana	89-90 (Vis.)
Chierchia, Gennaro	86-87 (Vis.)	Muysken, Pieter	82-83 (Vis.)
Cooper, Robin	76-77 (Vis.)	Partee, Barbara H.	72-present
Dell, François	88-89 (Vis.)	Pater, Joseph	99-present
Demers, Richard	68-75	Percus, Orin	97-98 (Vis.)
Deprez, Viviane	92-93 (Vis.)	Pesetsky, David	83-89
Frazier, Lyn	78-present	Peterson, Thomas	71-73
Freeman, Donald C.	68-76	Prince, Alan	75-84
Gafos, Diamandis	96-97 (Vis.)	Richards, Norvin	97-98 (Vis.)
Green, Lisa	97-present	Rizzi, Luigi	81-82 (Vis.)
Heim, Irene	94-95 (Vis.)	Roeper, Thomas	73-present
Heny, Frank	70-75	Selkirk, Lisa	74-present
Heringer, James	71-73	Sharvit, Yael	98-99 (Vis.)
Higgins, F. Roger	76-77 (Vis.), 79-present	Speas, Margaret	89-present
Ito, Junko	93-94 (Vis.)	Stowell, Tim	82-83 (Vis.)
Johnson, Kyle	93-present	Uriagereka, Juan	88-89 (Vis.)
Kahn, Daniel	77-79 (Vis.)	Williams, Edwin	75-92
Kayne, Richard	78-79 (Vis.)	Vergnaud, Jean-Roger	78-82
Keer, Edward	98-99 (Vis.)	Wilkins, Wendy	77-78 (Vis.)
Kempson, Ruth	82-83 (Vis.)	Woolford, Ellen	92-present
Kenstowicz, Michael	84-85 (Vis.)	Vetter, David	70-72
		Zimmermann, T.E.	89-90

**Department Heads.**

Don Freeman, Acting Chair of Linguistics Program 1969-70; Chair of Linguistics Program 1970-71; Head, Linguistics Department, 1971-72.

Samuel J. Keyser, Head, 1972-77

Emmon Bach, Head, 1977-85 [Selkirk Acting Head 1982-83]

Lisa Selkirk, Head, 1985-87

Barbara Partee, Head, 1987-93 [Selkirk Acting Head 1989-90]

John McCarthy, Head, 1993-96

Ellen Woolford, Head, 1996-98

Lisa Selkirk, Head, 1998-present.

**Graduate Program Directors 1971 – present.**

[Note: we are not completely sure of all the starting and ending dates; corrections welcome.]

Frank Heny	71-72
Barbara Partee	72-75
Edwin Williams	75-81
Roger Higgins	81-85
Lyn Frazier	85-86
Angelika Kratzer	86-87
Emmon Bach, Acting GPD	88
Roger Higgins, Acting GPD	89
John McCarthy	90-92
Peggy Speas	92-93
John McCarthy	94
Kyle Johnson	95-99
Ellen Woolford	99-