

## Language Documentation and Description in Africa (A003810)

**Course size** *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

**Credits 5.0** **Study time 150 h**

**Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2023-2024**

A (semester 1) Dutch, English Gent lecture

**Lecturers in academic year 2023-2024**

Goes, Heidi LW21 staff member  
de Schryver, Gilles-Maurice LW21 lecturer-in-charge

**Offered in the following programmes in 2023-2024**

	crdts	offering
Bachelor of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject Arabic and Islamic Studies)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject China (China Track))	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject China (UGent Track))	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject India)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject Japan)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in African Languages and Cultures	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in History	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Moral Sciences	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy	5	A
Exchange Programme African Languages and Cultures	5	A
Linking Course Master of Arts in African Studies	5	A
Preparatory Course Master of Arts in African Studies	5	A

**Teaching languages**

English, Dutch

**Keywords**

language endangerment, language death, language revitalization, language documentation, culture documentation, language description, archiving, dissemination, Bantu, Africa

**Position of the course**

This course provides a broad introduction to language documentation and description, a new sub-discipline within linguistics, with special attention to the African languages. A recent international handbook is being used as guide (Boerger *et al.* 2020); during the classes the examples are taken from the experiences of the BantUGent research group.

**Contents**

Part 1: Theory  
Lesson 1 – Language endangerment, language death and language revitalization: What?  
Lesson 2 – Language and culture documentation: What?  
Lesson 3 – Themes, motivations and ethical aspects  
Part 2: A language and culture documentation project  
Lesson 4 – Planning of a documentation project  
Lesson 5 – The documentary corpus and archive  
Lesson 6 – BantUGent GUEST 1  
Part 3: Equipment and software  
Lesson 7 – Equipment

Lesson 8 – Software  
Part 4: Fieldwork  
Lesson 9 – Data management and elicitation  
Lesson 10 – Fieldwork  
Lesson 11 – BantUGent GUEST 2  
Part 5: Post-field processing  
Lesson 12 – Archiving, description, publication and dissemination

**Initial competences**

Secondary school.

**Final competences**

A good understanding of what language documentation and description in Africa entail.

**Conditions for credit contract**

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

**Conditions for exam contract**

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

**Teaching methods**

Lecture

**Learning materials and price**

Handbook (Boerger *et al.* 2020); own PowerPoint presentations; own equipment and software demonstrations; own audio, photos and videos; BantUGent examples.

**References**

Boerger, Brenda H., Sarah R. Moeller, Will Reiman & Stephen Self. 2020. *Language and Culture Documentation Manual*. <https://leanpub.com>: Leanpub.

**Course content-related study coaching**

Possibility to ask questions during and after class, via e-mail, and through Ufora.

**Assessment moments**

end-of-term assessment

**Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period**

Written assessment

**Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period**

Written assessment

**Examination methods in case of permanent assessment**

**Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment**

not applicable

**Calculation of the examination mark**

100% periodic evaluation (written exam)

**Facilities for Working Students**

Instead of being physically present during class, self-study of the handbook, in combination with the slides which are uploaded to Ufora following each lesson. Participate in the written exam like the regular students.