

## 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 in academic year 2024-2025**

A (semester 1)

Dutch, English

Gent

**Lecturers in academic year 2024-2025**

Pacchiarotti, Sara

LW21

lecturer-in-charge

Bostoen, Koen

LW21

co-lecturer

**Offered in the following programmes in 2024-2025**

[Bachelor of Arts in African Languages and Cultures](#)

**crdts**

**offering**

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

[Elective Set African Studies](#)

5

A

[Elective Set Linguistics](#)

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**

Group work, Seminar, Independent work

**Study material**

Type: Handbook

Name: Boerger et al. (2020)

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Language : English

Online Available : Yes

Type: Slides

Name: own PowerPoint presentations

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Language : English

Available on Ufora : Yes

Type: Audiovisual Material

Name: own audio, photos and videos

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Language : English

Available on Ufora : Yes

Type: Other

Name: own equipment and software demonstrations

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Language : English

Available on Ufora : Yes

Type: Other

Name: BantUGent examples

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Language : English

Available on Ufora : Yes

**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**

continuous assessment

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

Participation, Assignment

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

examination during the second examination period is possible in modified form

**Calculation of the examination mark****Facilities for Working Students**

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