

Swahili II (A005299)

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 2026-2027

A (semester 2)	Dutch, English	Gent	practical independent work seminar
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Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Shayo, Gundelinda	LW21	staff member
Bostoen, Koen	LW21	lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027

	crdts	offering
Bachelor of Arts in African Languages and Cultures	5	A
Micro-credential Swahili	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

Teaching languages

English, Dutch

Keywords

Swahili, Bantu, East-Africa

Position of the course

This introductory course is a follow-up of Swahili I and further elaborates on both the present-day role of Swahili as a lingua franca in East-Africa and its historical status as language of the classical Swahili culture. The students acquire more Swahili vocabulary as well as further insights in the grammar of Swahili as a Bantu language with special focus on morphology, syntax and the interaction between the two domains. In this way students learn how to translate more complex sentences from Swahili to Dutch and the other way around. Moreover, they learn how to make morpho-syntactic analyses of Swahili. The course also offers them more advanced competences to understand spoken and written Swahili and to speak and write it themselves.

Contents

By means of longer dialogues and written texts pertaining to the daily life in and the cultures of East-Africa the students acquire and exercise new Swahili vocabulary and the morpho-syntactic structures of Swahili grammar. They also learn how to use this vocabulary and grammar both orally and in written form (read, write, listen, speak). They acquire the language skills needed to write basic Swahili texts and to perform more advanced conversations pertaining to everyday life.

Initial competences

Having followed the Swahili I course or having acquired elsewhere the skills transferred that course.

Final competences

1 The objectives of this course correspond to the following general objectives of

the Bachelor in African languages and cultures:

B.1.1. Acquire insights into African linguistics.

B.1.2. Command the grammatical structure of Swahili and Lingála and develop an elementary oral fluency in both languages as a generative basis to acquire active competence in those and other Bantu languages.

2 In terms of language acquisition, reaching level A2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

The student can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). He/she can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. He/she can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.

3 As for linguistics, acquiring a scientific understanding of the basic structures of Swahili grammar, particularly with respect to morphology, syntax and the interaction between the two domains.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Seminar, Practical, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

Weekly seminar by the titular; weekly language practice classes by the language teacher; accompanied self study (weekly exercises at home); intermediary test. Facilities are provided to students who do not speak Dutch. Students who miss more than 20% of the practicals without legitimate justification can no longer participate in the examination. Participation in the writing exercises is also compulsory.

If the classes mentioned above cannot take place on campus due to COVID-19 restrictions, online alternatives will be offered.

Study material

Type: Handbook

Name: McGrath, D. and L. Marten. 2003. Colloquial Swahili: the complete course for beginners. London: Routledge.

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Language : English

Online Available : No

Available in the Library : Yes

Available through Student Association : Yes

Usability and Lifetime within the Course Unit : intensive

Usability and Lifetime within the Study Programme : intensive

Usability and Lifetime after the Study Programme : occasionally

Type: Handbook

Name: Swahili: A Comprehensive Grammar (forthcoming)

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Author : Koen Bostoën, Mary Charwi & Maud Devos

Oldest Usable Edition : 2026

Online Available : Yes

Available in the Library : Yes

Available through Student Association : No

Usability and Lifetime within the Course Unit : intensive

Usability and Lifetime within the Study Programme : intensive

Usability and Lifetime after the Study Programme : intensive

References

– ASHTON, E.O. 1947 Swahili Grammar. London : Longmans (reedited until '70)

- DE SCHRUYVER, G-M. et al. Online Swahili-English Dictionary: <http://www.goswahili.org/dictionary/>
- JOHNSON, F. 1939. A Standard English-Swahili dictionary. London: Geoffrey Cumberledge.
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- MDEE J.S & MASSAMBA D.P.B et al. 1996. Tuki English-Swahili Dictionary. Dar es Salaam: Institute of Kiswahili Research.
- PERROT, D.V. 1951. Teach yourself Swahili. London: English University Press
- RACINE-ISSA, Odile. 2003. Le swahili sans peine. Paris: Assimil (met audiomateriaal)
- SACLEUX C. 1939-1941. Dictionnaire swahili-français, 2 vols. Paris: Institut d'Ethnologie
- TUKI/UNESCO/SIDA. 1990. Kamusi sanifu ya isimu na lugha. Dar es Salam: Tuki/Unesco/Sida.
- ZAWAWI, Sharifa M. 1998. Jifunze Kiswahili Chetu, Vol. 2: Learn Our Kiswahili. Lawrenceville, New Jersey: Africa World Press.
- ZAWAWI, S.M. 2001. Kiswahili Kwa Kitendo: An Introductory-Intermediate Course. Lawrenceville, New Jersey: Africa World Press. Accompanying audio files: <http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu/swahili/index.html>

Course content-related study coaching

Interactive counselling through e-mail or by (electronic) appointment (office, MS Teams, Skype, etc.).

Assessment moments

end-of-term assessment

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

Oral assessment, Written assessment

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

Oral assessment, Written assessment

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

not applicable

Extra information on the examination methods

The written and oral exam take place succesively. The students first pass the written exam simultaneously and then individually the oral exam. Students who miss more than 20% of the practicals without legitimate justification can no longer participate in the examination.

Calculation of the examination mark

100% periodic evaluation: written exam (75%) and oral exam (25%). Students who do not participate in (one of the parts of) the assessment, or have a score lower than 10/20 for one of the parts, automatically fail the entire course. End scores higher than 10/20 will, in this case, be reduced to the highest non-passing score.

Facilities for Working Students

1. Recordings of the grammar classes can be made available
2. Attending language practice classes is normally compulsory, but exceptions for working students can be considered
3. Possible rescheduling of the examination to a different time in the same academic year
4. Feedback can be given by email, telephone or during an appointment during or after office hours

Extra information:

It needs to be pointed out that acquiring a new language without attending the course is not obvious. This is especially so for the practice sessions.

For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the faculty of Arts and philosophy and/or <https://www.ugent.be/lw/en/degree/fsa/workingandstudying.htm>

