

German Linguistics: Language System and Language Change (A006657)

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

Credits 5.0 **Study time 150 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2026-2027

A (semester 2) German Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Breitbarth, Anne LW06 lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027

	crdts	offering
Master of Science in Teaching in Languages(main subject Linguistics and Literature)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - German)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - German)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - German)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject German)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject German - Greek)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject German - Italian)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject German - Scandinavian Studies)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject German - Spanish)	5	A
Master of Arts in Historical Linguistics and Literature	5	A
Exchange Programme Linguistics and Literature	5	A

Teaching languages

German

Keywords

German, language change on the different levels of the language system (syntax, semantics, word-formation, phraseology, morphology, phonology, pragmatics)

Position of the course

This advanced course provides students with a thorough insight into diachronic change within the German linguistic system, and into the relevant academic literature. Improvement of research competencies is another goal of the course. At the same time, students maintain and improve their language proficiency at an advanced level in an academic context.

Contents

The content of the course will address the diachronic changes at the level of the language system (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics) and how to account for them linguistically. Based on lectures on the one hand and weekly tasks (reading, data analysis etc.) on the other hand, relevant issues from German diachronic linguistics and theories of language change will now be discussed at an advanced level.

Initial competences

During Ba3, students have acquired thorough proficiency in German and substantial insight into topics in synchronic (and diachronic) German linguistics. Relevant issues from German system linguistics will now be discussed at a very advanced level.

Final competences

- 1 Ability to interpret theoretically the processes of language change affecting German
- 2 To approach the topics in question in a critical, scientific analytical manner
- 3 To handle the relevant academic literature with an independent, critical mind
- 4 Critically evaluate theories on the basis of data from historical German (for instance from diachronic corpora).
- 5 Ability to use German at an advanced level (writing and speaking proficiency, a well-developed linguistic intuition, a writing and speaking style appropriate to academic contexts)

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

Lecture, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

- lecture: 75min/week, theoretical framework
- independent study: preparation of weekly tasks (alternating reading tasks and small research tasks)
- 75min/week: discussion of the (reading) tasks, seminar based on the input from the students

Study material

Type: Handbook

Name: Historische Sprachwissenschaft des Deutschen. Eine Einführung in die Prinzipien des Sprachwandels. 4.

überarb.u. erw. Aufl. Tübingen: Narr.

Indicative price: € 25

Optional: yes

Language : Other

Author : Nübling, Damaris, Antje Dammel, Janet Duke & Renata Sczcepaniak.

Available in the Library : Yes

Additional information: The book is available in the library. It is recommended as background reading on the topics of the course.

Type: Slides

Name: slides

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Available on Ufora : Yes

Type: Reader

Name: Reader with articles

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Available on Ufora : Yes

References

The standard references in German system linguistics

Course content-related study coaching

Individual and group tutoring

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

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

Written assessment open-book

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

Written assessment open-book

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Participation, Presentation, Assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible in modified form

Extra information on the examination methods

Details on the in-session evaluation: "participation" stands for the weekly preparation of reading or mini-research tasks, which are to be submitted before the next class. Part of the classes is based on this input.

Calculation of the examination mark

50% in-session (permanent) evaluation: weekly preparatory tasks

50% post-session evaluation (written exam)

Important:

If the student does not pass the in-session assessment, a second opportunity is offered through a compensatory activity between the first and second exam periods.

If the student does not participate in the in-session OR postsessional evaluation, or has less than 10/20 for one of the evaluations, they can no longer pass the course as a whole. In case the average of the final score is equal to or higher than 10/20, the average is reduced to the highest non-passing grade (=9).

Facilities for Working Students

1. Possible exemption from certain educational activities requiring student attendance

2. Possible rescheduling of the examination to a different time in the same academic year

3. Feedback can be given by email, telephone or by appointment

For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the faculty of Arts and philosophy (<https://www.ugent.be/student/nl/administratie/flexibel-studeren>)