

German Linguistics: Debating Linguistic Variation (A006658)

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 1)	German	Gent		
			lecture	0.0h
			seminar	0.0h
			independent work	0.0h

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Leuschner, Torsten 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
Exchange Programme Linguistics and Literature	5	A

Teaching languages

German

Keywords

variation, language change, corpora, popularization, Sprachkritik by linguists and laypeople

Position of the course

In this advanced course, students acquire a thorough understanding of variation and on-going change in present-day German and of the relevant points of view within academic and popular Sprachkritik. While doing so, they maintain and expand their academic proficiency in German.

Contents

The content of the course refers to patterns of variation in present-day German through the prism of their popular perception/critique and scientific explanation. Based on weekly presentations which form the occasion for discussion, relevant topics, theories and debates concerning issues in synchronic linguistics will be dealt with at an advanced level through patterns of variation in present-day German on the one hand and divergent perspectives on them from linguistic criticism ("Sprachkritik", bioth academic and popular). The weekly topics are introduced by the lecturer, followed the next week by an respective in-depth presentation by a (group of) student(s). If external experts are brought in for a session of its preparation, students can be assigned the task of leading the discussion.

Initial competences

Students have acquired thorough proficiency in German and substantial insight into major topics in synchronic German linguistics in the Bachelor

Final competences

- 1 to demonstrate a thorough insight into variation in present-day German, especially with regard to on-going linguistic changes and their reflection in divergent perspectives (academic and popular) on linguistic criticism ("Sprachkritik")
- 2 to support this insight through autonomous research tasks in connection with the weekly topics, potentially using GenAI
- 3 to critically evaluate the scientific and popular literature on language variation and the theories and interpretations it contains
- 4 to be thoroughly proficient in written and spoken German, including techniques for adequately collating and referencing information, potentially involving the responsible use of GenAI

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

Seminar, Lecture, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

The course consists of weekly lectures and interactive seminars (75 minutes), with active participation by the students expected during the seminars. Each student is also expected to give, or collaborate in, an interactive oral presentation which is then discussed in class. The presentation subsequently forms the basis for a written paper.

If an external expert is brought in for a session, students can be assigned the task of preparing and/or chairing a discussion. Such sessions may be held online.

This course assumes that students use generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) responsibly. A reflection on the (non-)use of GenAI is mandatorily included in the written paper and may be discussed during the oral exam.

Lessons are not recorded.

Study material

Type: Handbook

Name: Sprachkritik: Ansätze und Methoden der kritischen Sprachbetrachtung (2. Auflage) - Berlin/Boston: deGruyter 2016
Indicative price: € 40
Optional: yes
Language : Other
Author : Killian, Jörg / Niehr, Thomas / Schiewe, Jürgen
Oldest Usable Edition : 2. Auflage 2016
Available in the Library : Yes

Type: Syllabus

Name: Sprachkritik
Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
Optional: no
Language : Other
Available on Ufora : Yes

Type: Slides

Name: Variation im Deutschen
Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
Optional: no
Language : Other
Available on Ufora : Yes

References

The standard references of German 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

Oral assessment open-book

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

Oral assessment open-book, Assignment

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

in-sessional: oral presentation, written assignment, participation

post-sessional: oral exam

Calculation of the examination mark

80% in-sessional evaluation

The written assignment (Hausarbeit) accounts for 40% of the extra-sessional evaluation. The remaining 40% consist of 20% for the oral presentation and 20% for general participation in its various forms (incl. preparing and/of leading a discussion of an expert if relevant).

20% post-sessional evaluation

The post-sessional evaluation consists of an oral exam that takes the form of an reflection on the written assignment, including its embedding in the course as a whole.

All parts of evaluation are mandatory in order to pass the course. If a student fails to undergo part of the evaluation and the final mark is nevertheless 10 or more out of 20, the final mark is reduced to 9/20.

For the second examination period, the written assignment is re-submitted in revised form, and the oral exam is taken again.

Facilities for Working Students

1. Students cannot be excused from attending lectures.
2. Possible rescheduling of the presentation to a different time in the same academic year
3. Alternative time for feedback is possible

For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the faculty of Arts and philosophy