

English Linguistics: Functional Grammar (A006741)

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 1) English Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Taverniers, Miriam 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 - English)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - German)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Greek)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Italian)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Latin)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Scandinavian Studies)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Spanish)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - English)	5	A
Exchange Programme Linguistics and Literature	5	A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

English, linguistics, functional grammar, functional linguistics, functionalist linguistics

Position of the course

This master's level course gives students insight into the aims of Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), with a special focus on its application to texts.

Position of the course in terms of language proficiency: In the master programme in English, students are expected to develop from an initial CEFR C1 level into a first-stage C2 level ("Mastery").

Exchange students are welcome in this course provided that (1) they are MA students (general requirement: exchange students can only take courses corresponding to their own study level), and (2) they have a foundation in grammatical theory and analysis of English, which will be assumed as a starting point for this course.

Contents

Introduction to Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG); theory, description and application.

The model adopted is Halliday's version of Systemic Functional Grammar, more specifically the ideational component within that model (i.e. the way in which representational meanings are construed). Topics covered in the course include the representation of events, verb alternations, clause combining, nominalization as a type of grammatical metaphor. Description and analysis will focus initially on the clause and then extend to full texts, with an exploration of how choices in the clauses within a text contribute to its overall meaning.

Initial competences

To have completed at least two English linguistics courses from Ba1 and Ba2 (excluding English Proficiency I and II, and English Language/Text Proficiency I, II and III).
To master English at CEFR C1 level ("Expert"/"Effective operational" proficiency).

Final competences

- 1 Demonstrate understanding of systemic functional linguistics with emphasis on the ideational component.
- 2 Describe and analyse categories of the ideational metafunction within systemic functional linguistics using examples.
- 3 Identify and explain the relationship between lexicogrammatical structures and their functions in different contexts.
- 4 Apply the acquired concepts and analytical tools of systemic functional linguistics to analyse new text data.
- 5 Relate functional sentence analysis to the choices made by speakers/writers in the text as a whole.
- 6 Relate choices at the clause level to different text types or genres, and assess how language contributes to their communicative goals.
- 7 Distinguish patterns and themes in text data based on the principles of systemic functional linguistics, and draw overarching conclusions.
- 8 Utilise digital methods to work on projects in one or more phases of a research process, either collaboratively with fellow students or individually.
- 9 Reflect on the value of the course for future professional and academic development.
- 10 Act with academic integrity (to respect authorship and to not commit plagiarism; to correctly refer to previous scientific literature; to take into account ethical dimensions of scientific research; to use generative AI in a responsible way and report and reflect on this in a transparent manner).

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

Extra information on the teaching methods

- Delivery of content through lectures, using Powerpoint.
- Coached exercises.
- Group work: Text analysis sessions in small groups with coaching and feedback by the lecturer.
- Presentation of the results of the group work for the whole class
- Blended learning: interactive exercises and tasks (made in groups) in shared online learning environments.
- Lessons take place on campus. Lesson recordings are not utilized unless specifically requested or required.

Study material

Type: Syllabus

Name: Coursebook available via Ufora

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Available on Ufora : Yes

Type: Slides

Name: Slides available via Ufora

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Available on Ufora : Yes

Type: Handouts

Name: Handouts available via Ufora

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Available on Ufora : Yes

References

Eggins, Suzanne. 1994. *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics*. London: Pinter.

Halliday, M.A.K. & Christian M.I.M. Matthiessen. 2004. *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. 3rd edition. Oxford: Oxford UP.

Course content-related study coaching

Interactive coaching through Ufora and e-mail; in groups in the seminars; personally after prior e-mail appointment.

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

Calculation of the examination mark

100% continuous assessment

Facilities for Working Students

Facilities:

1 Student attendance during educational activities is required

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

3 Feedback can be given during an appointment during office hours

For more information contact the monitoring service of the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy: <https://www.ugent.be/lw/nl/student/studiestudentenbegeleiding/trajectbegeleiding.htm>