Bantu Corpus Linguistics and Lexicography

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2017-2018

A (semester 1)

Seminar (coached exercises and practical PC room classes)
PBL Tutorial (problem-based learning)

Lecturers in academic year 2017-2018

de Schryver, Gilles-Maurice LW21 lecturer-in-charge
Bostoen, Koen LW21 co-lecturer

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

Bantu languages, corpus linguistics, lexicography, data-driven language technology

Position of the course

This is an advanced course in which corpus linguistics for the Bantu languages as well as data-driven lexicography is introduced. Students acquire an in-depth knowledge of the methodologies, the tools, as well as the strengths and limitations of the analytical apparatus, and are invited to put the acquired knowledge into practice.

Contents

Corpus linguistics is a booming field, well covered in both basic textbooks (e.g. Biber et al. 1998, Kennedy 1998, McEnery & Wilson 2001) as well as in more advanced studies (e.g. McEnery et al. 2006, Renouf & Kehoe 2009, McEnery & Hardie 2012), which has largely been used to investigate the world’s major languages (e.g. Sinclair 1991, Meyer 2002, O’Keeffe & McCarthy 2010). However, even in collections which aim at sampling the world’s languages, the result deals largely with European languages (e.g. Wilson et al. 2006). The same can, mutatis mutandis, be said about data-driven lexicography. In this advanced course this status quo is challenged by focusing on corpus linguistics and lexicography for the Bantu language family. Given the state of the discipline, results from the wider field of African language technology (De Pauw et al. 2006-16) are also brought in.

Each class consists of two parts. In the first a topic from the list below is considered, and in the second the newly acquired knowledge is immediately put into practice on the computer.

Through state-of-the-art literature students are able to familiarize themselves with the early stages, development, and current use of data-driven methods in Bantu linguistics and lexicography. The differences with other approaches to data collection, data analysis and data synthesis (including questionnaires, stimuli, grammaticality judgement tests, introspection and intuition) are also given due attention.

Knowledge of Bantu languages or other African languages is an advantage, but not a prerequisite to follow this course. Each week students are asked to read one or more journal articles or book chapters as preparation for the lesson. The contents of these articles and chapters are discussed during class and put in a broader perspective.

**Initial competences**

‘Bachelor in African Languages and Cultures’, ‘Bachelor in Linguistics’, or equivalent.

**Final competences**

An advanced knowledge and understanding of Bantu corpus linguistics and lexicography.

**Conditions for credit contract**

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after assessment of competences.

**Conditions for exam contract**

This course can be taken via an exam contract. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of the initial competences required for this course.

**Teaching methods**

Seminar (coached exercises and practical PC room classes)
PBL Tutorial (problem-based learning)
Learning materials and price

Scholarly articles and book chapters are provided on the Minerva course site.

References


**Course content-related study coaching**

Feedback in class, via e-mail, and through the Minerva course site

**Evaluation methods**

50% non-periodic: permanent evaluation

50% periodic: end-of-term evaluation in the form of a research paper

**Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the first examination period**

Research paper

**Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the second examination period**

Research paper

**Calculation of the examination mark**

50% permanent evaluation (class participation, advance reading of provided literature)

50% research paper in which the in-depth knowledge of Bantu corpus linguistics and data-driven lexicography that was acquired in this course is applied to one or more Bantu languages of the student’s choice (minimum 6000 words, maximum 10,000 words, excluding references and addenda)