

Master Prospectus African Linguistics, 2008/2009

Programme overview, 2008/2009

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Objectives

In the course of the master's programme in African Linguistic students gain a profound understanding of linguistic research methods. The programme is internationally renowned for the expertise it has to offer in the field of a large number of African languages and linguistics. Students who are interested in linguistic issues can fully benefit from this knowledge. Where possible, the courses will take the shape of individual tutorials.

The aim of the master's programme in African Linguistics is to prepare students to perform linguistic analysis independently on an African language, showing awareness of the cultural and linguistic context. Moreover, the resulting analysis must be relevant for other linguists and African scholars. Moreover, the programme aims to raise students to a level of knowledge and skills that allows them to proceed to PhD research. Alternatively, graduates qualify for positions outside the university that require an academic level of thinking

Programme

First Semester

African Language and Structure (choose 2 courses)

Within this track students can choose courses such as Analysis of Tone Languages, Linguistic Phonetics, and Descriptive Syntax. These courses are offered every year or every other year. Courses from other master's programmes in linguistics offered in Leiden, such as the Research Master's in Linguistics, can also be taken within this track.

Linguistic Fieldwork

Practical training in the methods of elicitation of linguistic data, in collaboration with a native speaker of a language that you are not familiar with.

Language, Culture and Cognition

This course discusses the relationship between cultural patterns, language use and language structure (language, worldview, and cognition). In particular it examines the lexical structure in the domains of colour, space, family, time, ethnobotany, ethnopsychology (emotions, health/illness of the body and mind), ethnophilosophy (indigenous knowledge, cultural norms).

Linguistic Area Study

Students study a language group of their choice. Teaching either takes the form of an individual tutorial or of a formal course depending on the number of students. Formal courses are likely for following linguistic areas: Bantu languages, Berber languages, and Cushitic and Omotic languages. The final part of the course includes an essay that can serve as preparation for the final paper.

Second Semester

Samples of Linguistic Structures of African Languages

Experts in five geographically and typologically different languages will provide structural overviews of the languages pertaining to their expertise. There are three short intensive seminars taking up four to eight hours, which will be offered in the second half of the semester in order to help students who are doing fieldwork in Africa from January to March. The African languages which may be offered are Amharic, Lingala, Kinyarwanda, Dinka, Nama, Benchnon, Songhay, Central Togo languages, Iraqw, Ngiti, Konso, Mbugu, Riffian Berber, Makwe, Hausa, Nyamwezi, EKoti, Umbundu, Gbe, Akan, Tuareg, Lendu, Somali, Oromo and Ge'ez.

Starting the programme in February

Leiden University offers the possibility to start MA programmes in February. If you choose to do so, please take up contact early with the coordinator of the programme, as we will have to set up a special programme.

Berber Linguistics

Within the master's programme in African Linguistics, a special track is available, called "Berber Linguistics". This track has been developed in cooperation with Professor H.J. Stroomer. Students taking this track can choose the course Introduction to Berber Linguistics and First Berber Language as their African Language and Structure course, and they have the option of specialising in the Berber language or on a topic that they are interested in. By offering this option, we hope to attract students with a Berber background from the Netherlands, Europe, and North Africa as well as to capitalise on the expertise available in our Faculty at the moment (Professor H.J. Stroomer, Dr M.G. Kossmann).

Master's thesis and requirements for graduation

In order to graduate, students need to have successfully completed the 60 ects programme and have completed their final thesis as a component of that programme. The thesis has a weight of 20 ects, and as a rule should not exceed a maximum of 17,000 words including notes, bibliography and appendices. To a large extent, the second semester will be dedicated to writing the master's thesis. Insofar as possible, students are expected to conduct their research in Africa. In preparation, students are expected to take a literature exam. A large part of the course will be taught in the form of individual tutorials.

See also: http://www.arts.leidenuniv.nl/students/ma_mphil.jsp

Programme schedule Master African Linguistics

'Regular' track

sem	course title	ISIScode	t.a.	level	ECTS
I	African Language Structures I *)	MATALS	s	600	5
I	African Language Structures II *)	MATALS	s	600	5
I	Linguistic fieldwork	MATLF	s	500	5
I	Language, Culture and Cognition	MATLCC	s	500	5
I	Linguistic Area Study	MATSLA	tu	500	10
					30
II	Samples of Linguistic Structure of African Languages	MATLSAL	s, l	600	10
II	MA-thesis	MAALSCR	sst	600	20
					30

*) Students select one of the courses on offer. In 2008-2009 they can choose between 'Language Contact', 'Tone in African Languages', 'Berber linguistics' and 'Language in Africa' (second semester).

Track Berber linguistics

sem	course title	ISIScode	t.a.	level	ECTS
I	Berber Linguistics	MABELI	s	600	10
I	Introduction to Berber Studies	MABEST	s, l	500	5
I	First Berber Language *)		s	500	5
I	Linguistic fieldwork or Second Berber Language *)	MATLF	s	500	5
I	Language, Culture and Cognition	MATLCC	s	500	5
					30
II	Samples of Linguistic Structure of African Languages	MATLSAL	s, l	600	10
II	MA-thesis	MAALSCR	sst	600	20
					30

*) The following languages are offered on a regular basis: Tashelhiyt (MATASH), Tarifiyt (MARIF), Tuareg (MATUA). Other languages are offered on demand only.

Key:

sem: semester

t.a.: teaching activity

tu: tutorial

s: seminar

l: lecture

sst: self-study

level: level-indication according to the Leiden 100-600 system