



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Introduction to the Structure of Bantu: Ruuli - A - 41264

Last update 16-03-2024

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Linguistics

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Anna Veselovsky

Coordinator Email: anna.veselovsky@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: By appointment

Teaching Staff:

Ms. Anna Veselovsky

Course/Module description:

This language course spans three semesters. The focus of the course is two-fold: the participants will learn how to work with various materials collected during field work and get familiarized with methods of describing an understudied language, as well as contribute to the ongoing project dedicated to the documentation and description of this language.

Course/Module aims:

Ruuli is a Great lakes Bantu language of the Niger-Congo phylum spoken in Uganda. It is the native language of the Baruuli and Banyara people of central Uganda. It is a minority language spoken by about 180,000 people. The materials to be used in the course originate from an ongoing documentation project and encompass a corpus of more than 200,000 words, a grammar sketch and a lexicon. In the course of the seminar the students will get familiarized with various structural aspects of this language (phonology, tone, morphology, syntax, and lexicon), and will have the opportunity to contribute to its description by investigating individual aspects of this language.

The second theme of this course are the Bantu languages in general. It is a large family of languages (between 440 and 680) spoken by the Bantu peoples throughout Sub-Saharan Africa. As part of the Southern Bantoid group, they are part of the Benue-Congo language family, which in turn is part of the large Niger-Congo phylum. Bantu languages are largely spoken east and south of present-day Cameroon, throughout Central Africa, Southeast Africa and Southern Africa. Many Bantu languages have been documented and extensive descriptions exist for some of them. Typologically, these languages are famous for their extensive gender/noun class systems, extensive productive valency-changing morphology, an intimate integration of information structure and clause syntax. During the course of the seminar the students will be familiarized with the diversity and genealogical classification of these group of languages, with its major typological characteristics, as well as with recurrent research topics. The existing descriptions of other Bantu languages will support and guide the study of Ruuli.

The course offers the possibility to obtain a first-hand experience in collaboration on an on-going language documentation and description project, as well as will ensure that the participants gain a familiarity with the structure of the Bantu languages.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

On successful completion of this module, students should be able to outline the major typological characteristics of the Bantu languages and identify the respective structures in Ruuli and other languages. The participants will be able to collect relevant examples on any aspects of Bantu grammar from annotated and not

annotated corpora, organize and summarize the findings and interpret them in the light of what is known about the Bantu languages and what is expected from the typological point of view. The participants will learn to plan a corpus-based study on individual aspects of Ruuli grammar, will prepare, design and complete a number of such studies, will be able to enrich the available corpus with further linguistic annotations and summarize and evaluate them.

Attendance requirements(%):

100

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: In person

Course/Module Content:

1st semester

Class 1: Introduction. Locating Ruuli on the map.

Class 2: The phonemic inventory.

Class 3: The nominal morphology: noun classes

Class 4: Morphophonological processes: vowel harmony, glide formation.

Class 5: The noun phrase: the head, modifiers, agreement.

Classes 6-7: Linguistic annotation.

Class 8: Beyond the noun phrase: locative noun classes, a glimpse at the verb structure.

Class 9: Possessive noun phrases.

Class 10: Lexical borrowings.

Class 11: Diminutives and augmentatives.

2nd semester

Class 1: Verbal morphology in Bantu: major categories

Class 2: Verbal agreement morphology in Ruuli

Class 3: Clause structure in Ruuli

Class 4: TAM in Bantu

Class 5: TAM in Ruuli (1): tense

Class 6: TAM in Ruuli (2): aspect

Class 7: TAM in Ruuli (3): mood

Class 8: Mood and modality in Ruuli

Class 9: The syntax, semantics and morphology of valency changing operations (1): the passive

Class 10: The syntax, semantics and morphology of valency changing operations (2): the applicative

Class 11: The syntax, semantics and morphology of valency changing operations (3): the causative

Class 12: The syntax, semantics and morphology of valency changing operations (3): the reflexive

Class 13: The narrative tense

Class 14: Verbal syntax and morphology in Ruuli: a summary and way forward

3rd semester

The third semester will cover such topics as dialectal variation, word formation, lexicosemantics and a range of syntactic topics (information structure and constituent order, relative clauses, etc.). The choice of the topics will be guided by the participants' interest and suitability of individual topics for research publications.

Required Reading:

Nurse, Derek and Philippon, Gérard. 2003. The Bantu languages. London: Routledge

Namyalo, Sauda et al. 2021.

A dictionary and grammatical sketch of Ruruuli-Lunyala. Berlin: Language Science Press

Additional Reading Material:

Readings on individual aspects of Bantu languages will be provided during the course.

Grading Scheme:

Active Participation / Team Assignment 30 %

Submission assignments during the semester: Exercises / Essays / Audits / Reports / Forum / Simulation / others 50 %

Attendance / Participation in Field Excursion 20 %

Additional information: