

Reading Sumerian texts – from first steps to deciphering inscriptions

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Description: This class will introduce you to the oldest known language in the world, “Sumerian”, which was a living language during the 3rd millennium BC in Mesopotamia, the Land between the Euphrates and the Tigris, that is today’s Iraq. It died out around 2000 BCE, but it was used –similar to Latin in Europe – as a scientific and religious language until the 1st millennium BC in Babylonia and Assyria.

In interactive lessons, knowledge about its vehicle, the cuneiform script system and a basic grammar will be acquired, so that successful participants will be able to read simple inscriptions (and other texts) from original objects, such as statues and tablets.

Literature: D.O. Edzard, *Sumerian Grammar* (HdO 71), Leiden – Boston 2003; K. Volk, *A Sumerian Chrestomathy* (SILO 5), Wiesbaden 2012; M.-L. Thomsen, *The Sumerian Language. An Introduction to its History and Grammatical Structure* (Mesopotamia 10), Copenhagen 1984.

All participants will receive the teaching documents in PDF.



Place: Celetná 20, room 102 (class room of the Institute of Comparative Linguistics)

SIS: **AKL5000333**

Date: 22nd to 26th of May, 2017

Schedule:

Monday, 9:30–11:00	1) Introduction to Sumerian: Language and Cuneiform Script
Monday, 11:30–12:30	2) Substantives 1– Word Categories, Number, Gender, Possession
Monday, 14:00–15:30	3) <i>Exercises 1: Reading Cuneiform</i>
Tuesday, 9:30–11:00	4) Substantives 2 – The ten cases in Sumerian
Tuesday, 11:30–12:30	5) Pronouns, Demonstrative Particles and Numbers
Tuesday, 14:00–15:30	6) <i>Exercises 2: First words</i>
Wednesday, 9:30–11:00	7) The Nominal Chain
Wednesday, 11:30–12:30	8) Verb 1 – The Verbal Chain, Verbal Classes
Wednesday, 14:00–15:30	9) <i>Exercises 3: First inscription of Gudea</i>
Thursday, 9:30–11:00	10) Verb 2 – Conjugation and Conjugation Prefixes
Thursday, 11:30–12:30	11) Verb 3 – The Case Elements
Thursday, 14:00–15:30	12) <i>Exercises 4: Inscriptions from Ur-III-Period</i>
Friday, 9:30–11:00	13) Verb 4 – The Modal Prefixes
Friday, 11:30–12:30	14) Verb 5 – Enclitic Copula, Non-finite Forms, Subordination
Friday, 14:00–15:00	15) <i>Exercises 5: A Statue of Gudea</i>