

**PhD position in linguistic description and typology**  
**(15 April 2022–14 April 2025) – LLACAN-CNRS, Paris**

The research unit *Langage, langues et cultures d'Afrique* (LLACAN) from the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) invites applications for a three-year PhD position.

This position is part of the project “*Complex Predicates in Languages: Emergence, Typology, Evolution (ComPLETE)*”, funded by the French Agence National de la Recherche (ANR) and the German Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) in the form of a Research Grant awarded to Martine Vanhove (PI, CNRS-LLACAN), Alexandre François (Co-PI, CNRS-LATTICE) and Walter Bisang (PI, Universität Mainz).

**Research topic**

***Verbal complex predicates in Kwa and/or Kru languages  
in a typological perspective***

As a PhD researcher in the ComPLETE project, you will explore verbal complex predicates in Kwa and/or Kru languages. In parallel, you will participate in the elaboration of the project’s typological questionnaire and database, in close cooperation with the ComPLETE team members.

The PhD will include fieldwork in southern Côte d’Ivoire (or with the diaspora in France if the pandemic lasts), and information mining from available grammars and dictionaries. The fieldwork component will give priority to the languages where information on verbal complex predicates is lacking, or needs to be complemented on the basis of the questionnaire.

**Selection criteria**

- A Master’s degree in African linguistics and/or linguistic typology with an outstanding academic record.
- Strong proficiency in both spoken and written English.
- Strong analytical skills and proven self-motivation to complete independent work.
- Strong team player qualities (you will work in an international team where communication is crucial for the success of the project).
- Research experience on Kwa and/or Kru languages is beneficial.
- A good understanding of the typological and theoretical implications of the study of verbal complex predicates.

**Our offer**

- Full-time position, starting on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022, for 36 months.
- Salary based on French and CNRS regulations (approx. 1700€ net salary).
- According to French labor laws, benefits include 30 days holiday per annum plus Bank Holidays.
- An inspiring, international, environment with leading domain scientists at our research units (Paris area) and at the University of Mainz.
- Facilities, academic and IT support, and resources to do all the things described above.

## About LLACAN

The research unit *Langage, langues et cultures d'Afrique* (LLACAN) groups 26 professors and researchers and 10 engineers, technicians and administrative personnel. It is affiliated to the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), the National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilisations (INALCO) and the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (EPHE). LLACAN is one of the research units that constitute the excellence cluster *Empirical Foundations of Linguistics* (Labex EFL).

Our focus is on the study of African languages, based on first-hand data collected during fieldwork. Our research is embedded in the larger theoretical frameworks of comparative and historical linguistics, cognitive linguistics, sociolinguistics and typology. This enables us to contribute to the understanding of human language, culture and cognition. We also examine the relationships between African languages in terms of their historical development and genetic links, as well as of contact-induced changes in languages of the same geographical zone. The example of African languages enables us to lay the foundation for understanding the reasons and mechanisms of language change and language shift in general.

## About the ComPLETE project

The ComPLETE project (2022-2025) focuses on the typology of **verb-based complex predicates**. These are defined as *grammatical constructions serving as a predicate to a single subject, and involving at least two lexical items belonging, synchronically or diachronically, to the class of verbs*. This definition includes serial verbs, converbs, light verbs and auxiliaries: These share certain functional properties and sometimes follow parallel historical dynamics. The "ComPLETE" project aims to carry out a systematic analysis of complex predicates on formal and semantic grounds, from the perspectives of synchrony, diachrony and areality.

As the available data is limited to certain language families and geographic areas, ComPLETE will base its analyses on a wide range of language families, in line with the expertise of the participants. The project will develop a typological questionnaire for guaranteeing cross-linguistic comparability. Based on the answers provided by linguistic experts, three research questions will be addressed: (1) Can we identify cross-linguistic dependencies between the semantic domains associated with complex predicates (e.g. tense-aspect-mood, spatial orientation) and specific formal properties? (2) How can we model the diachronic evolution of these structures, in terms of grammaticalization and lexicalization? (3) How are complex predicates distributed across the world's linguistic areas or language phyla?

The core teams from France and Germany are composed of linguists with a long experience in linguistic fieldwork, cross-linguistic comparison, typology, and with expertise on a large number of language families, on a wide range of theoretical issues. Each country will recruit one PhD student and one postdoctoral researcher: in Germany, the postdoc (50%) will be responsible for coordination; in France, s/he will conduct a synthesis on a linguistic area, and bring in expertise in statistics. Together, they will collaborate with computational engineers to build a database.

At the end of three years, the ComPLETE project will present a joint volume with a position paper and chapters by all contributors. Our database and analyses will be publicly accessible online through the open-source platform of Cross-Linguistic Linked Data (CLLD).

**Your application:**

Please submit your application in English, including the following:

- Cover letter, explaining research experience and reason for interest in this project, along with a proposed research project (max. two pages).
- Your CV and copies of degree certificates (Bachelor's/Master's diplomas and/or transcripts).
- Names and contact information (including e-mail and phone) for 1-2 referees.
- For queries, please write to [martine.vanhove@cnrs.fr](mailto:martine.vanhove@cnrs.fr)
- Please send your application to: [martine.vanhove@cnrs.fr](mailto:martine.vanhove@cnrs.fr)

**Deadline for application: 31 January 2022**

If you are selected, interviews will be online via zoom a few days after the deadline.

We look forward to receiving your completed application.