

Empirical Translation Studies: Concepts, Theories and Methods (A005491)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 6.0 **Study time 180 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2025-2026

A (semester 1) English Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2025-2026

Vranjes, Jelena	LW22	lecturer-in-charge
Daems, Joke	LW22	co-lecturer
De Sutter, Gert	LW22	co-lecturer

Offered in the following programmes in 2025-2026

	crdts	offering
Master of Arts in Advanced Studies in Linguistics (main subject Linguistics in a Comparative Perspective)	6	A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

empirical translation studies, translation norms, risk aversion, bilingual cognition, constrained language, corpus and experimental methods, (multivariate) statistics.

Position of the course

This course offers a thorough and critical introduction to (empirical) translation studies since the mid-1990's. It focuses on the major (conceptual) insights, theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches.

Contents

This course provides an up to date overview of the major conceptual, theoretical and methodological advances in empirical translation studies. Empirical translation studies is the field of study that focuses on quantitative observational studies (corpus or experimental studies) of lexical, morphosyntactic and discursive linguistic choices in written, spoken and audiovisual translation. Its objective is to deepen the understanding of the sociocognitive mechanisms that underlie translational behavior. Empirical translation studies is interdisciplinary in nature; it has strong links to neighbouring fields, such as variational linguistics, sociolinguistics, contrastive linguistics, psycholinguistics and second language acquisition.

The content of the course comprises four main parts:

1. Important concepts in translation studies, with a.o. translation universals and norms.
2. Important theoretical models: risk aversion, cognitive translation studies, relevance theory.
3. Important methodologies: corpora and experiments.
4. Interdisciplinary insights: a.o. priming and cognate facilitation effect (psycholinguistics), entrenchment and salience (cognitive linguistics) and prestige (sociolinguistics).

Initial competences

Master degree in Language and Literature, Languages and Culture, in Translation, Interpreting Multilingual Communication or similar master degree with sufficient background knowledge in linguistics.

Final competences

- 1 Critically assess research results with respect to methodology.
- 2 Interpret results of statistical tests
- 3 Link empirical patterns to known concepts in translation studies.
- 4 Choose the most appropriate methodological approach given a specific research question.
- 5 Choose the most appropriate statistical procedure given a specific research design.
- 6 Apply theoretical insights from neighbouring disciplines to data patterns in translation studies.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Seminar

Extra information on the teaching methods

Students read one or more texts prior to class. These texts are thoroughly discussed in class, also in relationship to the students' own research paper.

Study material

Type: Reader

Name: selected papers

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Online Available : No

Available in the Library : Yes

References

- De Sutter, G., Lefer, M.-A., & Delaere, I. (Eds.). (2017). *Empirical translation studies: new methodological and theoretical traditions*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter.
- Pym, A. (2017). *Exploring translation theories*. Routledge.

Course content-related study coaching

Personal: after appointment

Assessment moments

end-of-term assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Assignment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Assignment

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

not applicable

Extra information on the examination methods

The student submits a paper about a topic in translation studies that uses the conceptual, theoretical and/or methodological aspects offered in this course.

Calculation of the examination mark

Paper: 90%; collaboration in class: 10%

Facilities for Working Students

Absence is allowed provided that a replacement task is submitted