

Translation ergonomics: interfaces, interactions and interrelations between people, processes and products

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With the realization that translation is a situated activity involving complex interactions within socio-technical systems, translation studies has seen an increasing interest in researching the realities of the translation workplace in freelance, commercial and institutional contexts. One emerging focal point has been ergonomics, defined by the International Ergonomics Association¹ as “the scientific discipline concerned with the understanding of interactions among humans and other elements of a system, and the profession that applies theory, principles, data and methods to design in order to optimize human well-being and overall system performance”. Recent work on translation ergonomics has shown how physical, cognitive, social, organizational and environmental factors can and do impact on professional translators’ performance, their efficiency, their motivation and, ultimately, the quality of their output. This panel seeks to build on initial work that has been done by focussing on current methodological, professional, practical and educational approaches to the ergonomics of translation in its three classic domains: the physical, concerned with systemic impacts on physical activity and health; the cognitive, related to how factors like load, stress and computer-human interaction affect mental processes; and the organizational, centred on sociotechnical systems such as organizational structures, policies and processes. Given the potentially detrimental effects of poor physical, cognitive and organizational ergonomics, we wish to broaden the scientific and professional communities’ understanding of how improved knowledge and awareness of ergonomic workplace conditions can and should inform translation practice, management, teaching and learning.

Contributions are invited on relevant research, theory, practices and/or pedagogy related, but not limited, to:

- ergonomic issues at translators’ workplaces
- physiological and psychological issues related to poor ergonomics
- ergonomics and cognition
- the impact of ergonomic factors on translation practices, processes, decision-making, creativity and/or quality
- ergonomics issues related to workflow processes, language technologies and/or sociotechnical systems
- ergonomics and organizational aspects of language-service providers
- ergonomic perspectives in translator education

Interdisciplinary contributions by ergonomics and translation studies specialists are particularly welcome.

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¹ <https://www.iea.cc/whats/index.html>

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