

An analysis of work-related medical issues and ergonomic aspects in Brazilian translators' workplace

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Over the last few years, there has been an increasing acknowledgment of the importance of physical, cognitive, and organizational ergonomics in workplaces, especially in professional translation settings. Based on an anonymous online survey answered by translators from different countries, this study describes the groups of translators in Brazil and compares their data to the overall sample of respondents in order to analyze work-related medical issues in the Brazilian environment compared to other countries and to investigate which aspects should be more ergonomic. Similarly to the overall sample (1,850 respondents), our analysis shows that 78% of the 70 Brazilian participants are freelancers, 13% of them works in governmental institutions and 9% works in commercial enterprises. The most frequent health complaints informed by the overall sample are pain in the neck, followed by shoulder pain, nervousness, tension, irritability and discomfort or pain in arms and hands. In the Brazilian sample, difficulty concentrating (88%) is the most frequent health complaint, followed by (lower) back pain (69.7%), leg or feet aches, heavy legs (69.1%), and other pain in joints, muscles and/or limbs (68.6%). Regarding the ergonomic aspects, several Brazilian participants indicated that they would like the chair (63%), noise levels (42.9%) and the desk size (40%) of their workplace to be more ergonomic. Results from the overall sample showed chair, room temperature and noise levels as the most frequent ergonomic aspects to be improved. The results from this research can contribute to increase awareness of the physical and cognitive aspects of professional translation as well as to improve translators' working conditions.