

## Translation Technologies: Striking a Balance

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The online Cambridge Dictionary defines **balancing act** as “a difficult situation in which someone has to try to give equal amounts of importance, time, attention, etc. to two or more different things at the same time.” In bridging two languages and cultures, translators have always had to perform a type of balancing act, such as by conveying the source author’s intentions while also meeting the expectations of the target audience. Indeed, the success of a translation often depends on how well the translator performs this balancing act. If translators are already adept funambulists (tightrope walkers), it might not seem like a big deal to introduce additional parameters that require finding the right balance; however, striking a balance is a complex and demanding task. Technology is often presented as a means of simplifying a task, but in the case of computing technologies, recent trends in cognitive ergonomics (i.e. cognitive demands placed on users by the design and complexity of computer programs), indicate that human interaction with computer-based systems is increasingly complex and thus needs more sophisticated support. One of the ways in which translation technologies have placed increased cognitive demands on translators is by introducing additional ways in which translators need to strike a balance. While the concept of balance may come up in an ad hoc way in the translation technology curriculum, the rise in the number of balance-related cognitive demands imposed by translation tools could point to a need to tackle this concept more directly. This presentation explores a number of ways in which translation technologies require translators to grapple with the complex notion of balance (e.g. fuzzy matching, term extraction, design of training corpora for machine translation tools, setting the “temperature” in large language models, UX for different players in translation process), and considers how we can better prepare translation students to cope with the balancing act in their future careers.