PLM2023 Thematic session: Eye-tracking in reading research and translation reception studies

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Reading is such a complex process that there is no single theory of reading but there are models and frameworks which have evolved coming mainly from eye movement research (Holmqvist et al., 2011). Some of these models and frameworks focus more on the visual processes, i.e. eye movement control (the E-Z Reader model by Reichle, Rayner and Pollatsek (2003), the SWIFT model by Engbert, Nuthmann, Richter, and Kliegl (2005), while others aspire to explain how the mind generates meaning from text by tapping into the mental processes (construction-integration model by Kintsch (1988); the Reading Systems Framework by Stafura and Perfetti (2017). Most eye-tracking studies which underly these models investigated how we read single words and sentences.

In this thematic session we want to open up a discussion on how the view of the reading process offered by the prevalent models and frameworks can be extrapolated to 'real-world reading' (Jarodzka and Brand-Gruwel 2017) which involves reading a variety of texts for different purposes in analogue and digital formats. We are interested in how the purpose of reading, the text- and reader-related factors affect the reading experience and text reception (Hyönä, Lorch & Kaakinen 2002; Kruger 2013; Walker 2021). Is reading in our first language different from reading in our second language? Can eye-movements capture the fact that a text has been written in the writer's native language or translated from another language? Do language errors in human and machine translated texts impact the fluency of reading and call for higher order meaning integration processes (re-reading)? Does reading a badly translated novel spoil our narrative engagement? These are some of the questions we would like to address. Another matter to also discuss is methodological challenges in experimental studies involving various text types, languages and readers (Kuperman et al. 2022).

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