

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL NORMS TO INTERPRETATION

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ABSTRACT

Interpreting is shaped on three forces: cognitive conditions of the setting, the competence of the person interpreting and the social norms of interpreting. This study tends to display more light on the role of social norms on interpreting. This will be done through getting data from peer-reviewed articles, concentrating on one case which majored on conferences and the interpretations that go there. Here we see the various shifts that the interpreters go through. This study will shed new knowledge on interpreting studies through the methodology in descriptive studies.

Keywords: *social norms, interpretation*

INTRODUCTION

Social norms are being known for their efficacy, and this is seen in how it is trending. Interventions have been set up for social standards that are misunderstood. The interventions are supported by top federal agencies of the government together with other non-governmental organizations. The social norms approach gives us a theory of human way of doing things that has benefits for health prevention practices and promotion. (Rubington, Weinberg, 2015)The plan states that our individual behavior is influenced and affected by the incorrect way in which other groups see us. For instance, people might concentrate on the negatives of peer pressure like alcoholism, drug abuse, smoking and forget that peer pressure can also be active, aiming toward good behavior. (Ritwik, Banerjee, 2016)

The approach also points out that once a problem behavior is overestimated, the problems will increase while individuals are discouraged from engaging in healthy behavior. Enforcing corrections of these norms may result in decreasing the problem or making health behavior more prevalent. Extensive research has been done thus validating these assumptions. Interventions on social norms focus significantly on peer influence (Hess & Hareli, 2014). This is because peer influence is much stronger as compared to biological, religious, familial or even cultural influences (Aline & Melanie, 2015). Peer influences can be based on more than what we think other people are thinking than on the real thing that we need to believe.

HISTORY

H. Wesley and Berkowitz were the first people to come up with the social norm approach in 1986. They were doing some analysis of the patterns of student alcoholism. In their study, they found that college students overestimated the level of permissiveness of drinking behavior. Due to this overestimation, the students were able to predict how much an individual student drank. This research showed that recommendations with clear and accurate information about the behavior represented just a small percentage from other traditional strategies. (Higgs, 2015) They also discovered that prevention of drug emphasized on the problem. Since the inception of social norms approach, models have been made to describe proactive ways to incorporate these norms in a positive way.

TYPES OF NORMS

There are various types of norms. One of them is attitude, or what individuals feel is the right thing to do based on their beliefs or the morals they uphold. The second type of norm is our behavior, the way we do

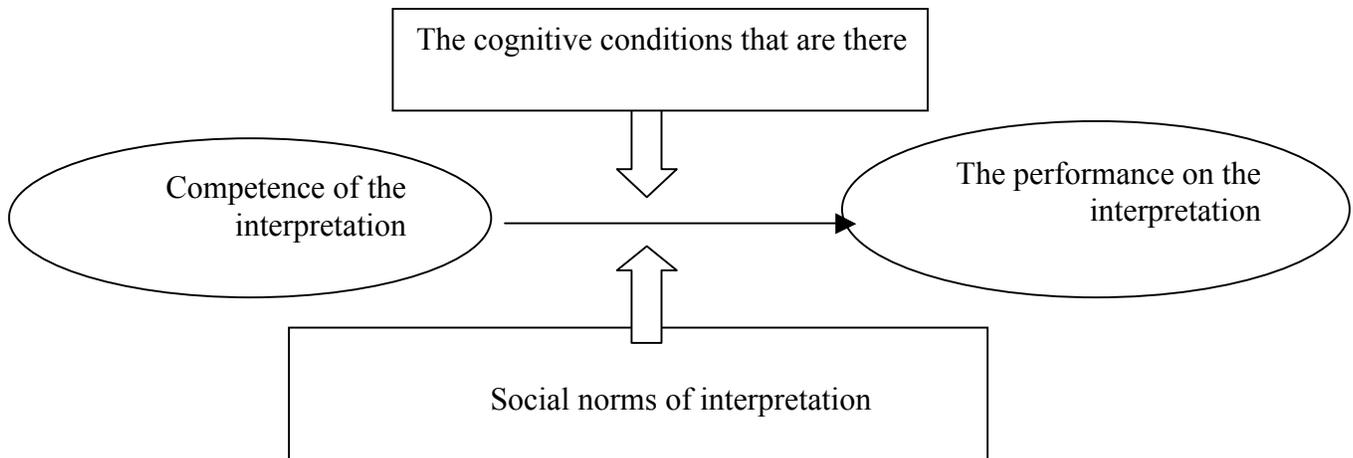
things or what we actually do. According to research, there have been more misperceptions of the injunctive norms as compared to the behavioral norms. (Higgs, 2015) A misconception is a gap that is created between the actual or real behavior and what people actually think about other folk’s behavior or even attitude. Misconception mainly occurs when there is overestimation or underestimation of attitudes or behavior of a particular population. However, from the research, it is not quite clear if one of these types of norms is likely to change the behavior hence interventions of the social norms should be preferred. According to Perkins (2013), behavioral norms are not obligatory, and feedback from the injunctive norms can effectively be used in the interventions on social norms for they are usually more conservative than actual behavior (Light, 2014).

The purpose of this study is to try and relate social norms to interpretation and get to see the role social norm plays on interpretation. Currently, emerging groups of people have been supporting the social norm theory in order to describe the interventions based on the theory. Interpreting is a way of communication whereby the process is designed in revealing meanings and relationships of our cultural and natural heritage through the involvement of objects, artifacts, landscapes and sites. It can also be defined as not only presenting information but also a specific communication strategy used to translate information to people from one technical language of the expert to the everyday language of the new individual or visitor. Interpretation is more of a social act that involves shared behavior which is usually contributed and shared by our ways of thinking. The behavior of an interpreter is not entirely individual but rather other parties or actors are involved, for instance, the people he or she is interpreting to.

A long time ago, interpreting studies concentrated on cognitive processes in interpreting behavior. According to Baker

“[t]he vast majority of research [on interpreting] has been, and continues to be, devoted to investigating cognitive aspects of interpreter performance. [...] Little or no attention has so far been given to investigating constraints which arise from the nature of the role played by the interpreter and the pressures on him or her by other participants in specific settings. (Baker 1997: 111)”

In spite of this well-researched significance, an adequate description of interpreting behaviors and activities should be given (Alan, 2012). The main forces that shape up the performance of the performance are the competence of the interpreter as he or she interprets, the on-site cognitive requirements, the social norms of interpreting. The relationship can be represented as seen in the figure below.



The three forces that shape up the interpreting performance and the social norms of interpreting are defined as the values that are shared and the ideas among professional interpreters. The social norms of interpretations are the rules or regularities of translation behavior. Interpreting is a social behavior and hence has to be governed by given norms. They reflect the shared values of a cultural or a social group.

(Alan, 2012) The norms that govern interpreters guide them on what they end up choosing as their strategies in the interpreting behavior and in shaping the interpreting activities in a social setting. The significance of this research is to identify the social norms of interpreting and identifying the role the norms play in interpreting. The paper also focuses on the various methods used to investigate norms in interpreting. In this case, the method for identifying methods of investigating norms should correspond to an interpreter's definition of a social norm (Alan, 2012).

RESEARCH QUESTION

This study aims to conduct a descriptive study in the interpretation of activities in different settings. This study also tries to explore the actual norms that are there in interpreting; especially those related to text or targeted text.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, The researcher decided on using past articles that have done research on social norms and interpretation. The researcher used almost 20 articles; all peer reviewed who have done vast research on the topic at hand. The researcher gave more attention to those articles which gave more focus to social norms role and interpretation.

DATA COLLECTION

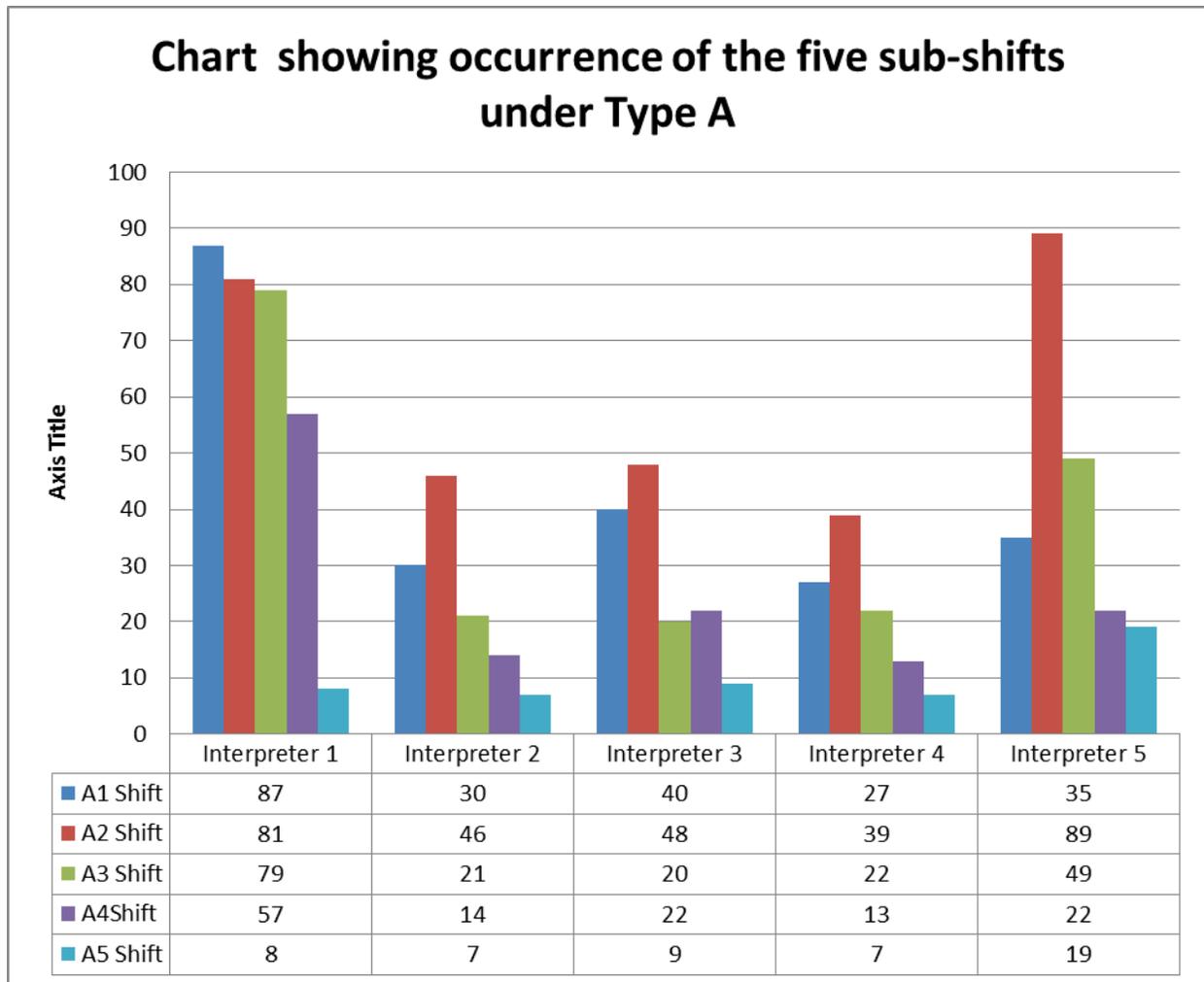
In one of the articles, there is a study whereby a research was done by the Chinese Premier Press Conferences. The main speakers in that conference were Zhu Rongji and Wen Jiabao; there were interventions in the form of questions from journalists from all over the world. Although the speakers had prepared a press conference before, there were five interpreters on-site. With the data from the peer-reviewed articles, we were able to do a bit of analysis in Excel.

DISCUSSION

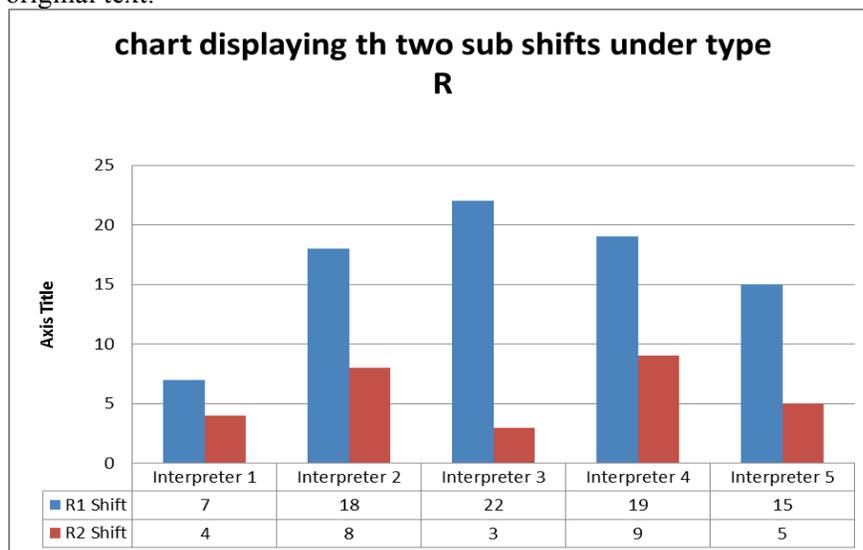
The press conference case study was defined by three factors, the interpreter's competence, the cognitive conditions and the social norms that govern interpreting. However, in this study, the main focus was on the social norms and their roles.

SHIFTS

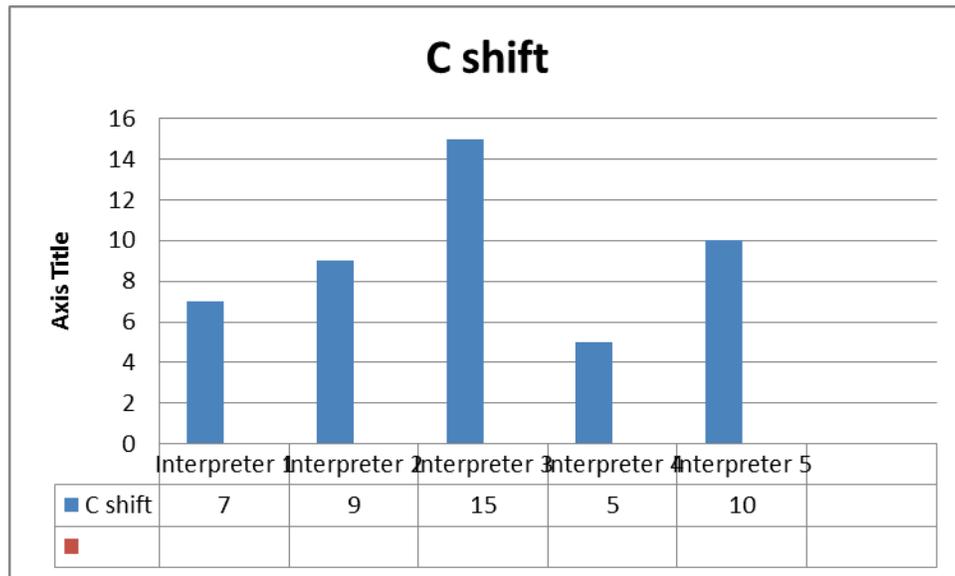
There were three types of shifts used by the interpreters. The interpreters add some cohesive textual devices or some logic expressions in their interpretation to make their textual implicit. The second shift is to elaborate the background information contextual on the significance of the targeted text. The third shift is to refer to the specific idea being interpreted and make it implicit to the text. The fourth shift refers to two kinds of repetition, which is, repeating phrases and words that are synonymous in the targeted language. The fifth shift refers to the information that is not in the text.



R1 shift is when the interpreter omits what they think is not useful information from the person who has spoken as they are interpreting. R2 shift occurs when the interpreter minimizes and hence loses the structure of the original text.

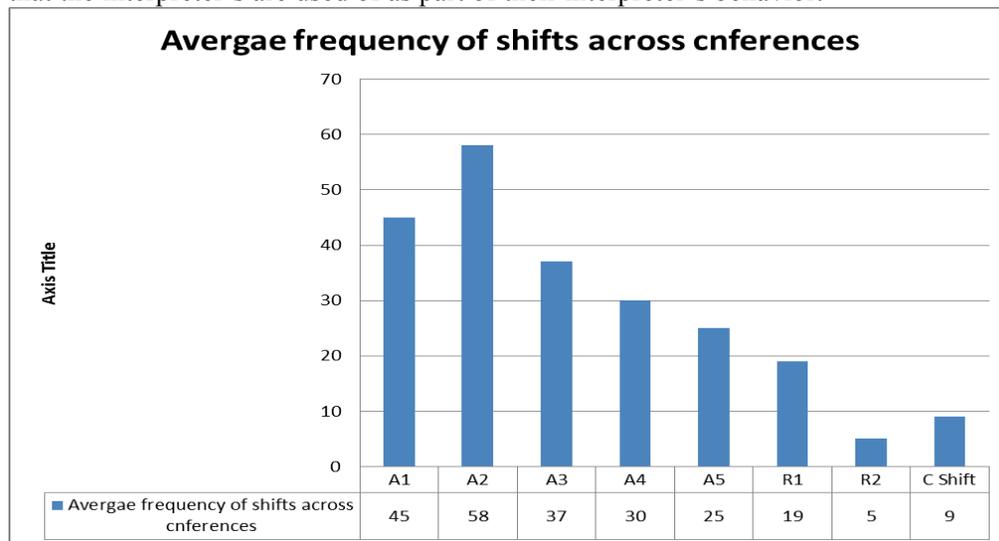


Shift C occurs when the interpreters knowingly corrects the phrases of the original text that they themselves believe is wrong.



DISCUSSION

We took of only one case study of conference, but these shifts happen in conferences. This shows an incidence that the interpreter's are used of as part of their interpreter's behavior.



According to our analysis of the shifts of the interpreters, it can be clearly seen a trend in the behavior of the interpreters. The interpreters tend to stick to the norm of feeling adequate as they carry on the interpretation. They tend to pursue accuracy because it is a social norm that has been there they are only trying to conform to it. They also pursue consistency and feeling complete of a job well done. This explanation applies to the interpreters being specific on the information they interpret, the level of them being explicit and being logic. The social norms have shaped the interpreters to turn out and be the best and interpret the right thing for easy passing of information. The social norms studied in this case study maximize recovery of original information.

CONCLUSION

In this study, we see that social norms are very important in interpreting based on the setting of the interpretation. The study may also give us more insight on qualities involved in interpreting; quality should be based on norms and not quality criteria between the source of information and the target audience.

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