Interpreters' role perceptions in business dialogue interpreting situations

MASATO TAKIMOTO
MONASH UNIVERSITY

This paper aims to examine interpreters' perceptions regarding their role in business interpreting situations involving the Japanese and English languages in Australia. Australia has a nationwide accreditation system for professional interpreters, and accredited interpreters are in theory bound by the professional code of ethics and code of practice. The codes, for example, stipulate such aspects as accuracy, impartiality and confidentiality in interpreting assignments. In this paper, I report on a study of seven interpreters, all of whom value such codes and recognise their importance but who expressed the feeling that there are various occasions where some of the provisions in the codes come in conflict with effective and efficient communication between Australian and Japanese clients in business-related situations. Furthermore, it seems that interpreters are actually active participants in inter-cultural communicative situations as a whole, and that their function appears to be more dynamic and proactive than the traditional stereotype towards interpreters implies. In this paper, the professional interpreters are the main focus and their perceived behaviour in business interpreting situations is discussed. The study is based on interviews with seven accredited Japanese language interpreters. Norm theory developed in the field of translation studies, as well as Goffman's role concept, are applied in the theoretical framework for the study.

1. Introduction

1.1. Main objectives

This paper attempts to examine the functions of Japanese language professional interpreters in business interpreting settings in Australia. The term 'business interpreting' is used in this paper mainly to refer to interpreting provided within the private sector. The role of an interpreter has traditionally been described using such terms as 'conduit', 'channel' or 'faithful echo' (e.g. Pöchhacker 2004:147; Roy 1993). These analogous terms are used to describe an interpreter as a neutral, machine-like device that conveys messages in the other language. Such a view can be seen in the Australian context, where, for instance, all professional interpreters who are accredited by NAATI (National Accreditation Authority for Translators & Interpreters) are expected to follow the ethical procedures as set out in the AUSIT (Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators) Code of Ethics and Code of Practice and, accordingly, are expected to act in the very way the above 'traditional' definitions suggest. (The Code of Ethics covers general principles, while the Code of Practice stipulates annotations to the principles.) This rather static and simplistic view of the role of the interpreter, however, has been questioned since the early 1990s, and some scholars have begun to suggest such alternative metaphors as communication facilitator, intercultural agent or advocate to reflect the role of an interpreter more accurately (Pöhhacker 2004: 148). Research efforts to examine a more dynamic role for the interpreter as an intercultural and communication expert in the dialogue interpreting mode have to date been applied mostly in the so-called community-interpreting areas, which include legal (court) and medical interpreting, as well as other 'institutionalised' interpreting situations (e.g. refugee hearings, police interviews) (e.g. Angelelli 2004; Barsky 1996; Berk-Seligson 1999, 2000; Brunette, Bastin, Hemlin and Clarke 2003; Carr, Roberts, Dufour and Steyn 1997; Davidson 2001; Kaufert and Putsch 1997; Mikkelson 1998; Roberts, Carr, Abraham and Dufour 2000; Rosenberg 2001; Wadensjö 1998). By contrast, very little research, if any, has been carried out on the role of the interpreter in the field of business interpreting. Furthermore, hardly any research to date has investigated Japanese-language interpreting.

The focus of this paper is therefore on analysing the perceptions of Japanese language professional interpreters regarding their role in business dialogue interpreting situations, in particular, in relation to the above-mentioned AUSIT codes. Their role from the viewpoint of intercultural communication will also be discussed.

1.2 Methodology

This paper is a case study employing a qualitative analytical approach. It is based on semi-structured interviews conducted with seven local professional interpreters in 2005. These interpreters were approached by email, using the NAATI open directory of professional interpreters. Four are English native speakers (Australians), while three are Japanese native speakers. A brief profile of each participant is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Profile of participants

	Native language	Interpreting experience	Education and interpreting training
J1	Japanese	4 years as a professional. Previously worked for a major multinational in Japan for several years before becoming an interpreter/translator. Worked in Japan as an in-house interpreter/translator for 2 years.	Postgraduate degree (2 years of full-time interpreting/translation training) before working as a professional.
J2	Japanese	Over 20 years, but about 6 years as a full-time interpreter/translator. Teaches interpreting/translation at tertiary level.	Postgraduate degree, but no formal training in interpreting.
J3	Japanese	Over 24 years, but 15 years as a full-time freelance interpreter/translator. Teaches interpreting at tertiary level.	Postgraduate degree in interpreting/translation.
A1	English	5 years, but 8 months as a full-time professional interpreter/translator.	University degree and vocational training in interpreting and translation.
A2	English	Over 30 years. A wide range of experience as an interpreter and translator, including in-house positions. Now works freelance.	University graduate. No formal training for interpreting.
A3	English	20 years, but over 10 years or so as an accredited professional. Experience in teaching interpreting and translation at various tertiary institutions.	University graduate. No formal training for interpreting.
A4	English	Over 20 years. 12 years as a full-time interpreter/translator. Manages an interpreting/translation company.	School education (dropped out of year 12). No formal training for interpreting.

As shown in Table 1, the participants in this study have interpreting experience ranging from 4 to over 30 years, while the educational and formal training background of each interpreter also varies. However, all of these interpreters are NAATI-accredited professionals. Thus, the group covers a wide spectrum of professionals. In terms of gender, only one of the interviewees was male, which seems to reflect the fact that there are many more female interpreters listed in the directory than males in Australia. In this study, only the female form of personal pronouns is used in order to maintain the anonymity of the male informant.

The methodological procedures involved semi-structured interviews with the participants. Each interview lasted approximately 40 to 60 minutes. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed for analysis. The seven interviewees are referred to here as A1, A2, A3, A4 for the English native speakers, and J1, J2, J3 for the Japanese native speakers.

2. Framework for analysis

2.1 Chesterman's conceptualization of translation norms

Within the field of interpreting studies, to date there has been very little systematic research on norms (Pöhhacker and Shlesinger 2002:295). As a result, in this study I draw on translation norm theory, especially the framework presented by Andrew Chesterman (Chesterman 1993, 1997), as the main theoretical framework. Erving Goffman's concept of role (Goffman 1961) is also used to complement Chesterman's norm theory. In translation studies, the concept of norms has played an important role (c.f. Chesterman 1997; Hermans 1999; Toury 1995), and the approach is closely associated with the branch of translation studies known as descriptive translation studies (DTS).

Among the few studies that deal with interpreting norms at a conceptual level, Harris (1990) confirmed the validity of utilizing the notion of norms in relation to interpreting. Shlesinger, on the other hand, addresses some issues in using the concept of norms developed within translation studies to interpreting, pointing out that it is not easy to apply the concept directly to interpreting, due to the different natures of translation and interpreting (Shlesinger 1989). For example, she points out that interpreters have only limited exposure to interpreted texts produced by other interpreters, whereas translators have easy access to a wealth of translated texts written by other translators. Therefore, she believes that an application of the concept of norms is less relevant to interpreters. Among the small number of empirical studies that have attempted to apply a general notion of norms to analyse an interpreting event are some studies in simultaneous interpreting situations (Collados Aís 1998/2002; Schjoldager 1995/2002) or in a court interpreting situation (Jansen 1995).

The current study draws upon a more specific and systematic concept of norms which originally arose within translation studies, in an effort to develop a model suitable for analysing dialogue interpreting situations. It is valid to utilise translation norm theory for interpreting because it provides a perspective for examining the relationship between the original and target texts. In addition, as discussed below, Chesterman's model is useful for analysing interpreting because it includes the viewpoint of the user(s) of the translation (in the case of this study, interpreting).

As shown in Table 2, Chesterman's model consists of two main tiers: product-oriented expectancy norms and process-oriented professional norms. The former is a set of norms held by receivers of translations in relation to what translated products should be like (expectations), while the latter norms stipulate acceptable approaches and strategies necessary for fulfilling the former norms. In other words, the former defines the latter. Professional norms are then divided into smaller units: accountability norms, communication norms, and relation norms. Similar to Toury's concept of norms (Toury 1995), Chesterman likewise emphasises the descriptive nature of these norms. Although any norm cannot be entirely free from prescriptive connotations, initial recognition of the norm is possible only through descriptive analysis. The validity of norms, according to Chesterman, can be achieved either by validation by the norm authority in a society, or by the very existence of such norms, and both of validity are acknowledged in translation (Chesterman 1997:79).

Table 2: Chesterman's categorization of norms (Chesterman 1993, 1997)

Expectancy Norms (product-oriented norms)
(what translation should be like)

- Syntactic Expectancy Norms
- Semantic Expectancy Norms
- Pragmatic Expectancy Norms

Professional Norms (process-oriented norms)
(acceptable approaches and strategies to fulfil the expectancy norms)

- Accountability Norms (ethical norms)
- Communication Norms (social norms)
- Relation Norms (linguistic norms)

Similar to the suggestions made by Toury, Hermans identifies three sources from which norms can be elicited (Hermans 1999:85): (1) translations themselves; (2) paratexts, such as prefaces and footnotes; and (3) metatexts, such as various comments and statements, including codes of conduct issued by professional associations. In the context of interpreting situations, however, there are some aspects that require attention. For example, unlike translation, it is extremely difficult to have access to original and interpreted texts (Shlesinger 1989). Furthermore, unlike translations, where prefaces and footnotes often constitute a part of the translation itself and thus are available in written form, paratexts in interpreting are not readily available. For the current study, consideration will be given to Hermans's second and third sources, that is, paratexts and metatexts, for understanding norms in dialogue interpreting situations. In order to achieve this, data obtained from the semi-structured interview, which is considered to constitute suitable metatexts, is used as a primary source of the investigation. Additional metatexts are also found in the form of the AUSIT Code of Ethics and Code of Practice itself.

Chesterman describes expectancy norms in terms of the following characteristics: (a) they are product norms; (b) they are formulated by the receiver(s) of texts (in this case, clients); (c) they determine what a translation should be like; and (d) they are not validated by the norm authority. (Note that in this latter regard there is a contradiction between Chesterman 1993 and 1997.) However, there seem to be a few complicating issues when applying this model to dialogue interpreting situations. For instance, there are at least two sets of expectation norms in dialogue interpreting (i.e. two sets of clients). In addition, expectancy in interpreting is largely dependent on individual clients, rather than on such criteria as community consensus or a literary system, and thus can be regarded as rather fluid. Furthermore, the relevance of the syntactic/semantic/pragmatic subcategories is somewhat questionable with interpreting. In interpreting, a categorisation like linguistic, sociolinguistic and sociocultural may be more appropriate.

On the other hand, professional norms can be described as follows: (a) these are production norms; (b) they describe the behaviour of competent professionals; (c) they determine methods and strategies for the translation process; (d) they are stipulated in response to the expectancy norms; (e) they are recognised by the very existence of professional norms; (f) they are sometimes validated by a norm-authority; and (g) they are further divided into three norms, which are accountability norms, communication norms, and relation norms. Accountability norms concern ethical aspects, or the translator's (in this study, the interpreter's) integrity and thoroughness as a professional. Communication norms are social norms that relate to translators' (interpreters') efforts to maximise communication amongst participants. The relationship between the source and target texts falls under relation norms, which are basically linguistic norms. The three norms can be summarised in Table 3 as follows:

Table 3: Chesterman's Professional Norms (1993, 1997)

Professional Norms	Area	Attribute
Accountability norms	ethical	trust
Communication norms	social	understanding
Relation norms*	linguistic	truth

* *These norms are unique to translational activities, while the other two can be recognised in other communication situations.*

2.2 Goffman's 'role' concept

Because Chesterman's model was initially developed for translation, there are some potential inadequacies when it is applied to dialogue interpreting, some of which have been mentioned above. Dialogue interpreting can be defined as "interpreter-mediated communication in spontaneous face-to-face interaction" (Mason 2000:215). Some of the main characteristics of interpreting in this mode are that the interpreter interprets in both language/cultural directions (that is, bilateral/bicultural) (cf. conference interpreting), interpreting is performed face-to-face, and it is usually dialogic (cf. monologic), all of which make it different from other modes of interpreting, and also from translation. Therefore, in order to complement Chesterman's model, I have taken Goffman's concept of role into consideration. Goffman identifies three different levels of role: normative role, typical role and role performance. The typical role is the typical response of an individual in a certain position, whereas role performance is the actual behaviour of the individual. Normative role, on

the other hand, concerns the normative aspects of a role, so it seems possible to examine the AUSIT Codes in relation to the normative role. Chesterman's authority-validated professional norms can also be discussed in line with this role. The typical role can be elicited from the comments made by interpreters in interviews, and it can be contrasted with the professional norms that are validated by their existence (which will be called 'existence-validated' professional norms in this paper). Role performance will not be examined in this paper, as only interview data are utilised here.

In addition to the three role levels, the following terms proposed by Goffman seem valuable for this study:

• Role others (= relevant audiences), which in this study refers to 'clients';

• Role set (= aggregation of role others), as in client A (Australian) and client B (Japanese);

• Role sectors, such as role sector A (interpreter's role for Client A, Australian) and role sector B (interpreter's role for Client B, Japanese);

• Intra-role conflict, in relation to conflicts between role sector A and role sector B;

• Impression management.

2.3 Merger of the two theoretical approaches (Norm-Role Model)

Figure 1 is an attempt to combine Chesterman's concept of norms and Goffman's role concept. I tentatively call this the 'Norm-Role Model'. The two frameworks have proven to be useful in that they complement each other well for an analysis at the behavioural level of the interpreter (i.e. 'Professional Norms' and 'Role' levels). At the expectancy norms level, however, Goffman's concept appears more useful for interpreting situations because it assumes the existence of plural sets of expectations. In addition, it provides a perspective of potential conflict between the roles an interpreter plays for each party. Furthermore, the notion of 'impression management' in Goffman's concept offers a viewpoint of the dynamic relationship between the role-others (clients) and the interpreter, as well as possible adjustment efforts made by the interpreter.

3. Findings

The following examination is an analysis of professional norms and the role of interpreters with regard to norms, utilising the above-mentioned Norm-Role Model. More precisely, this paper focuses on the 'perceptions' of the interpreters in relation to what they think they usually do, which is thought to be related to the 'typical role' in the model. In addition, the relevance of AUSIT Codes is also considered within the framework of the model.

3.1 Relevance of AUSIT Code of Ethics and Code of Practice

In order to become a NAATI-accredited interpreter, applicants must pass the ethics test that asks about the requirements set out in these Codes. These Codes can be regarded as a form of Chesterman's 'authority-validated norms'. They are also considered to be closely related to Goffman's 'normative role'. First of all, the position of the codes within the current framework is discussed, followed by an investigation of interpreters' perceptions with regard to some of the requirements stipulated in these Codes, in relation to business interpreting situations.

3.1.1 Status of the Codes in the Norm-Role Model

From the perspective of Chesterman's model, most of the clauses of the Codes concern 'accountability norms', with some exceptions under the 'impartiality' and 'accuracy' categories, which are deemed to regulate the 'communication' and 'relation' aspects of norms. The Code of Practice does not spell out 'expectations' on the part of the clients. Therefore, it is presumed to be a document aimed at setting out desirable professional norms. Although it is debatable whether its statements are relevant in actual interpreting situations, it is nevertheless considered to be a form of 'authority-validated' professional norms. As discussed in the later section of this paper, the interviewed interpreters made various comments questioning the relevance of some of the Code's requirements in business interpreting situations. This indicates a potential clash between "authority-validated" norms and norms validated by their very existence (or 'existence-validated' norms).
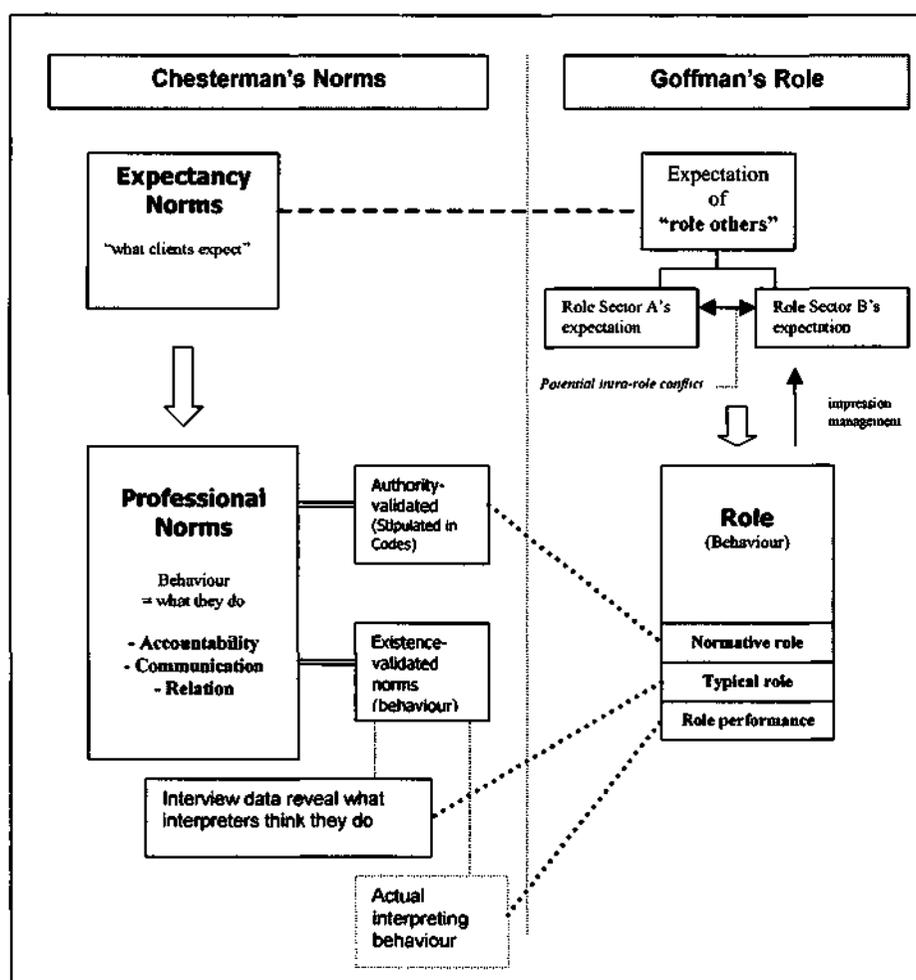
Figure 1: The relationship between Chesterman's Norms and Goffman's Role (Norm-Role Model)

Although the Code of Practice states the importance of accuracy and such requirements as interpreters not voicing an opinion, it does not stipulate a definition of the role of a professional interpreter. Furthermore, it outlines only one method of interpreting, and does not allow any modification on any occasion. In other words, it appears that the Code of Practice assumes an interpreter to be a static, machine-like actor at all times, regardless of the interpreting situation.

3.1.2 Relationship between Professional Norms and the Normative Role

According to Wadensjö, the normative role of interpreters becomes "shared through the official Code of Conduct, rules and regulations and through educational programmes" (Wadensjö 1998:83). Therefore, with respect to the role concept, the requirements described in the AUSIT Codes appear to correlate with the 'normative role'. Wadensjö also defines the normative role as "what interpreters think they do when they perform well, or at least appropriately as interpreter" (Wadensjö 1998:83). However, my interview data suggest that interpreters' understanding of 'appropriate' performance is not always consistent with the Codes in a business setting. All interpreters unanimously commented that they do not follow at least certain parts of the Codes in business interpreting situations. There are also some interpreters who commented that the requirement of the Codes may be suitable for an interpreter's role in the case of court or police interpreting, but not in business situations. According to A4, for example, when undertaking police-related interpreting, she claims to adhere to the Codes strictly, but employs flexible practices in business interpreting situations. J3 made a similar claim. Therefore, if the 'normative role' defines 'what is good' or 'what good interpreting should be like' in business interpreting situations, then the Codes and the normative role in business settings do not necessarily correspond. This aspect differs from Chesterman's norms, because he emphasises a 'descriptive' approach, as I explained above, and denies the normative (prescriptive) notion of norms.

3.1.3 Interpreters' views on 'impartiality'

While all interpreters who were interviewed support the concept of impartiality and a neutral stance as stipulated in the Codes, interpreters reported some aspects that may influence their impartiality. Two interpreters (A1, J2) voiced some difficulty in maintaining a neutral stance due to the very fact that they must directly deal with human beings in dialogue interpreting situations, which highlights the interpersonal nature of interpreting in this mode.

Another interesting variable relates to which party employs the interpreter. Two interpreters (A2, A3) mentioned that they keep a neutral stance regardless of the payment situation (or who she is actually employed by), while another two (A1, J2) claimed that they would consider which side covered the interpreting expenses. One (A1) commented, "It is natural to be faithful to those who are buying one's products, and in our case the product is interpreting." A4 pointed out that neutrality is not a problem when things are proceeding smoothly, but once the relationship becomes problematic, it would be difficult to keep that stance.

Another area of interest relates to the non-voicing of opinions. In this regard, the AUSIT norms state that *"Interpreters and translators shall not voice or write an opinion, solicited or unsolicited, on any matter or person in relation to an assignment."* (AUSIT Code of Practice 4.c, ii.). The general tendency in the data was that these interpreters do not voice any opinions, especially in terms of opinions on the actual content of messages. However, when issues relate to communication in general, the interpreters seem to behave rather flexibly, depending on the context, and may in fact voice their opinion when they consider it appropriate. J1 states, for example, that it is better for an interpreter to make comments to ensure smoother communication. She also mentions that it is impolite to ignore a request from a client soliciting her opinion. J2 supports this stance. A2 mentions that if an interpreter knows business protocols specific to a certain culture, it may be appropriate for the interpreter to mention them to the parties. Only one interpreter (A3) explicitly stated that interpreters should never express their own opinions.

The interpreters seem to be more relaxed during non-interpreting times (such as lunch-time or during breaks), when they feel more free to voice their opinions in the presence of clients. As a matter of fact, much appears to occur during this non-interpreting time, especially in terms of interpersonal aspects, which may have some influence on the individuals' role performance. These non-interpreting situations seem to correspond well to Goffman's notion of 'back region' (Goffman 1959) where not everybody is allowed to enter and where interesting actions can actually be observed. A closer investigation of this particular context may provide a further interesting perspective with regard to the interpreter's role.

3.1.4 Interpreters' views on 'accuracy'

'Accuracy' is the area where the strongest tone of objections was voiced by interviewees. The AUSIT Code includes such requirements as:

- *"...interpreters shall relay accurately and completely everything that is said."* (AUSIT Code of Practice 5.a, i)

- *"...shall convey the whole message, including derogatory or vulgar remarks, as well as non-verbal clues."* (5.a, ii)

- *"If patent untruths are uttered, interpreters shall convey these accurately as presented."* (5.a, iii)

- *"..shall not alter, make additions to, or omit anything from their assigned work."* (5.a, iv)

There seem to be two main reasons why interpreters do not comply with the AUSIT Code requirements stated above. The first concerns communication efficiency. Interpreters report that they incline toward maximising communication (which is reflected in 'communication norms') in the business context. In order to achieve this, there are a number of strategies that they commonly utilise. For example, they convey only the very important parts (J2), deliver commentary rather than interpreting as is (J2), add explanations before and after for better understanding (J2), convey everything, including even things that are not verbalized (J3), and censor what is appropriate in the context (A1, A4). A3 claims: "In a business situation, unlike a community interpreting setting, things get nowhere if we interpret literally, and that's why we are there". In other words, this finding appears to illustrate a possible contradiction between "maximisation of communication" and "observing the accuracy requirements set in the Code".

Another strong motivation for interpreters not to adhere to the Code derives from a request to them by their client. If a client demands a 'summary version', for example, then interpreters must respond to such a request (A1, J3). They are sometimes even requested to "convey this aptly" or "communicate in view of clinching a deal" (J3). In an extreme instance, an interpreter (A4) delivered a speech (interpreted version) without an original speech, after the same interpreter interpreted the identical speech on the first occasion, because that was what the client requested. A2 stressed that: "Whatever is said in the Code of Ethics, if a client says we don't have to say, then I must follow it, because we are in the business of interpreting."

3.2 Intercultural issues

A number of issues arising from communication between speakers with different cultural backgrounds are also relevant in this study. First of all, the Japanese-language interpreters seem to play an expanded role in business settings. For example, J2 reported that she had stopped other people from talking at a meeting so that a Japanese client could have an opportunity to make a comment. According to her, it was because "Japanese are less inclined to cut in due to the cultural difference". A very similar situation was reported by J3, who explained that she would add explanations because Japanese clients do not ask, even when they do not understand something. In the case of A3, she herself does not add explanations, but claims, "I'd say, 'Can you explain a bit more?' when clients seem not to understand something". Interestingly, interpreters' attention seems to be constantly directed toward the Japanese-speaking client rather than toward the Australian, irrespective of whether the interpreter is an English (Australian) or Japanese native speaker. In other words, their attempt is to apply the Australian communication norms to the Japanese clients.

Dialogue interpreting involves at least two immediate clients, which means that interpreters are exposed to at least two sets of potentially different expectations (or expectancy norms). Indeed, the number of people an interpreter deals with in a business situation is often more than two. Using Goffman's terms, an interpreter faces a minimum of two role-others, having a minimum of two 'role sectors'. Because of this, interpreters sometimes face a dilemma deriving from the intra-role conflict between the sectors. For example, A1 reports that clients may regard an interpreter as a convenient person to ask to undertake various odd tasks even though these do not constitute a part of the interpreter's duties. However, she says that she would not be able to decline such a request, especially when the request comes from a Japanese client, mainly because she does not wish to be disliked by her clients. Her statement implies that she is less reluctant to reject such requests from an Australian client. That is to say, her perception of her role between the two sectors is not exactly identical and thus could become a potential cause of intra-role conflict.

According to the interview data, expectations could differ greatly between Japanese and Australian clients. For example, according to J2, Japanese clients tend to rely on an interpreter more than Australians do because they suffer from an inferiority complex stemming from the fact that they are not competent in English. From a slightly different perspective, J2 reports that Japanese clients show more appreciation toward interpreters than do Australians, because they value the service provided by interpreters, understanding that it requires a high level of skills, while Australians tend to regard an interpreter simply as someone who happens to speak two languages. J2 points out, however, that Japanese clients sometimes distance themselves from an interpreter to avoid their own pride being hurt, because some clients do not wish to accept the fact that interpreters speak a language that they cannot speak themselves. Another interesting but slightly different comment came from an Australian interpreter (A2), who says that Japanese clients with English-language capability tend to be harsher on Japanese interpreters than on Australians. She explains this as a result of 'competition' between the Japanese clients and Japanese interpreters. In the case of Japanese clients, their own perception regarding their English-language capability appears to be a very strong determinant in forming their expectations, which is not necessarily applicable to Australian clients.

3.3 Adjustment efforts of interpreters

Interpreters seem to engage in countless adjustment activities with regard to their role in a dialogue interpreting situation, which is one of the most interesting findings in this study. Adjustment activities here imply efforts by the interpreter in response to expectations by clients with regard to her role. This is perhaps partly because of the complexity of understanding and responding to expectancy norms (or expectations of all role-others) in dialogue interpreting situations.

Another reason appears to derive from the very 'interpersonal' and 'direct' nature of dialogue interpreting as opposed to translation, or even as distinct from simultaneous conference interpreting. In terms of the Chesterman model, the adjustment effort seems to relate to some extent to 'accountability norms', as well as to 'communication norms'. However, it seems that this model in its current form does not fully explain the interpersonal nature of interaction in the dialogue interpreting mode. On the other hand, Goffman's concept of 'impression management' may be applicable.

The initial and very important adjustment phase that interpreters face is what can be called the 'establishment of expertise' phase. Interpreters appear to spend much energy at the very beginning of each business interpreting assignment so that they can prove themselves able and trustworthy to their new clients. For example, a female interpreter (J3) described her experience in an assignment where she had faced an adverse reaction from her (male) clients, whom she thought poorly evaluated her competence to handle the requisite technical conversations. Her first priority was thus to prove herself capable of handling such an interpreting situation. She also reports that whenever she has a difficult client, her principal priority is obtaining the trust of that person. J2 describes this as an establishment phase where she makes an effort to probe the intentions of the client so that she can determine her role as an interpreter. She emphasises the importance of building a trustworthy relationship first and foremost. Another interpreter (A4) calls this the 'training' phase, explaining, "... the big task for us in 5, 10, 15 minutes, we have to train them, sometimes it takes weeks to train them, so that they realise that we are not a threat ... we are a translator [sic] that's all we do."

In addition to establishing their expertise as professional interpreters, this establishment stage is when interpreters make initial adjustments with regard to their roles, in response to clients' expectations. Although efforts at making adjustments seem to continue throughout an assignment, this stage appears to be most crucial. Through such adjustment efforts, interpreters gradually understand where they stand in terms of their role for that particular assignment. The majority of interpreters (all except A4) interviewed clearly stated that they would adjust their role according to the expectations of the client. As discussed above, interpreters seem to regard the requirements of the Codes as less applicable to business situations, and therefore the leeway for adjustments seems to be much larger than in settings such as court or police interpreting. In other words, the interpreter's role in a business situation appears to be rather flexible, often with a seemingly expanded role. This, in turn, requires interpreters to make much harder adjustment efforts due to the wider options from which to choose. Some examples of their expanded role have already been discussed above in relation to the intercultural context. Other examples include an interpreter making some comments when clients talk in circles (J3); being requested to make photocopies (A1); playing a coordinator's role, including giving advice on how to advance a meeting and how to take minutes (J2); a messenger (A1); role as a counsellor and mother (J2); umpire (J2); and peacemaker (A2). Besides clients' expectations, such factors as time spent with clients, the friendliness and attitude of clients, and which side bears the cost of interpreting, may also influence the interpreters' role (J2).

While certain expectations seem to make interpreters feel overwhelmed at times, some interpreters report that they enjoy such an expanded role. J2 states that an assignment with expanded role expectations gives her a greater sense of fulfilment. J3 points out that it is imperative that clients' needs be met in business interpreting, more so than in community-based interpreting. Otherwise, she claims that future assignments will surely be given to another interpreter. However, she stresses the importance of making it clear to the client that she undertakes such tasks as a free 'extra' service. Similarly, both A1 and J2 mentioned that interpreting is, after all, a part of the service industry.

4. Conclusion

Chesterman's model has proven useful for categorising various aspects of interpreters' views towards their behaviour. The notion of expectations on the part of the client is also valid, although this paper does not directly consider expectancy norms themselves. Goffman's concept of role provides additional viewpoints to the Chesterman model, especially in terms of the inter-relationship among the interpreter, role others (clients), and various roles (normative and typical roles, and role performance).

As noted above, Chesterman's model was initially developed within translation studies. Therefore, while it provides an extremely valuable framework, in the course of examining the perceived behaviour of the interpreters, some features that

are unique to dialogue interpreting situations were also confirmed. First of all, with translations, it may be possible (or rather, it is necessary) to generalise the expectations of a target group/culture/audience. However, in dialogue interpreting, expectations can be quite idiosyncratic from one client to another, from one assignment to another, and even from one moment to another, making interpreters deal with these expectations individually and on an on-going basis. To make the situation more complex, for interpreting in the dialogue mode there are a minimum of two clients, who usually belong to different cultures. This means that there are plural sets of expectations at work, which could potentially be contradictory. In addition, dialogue interpreters are directly exposed to clients, and therefore clients' expectations are naturally more immediate and visible to interpreters. Complementing the Chesterman model with Goffman's role concept made it possible to consider extra perspectives for some aspects of this more complex nature of interpreting. However, in order to respond to this fully, a fourth dimension might need to be incorporated within Chesterman's professional norms. This will enable us to emphasise the interactive and interpersonal aspects, whose attribute is adjustment and flexibility. Alternatively, modification or restructuring of the other norm categories, particularly in relation to communication norms, might solve this issue in applying the model to dialogue interpreting situations.

With regard to interpreters' perceptions about their behaviour, particularly in relation to the requirements set out in the AUSIT Codes of Ethics and Practice, this study shows that some discrepancies exist between the perceptions of individuals and the Codes. In other words, the study implies that there is a potential clash between the authority-validated professional norms and existence-validated professional norms. The findings of this study suggest that a more flexible understanding of the concept of the role of interpreters is necessary for business settings. The professional interpreters in this study are not static. They are dynamic entities who respond to the expectations of the client, and their adjustment behaviour seems to be critical in successful interpreting in these situations. All interpreters in this study indicate that they value and respect the existence of the Codes, yet they insist that flexible interpretation and application are necessary for success. Their roles are often expanded, and they seem to be greatly dependent on the expectations of clients. In that sense, Chesterman's claim that expectancy norms regulate professional norms appears relevant. These results therefore suggest that some modifications to the existing Codes might be required for their application to the business domain. At least, it would seem helpful to advise novice interpreters that the Codes in their current form might have certain limitations in relation to business situations. A further study, especially an investigation of interpreters' actual behaviour in natural settings, or a broader study with more subjects and/or other language combinations, would be useful in confirming the findings of this study.

References

Angelelli, C.V. 2004. *Revising the interpreter's role: a study of inference, court, and medical interpreters in Canada, Mexico, and the United States*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Barsky, R.F. 1996. The interpreter as intercultural agent in convention refugee hearings. *The Translator*. 2(1):45-63.

Berk-Seligson, S. 1999. The impact of court interpreting on the coerciveness of leading questions. *Forensic Linguistics*. 6(1):30-56.

Berk-Seligson, S. 2000. Interpreting for the police: issues in pre-trial phases of the judicial process. *Forensic Linguistics*. 7(2):212-37.

Brunette, L., Bastin, G., Hemlin, I. and H. Clarke. 2003. *The critical link 3: interpreters in the community*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Carr, S.E., Roberts, R., Dufour, A. and D. Steyn. 1997. *The critical link: interpreters in the community: papers from the First International Conference on interpreting in legal, health, and social service settings*. Geneva Park, Canada, 1-4 June 1995. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Chesterman, A. 1993. From 'is' to 'ought': Laws, norms and strategies in translation studies. *Target*. 5(1):1-20.

Chesterman, A. 1997. *Memes of translation: the spread of ideas in translation theory*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Collados Aís, A. 1998/2002. Quality assessment in simultaneous interpreting: the importance of nonverbal communication. In F. Pöchhacker and M. Shlesinger (eds), *The interpreting studies reader*, 327-36. London: Routledge.

Davidson, B. 2001. Questions in cross-linguistic medical encounters: the role of the hospital interpreter. *Anthropological Quarterly*. 74(4):170-8.

Goffman, E. 1959/1971. *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Goffman, E. 1961. *Encounters: two studies in the sociology of interaction.* Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill.

Harris, B. 1990. Norms in interpreting. *Target.* 2:115-19.

Hermans, T. 1999. *Translation in systems: descriptive and systemic approaches explained.* Manchester: St. Jerome.

Jansen, P. 1995. The role of the interpreter in Dutch courtroom interaction: the impact of the situation on translational norms. In J. Tommola (ed.), *Topics in interpreting research.* Turku: University of Turku, Centre for Translation and Interpreting.

Kaufert, J.M. and R.W. Putsch 1997. Communication through interpreters in healthcare: ethical dilemmas arising from differences in class, culture, language, and power. *The Journal of Clinical Ethics.* 8(1):71-87.

Mason, I. 2000. Models and methods in dialogue interpreting research. In M. Olohan (ed.), *Intercultural faultlines: Research models in translation studies I: Textual and cognitive aspects,* 215-31. Manchester: St. Jerome.

Mikkelson, H. 1998. Towards a redefinition of the role of the court interpreter. *Interpreting.* 3(1):21-45.

National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) 2000. *Ethics of interpreting and translation: a guide to professional conduct in Australia.* Canberra: NAATI.

Pöchhacker, F. 2004. *Introducing interpreting studies.* London: Routledge.

Pöchhacker, F. and M. Shlesinger. 2002. *The interpreting studies reader.* London: Routledge.

Roberts, R.P., Carr, S.E., Abraham, D. and A. Dufour (eds). 2000. *The critical link 2: interpreters in the community: Selected papers from the Second International Conference on interpreting in legal, health, and social service settings.* Vancouver, BC, Canada, 19-23 May 1998. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Rosenberg, B.A. 2001. *Describing the nature of interpreter-mediated doctor-patient communication: a quantitative discourse analysis of community interpreting.* Unpublished PhD, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.

Roy, C.B. 1993. The problem with definitions, descriptions, and the role metaphors of interpreters. *Journal of Interpretation.* 6(1):127-54.

Schjoldager, A. 1995/2002. An exploratory study of translational norms in simultaneous interpreting. In F. Pöchhacker and M. Shlesinger (eds), *The interpreting studies reader.* London: Routledge.

Shlesinger, M. 1989. Extending the theory of translation to interpretation: norms as a case in point. *Target.* 1(1):111-15.

Toury, G. 1995. *Descriptive translation studies and beyond.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Wadensjö, C. 1998. *Interpreting as interaction.* London: Longman.

Masato Takimoto is a lecturer in Japanese interpreting and translation at the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics, Monash University. He is a NAATI accredited Conference Interpreter/Advanced Translator.