



The Linguist and Workplace Norms

Publication type: Journal article

Journal: [Cahiers de lexicologie](#)

[2017 - 1, n° 110. Normes linguistiques et terminologiques : conflits d'usages](#)

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Abstract: Within the workplace, the notion of “linguistic norm” is often considered as equivalent to that of “Controlled Natural Language”, namely a set of recommendations intended to limit the difficulties inherent in the use of natural language. This point of view does not take into account another kind of norm that emerges spontaneously within groups of speakers, notably when they share a common goal. The present paper aims to demonstrate that these two kinds of norms, prescribed and spontaneous, must both be considered by linguists if they want to improve information transmission. The results obtained in two systematic studies are presented, one on an oral corpus in the Air Traffic Control domain and the other on a written corpus in the space domain. The implementation of prescribed linguistic norms in real situations is described. The authors propose to improve the design of Controlled Natural Languages by taking into account not only the experts’ knowledge but also linguistic knowledge, which has rarely been done.

Pages: 171 to 187

Journal: [Journal of Lexicology](#)

CLIL theme: 3147 -- SCIENCES HUMAINES ET SOCIALES, LETTRES -- Lettres et Sciences du langage -- Linguistique, Sciences du langage

EAN: 9782406070573

ISBN: 978-2-406-07057-3

ISSN: 2262-0346

DOI: 10.15122/isbn.978-2-406-07057-3.p.0171

Publisher: Classiques Garnier

Online publication: 07-01-2017

Periodicity: Biannual

Language: English

Keyword: genre, controlled natural language, normalization, norming

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