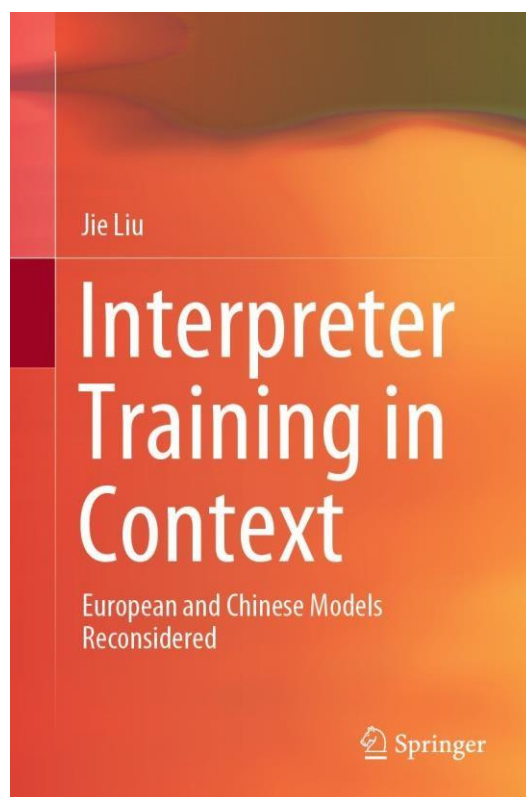# BOOK REVIEW

BOOK REVIEW OF *INTERPRETER TRAINING IN CONTEXT: EUROPEAN AND CHINESE MODELS RECONSIDERED*

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Liu, Jie (2020). *Interpreting Training in Context: European and Chinese Models Reconsidered.* Cham: Springer. ISBN 978-981-15-8593-7 (hardback); ISBN 978-981-15-8594-4 (ebook).

Although working as a conference interpreter involves the mastery of consecutive and simultaneous interpreting, it is now widely accepted that the necessary skills can be taught via relevant education and training programmes. Indeed, many institutions around the world offer interpreting courses in a range of languages at various academic levels. Sometimes, this training may form part of a broader qualification in modern languages or in translation, or it may be taught as a fully independent degree or diploma in (conference) interpreting.

Interpreter Training in Context: European and Chinese Models Reconsidered is part of Springer's "New Frontiers in Translation Studies" book series and is divided into six chapters with an appendix. In the work, Jie Liu adopts a comparative approach to provide detailed insights into the relevant models underpinning (conference) interpreter education in Europe and China. Currently based at Central China Normal University in Wuhan, Liu has significant academic and practical experience both in China and in Europe as an interpreter, interpreter trainer, and interpreting studies researcher. Indeed, the book is based on the author's doctoral research at Utrecht University in The Netherlands, and the work focuses primarily on consecutive interpreting within the wider framework of conference interpreter training.

The opening chapter centres on fundamental concepts related to interpreter training, providing a useful recap for those familiar with the topic, as well as a succinct synthesis for scholars from other disciplines. A broad definition of interpreting is offered, with further explanation of the different types and modes of interpreting within the historical and modern context. This is then complemented by an overview of research into interpreting studies, providing a basis for the second chapter which delves into the book's theoretical foundations. Here, Liu analyses relevant aspects relating to the academic- and practice-related interpreting research paradigms of the Paris School. These were originally developed several decades ago at the prestigious École Supérieure d'Interprètes et de Traducteurs (ESIT) and which were subsequently promoted by the Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence (AIIC, the worldwide association for professional conference interpreters). This "European" model is then compared with the theoretical underpinnings of the "Chinese" model of interpreter training, which was first developed at Xiamen University (XiaDa).

In chapter 3, after general remarks on varying institutional approaches to interpreter education on both continents, the author uses case studies to compare and contrast the different training models between Europe and China. Firstly, a detailed presentation and analysis of ESIT's conference interpreter training programme is provided, offering insights not only into the entry requirements and admissions testing, but also a module-by-module analysis of the syllabus together with information about the assessment procedures. Turning to China, the pedagogical offerings of two leading Chinese interpreter training universities (Xiamen University and Guangdong University of Foreign Studies) are detailed; here too, the curricula and expected learning trajectories are presented and discussed.

Chapter 4 highlights the importance of context for interpreting in China. Here, the author analyses the country's historical and modern sociolinguistic landscape at the macro level, drawing attention to certain notable differences in comparison with Europe's sociolinguistic reality, before turning to the micro level to examine

interpreting-related points of interest relating to the Mandarin Chinese language itself. This provides background for exploring how suitable the relevant European and Chinese models are for the China-related context, using a case study from Xiamen University to explore these aspects in practice.

The focus of Chapter 5, however, is more practical, albeit grounded in the relevant theories, and involves the implementation of task-based approaches in interpreter training with specific regard to the Chinese context. In advocating for a shift in pedagogical perspectives, a four-stage plan to guide interpreting students from novice to professional level competency is presented, with detailed teaching plans provided as sample templates.

In the concluding chapter, Liu outlines the novel features of the work, highlighting the fact that evolution of existing frameworks is required to meet the contemporary demands of interpreter training and professional practice as an interpreter. To this end, with regard to the Chinese context, a new model based on the XiaDa model is offered, as well as guidance on how training programmes for interpreters could adapt to future realities. Finally, the author draws attention to some of the pathways that additional research in this area could take.

Informed by the author's background in interpreting research, training, and practice, *Interpreter Training in Context: European and Chinese Models Reconsidered* is a worthy addition to an important and highly relevant topic. Given its focus, a key part of the work's audience will naturally be interpreter trainers working in China and/or with Mandarin Chinese, yet the comparative nature of the book means that it may also be of interest to professional and pedagogical training specialists in broader language-related fields. In summary, the volume successfully blends theoretical and practical aspects in an insightful manner, with the clear potential to play an influential role in interpreter training in the Chinese context.