

BOOK REVIEW

Global Insights into Public Service Interpreting: Theory, Practice and Training

By Riccardo Moratto and Defeng Li, Oxford & New York, 2022,

Received: 11 June 2022; Revised: 05 November 2022; Published: 21 December 2022

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Public service interpreting (PSI) touches on the “most private spheres of human life” (Hale, 2007, p. 25). In interpreting studies, the term PSI goes by different names in different geographic locales. As an umbrella term that encompasses a broad range of sub-categories such as court, police, social welfare, and medical interpreting, PSI is often defined as “the type of interpreting that takes place between residents in a community” (Hale, 2011, p. 343). Access to quality PSI services is of paramount importance. Particularly in recent decades, with the increasing global mobility, warfare, immigration and asylum, PSI services have grown exponentially as a moral and regulatory imperative to facilitate fair and adequate communication between the public service sectors and members of different language communities and cultures who are often people with a migrant and/or refugee background or linguistic minorities who have limited proficiency of the majority language of the country. Considering the multi-faceted nature of public services, research in PSI is undoubtedly interdisciplinary. Situated in the global context of PSI, the book provides a systematic overview of insight-driven discussions on relevant theoretical, practical, and pedagogical issues in different geographic locations with contributors of a diverse linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds. The discussions revolve around three main areas: (1) professional role and ethics (see Chapters 1 to 5), (2) policies, problems and strategies in PSI practices (see Chapters 6 to 9), and (3) training and interpreter education (see Chapters 10 to 14).

This well-structured volume comprises three sections: theories, global practices, and training. Starting by introducing relevant theoretical concepts and framework, the first part of this book consists of five chapters, which pave the ground for further practice-informed discussions. In Chapter 1, Agnieszka Dominika Biernacka and Aleksandra Kalata-Zawłocka examine the universality of ethics by conducting a comparative analysis of two codes of ethics for spoken or signed language interpreters in Polish public services. The results indicate the possibility of uniform codes of ethics due to the shared principles, such as accuracy, impartiality, confidentiality and professionalism. In Chapter 2, Nicole W. Lan and Ester S. M. Leung present two videotaped interpreter-mediated simulated medical consultations involving a doctor, a patient, and 26 student interpreters in the Japanese and English language pair. Based on a concise review of literature on empathy from cognitive, affective, and behavioural perspectives, a five-point scale is employed for raters to assess trainee interpreters’ interactional management concerning empathetic performance. Aided by multimodal discoursal analysis consisting of verbal and non-verbal cues (e.g. a nod, gaze, posture), the findings reveal that empathetic cues have implications for rapport-building and perceptions of warmth, genuineness, and



credibility. In Chapter 3, Lihua Jiang investigates the factors influencing the interpreter's choice between verbatim and non-verbatim renditions in the bidirectional communicative discourse. Applying a Triadic Discourse Interpreting Model (TRIM), a constellation of parameters and interpreting filters (e.g. discourse purpose, coherence, topic continuity, isotopic continuity, knowledge, and interest) are used to elucidate the knowledge, competency, and situational challenges in the PSI triadic speech event. In Chapter 4, Junfeng Zhao, Zhimiao Yang and Riccardo Moratto probe the core concepts of classical rhetoric, namely ethos, pathos, and logos, into the "identification", "audience", and "multi-value judgment" in the legal discourse. The results reveal several issues in the interpreted rhetorical legal discourse: lack of ethos, improper simplification of pathos, incomplete logos, and inadequate audience awareness. In Chapter 5, Amalia Amato and Gabriele Mack assessed children's perceptions and preferences in interpreter-mediated communication to inform ad hoc training for interpreters working with children in Italy. The study examines children's language rights and representation in social welfare and legal interpreting by interviewing 18 children of different age groups about their perceptions of interpreter-mediated communication on seven thematic topics. These topics include (1) personal feelings; (2) understanding of roles and relations between the persons involved; (3) skills of the people involved; (4) space and time arrangements; (5) technical implementation of the interview; (6) trust and rapport; and (7) general feedback. The recommendations for PSI service include clearer role and rapport-building protocols, better seating arrangement, attentive listening, ease of stress, and engaging eye contact.

The second part, which comprises four chapters, concentrates on multidimensional discourse practices in PSI across different countries and regions. In Chapter 6, Cheng Zhan investigates the interpreter mediation by means of the creation of text ownership and adoption of turn-taking strategies based on a corpus of five police interrogations facilitated by trainee interpreters in Guangzhou (China) and their post-task reflections. In Chapter 7, Agnieszka Dominika Biernacka investigates overlaps in the interpreter-mediated institutional talk in the courtroom by examining 37 hours of transcribed audio-visual recordings of oral court proceedings that involve 12 Polish-English interpreters. In Chapter 8, Aslı Polat Ulaş discusses interpreters providing services between Syrian refugees and Turkish public officials in the units of the Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (ASAM), in the legal context and in public healthcare institutions under the EU-funded healthcare project SIHHAT to explore interpreters' social, cultural, educational and professional backgrounds, their perspectives on the interpreting activities, their attitudes towards and expectations about PSI based on Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital and illusion. In Chapter 9, Eva N. S. Ng presents a historical review of court interpreting in Hong Kong from the early colonial days to the present time and argues the contrasting status of court interpreters, from the historical linguistic monopoly to the subject of present-day court scrutiny.

The final section, which consists of five chapters, focuses on PSI training and interpreter education. In Chapter 10, Christopher D. Mellinger proposes a dialogic pedagogy grounded in a practice-based and research-informed way. In Chapter 11, Ineke H.M. Crezee elicits trainee interpreters' perspectives of the hybrid medical interpreting training and assessment model in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In Chapter 12, Zhiwei Wu examines curriculum models and programme descriptions using a case study of educational design in an Advanced Liaison Interpreting course at a university in Hong



Kong. In Chapter 13, Binhua Wang and Lihong Pan propose a framework of PSI competencies by integrating representative constructs from the relevant research literature, textbooks and professional documents. In Chapter 14, Laura Volpato and Lara Mantovan investigate the under-researched use of the sign language PSI in Italy.

Overall, this book covers a wide range of discussions on conceptual, pedagogical, and practical issues in PSI across different languages and regions. The book has revealed a number of strengths. Theoretically speaking, firstly, it adopts a global perspective of PSI research by highlighting language-specific issues when interpreting between European and non-European languages. By doing so, this book evidently amplifies the voices of interpreters and public service users from less-heard language communities and cultural backgrounds. Secondly, it also highlights the issue of access and accessibility by giving special attention to sign language service users in its discussion. Thirdly, the book takes the PSI as an organic whole in interpreting studies and relevant fields of research by drawing on concepts and frameworks in other disciplines of humanities and social sciences with contributors from a variety of research backgrounds. Methodologically, it highlights the use of empirical data collected in PSI practice. Supported with the wealth of data, PSI research tends to yield more reliable findings that reflect specific geographic and demographic characteristics.

However, despite these apparent merits, some minor issues are noteworthy. Firstly, though the 14 papers are organised into three sections, including five on theoretical topics, four on global practices, and five on training, there are some overlaps across the three sections. For instance, some chapters in the theoretical discussions also touch upon problems in PSI practices and make policy recommendations. Secondly, given the broad scope and aim of this book, it would be more helpful to add recommendations for further reading, which can orient interested readers to explore more on a specific topic. Considering the broad range of relevant topics included in this volume, the book successfully achieved its aim by presenting a practical guide for professionals, academics, and lay audiences.

Declarations and Acknowledgement:

The author declares there is no conflict of interest.

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Ran is a PhD candidate at UNSW Sydney. She is a Level 1 (Advanced) Interpreter/Translator accredited by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security (P.R. China) with over seven years of professional experience as a full-time interpreter in organisations such as Tencent Technology and Shanghai Jiao Tong University. Her research interests include practice-informed court interpreting and interpreter education. As a lifelong learner, she welcomes interested researchers and peers to connect, learn, and grow together.



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