

# INVESTIGATION ON THE INADEQUATE TRAINING FOR INTERPRETERS IN CHINESE UNIVERSITIES

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## Abstract

China is in great need of interpreters ,but universities as main sources cannot meet the demands . This report ,by meta analysis ,is to examine the inadequacy in the training for professional interpreters in Chinese universities . The problems identified include low status of interpreting ,lack of sound training principles and qualified teachers ,use of non scientific teaching technique and inappropriate assessment system . Some recommendations are made to the educational authorities and university teachers on how to improve the level of interpreter training in Chinese universities ,such as raising the status of interpreter classes ,establishing sound training principles ,improving teaching resources ,and developing scientific teaching technique and an appropriate assessment system .

## Key words

interpreting ;inadequate training ;recommendation

## 1 . Introduction

China has been ,and is ,experiencing several important political ,cultural ,and socio-economic events ;expanding reforms across all sectors ,joining of the World Trade Organization ( WTO ) ,hosting of the 2008 Olympic Games and the 2010 World Exhibition . Ever increasing cross-cultural communications impose higher demands on interpreters . But China is greatly short of interpreters . Wang Lifei ,claimed during the Sixth National Interpreting Conference ,that the whole country needed about 1 million interpreters ,but the number of graduating interpreters from universities every year is only about 200 ( Zhan 2007 ) . Shanghai alone is short of 400 000 interpreters for the World Exhibition ( Aladin 2005 ) . In large cities such as Shanghai ,Beijing ,and Shenzhen ,an interpreter certificate is a must when most “three-capital enterprises” hire their middle or senior employees ,and interpreter training has become one of the most popular programs for professionals in Shanghai ( Cheng 2006 ) . China is in great need of interpreters ,but the gap between the demands and supplies is very large . Not only the court interpreters ,scientific and technological interpreters are in shortage ,the simultaneous interpreters ,conference interpreters ,commercial interpreters ,and contacting interpreters are also greatly lacking ( Aladin 2005 ) .

Interpreters in China mainly come from universities ,but the students majoring in interpreter are not only small in number but also poorly qualified for the professions in the market ,for they are mainly trained for conference or diplomatic interpreting rather than for other professional needs . At present ,there are several forms of interpreter training programs in colleges and at universities :the basic training (or the basic courses) for junior and senior undergraduates (these students are not quite qualified for the professions after graduation) ;senior translation training for the graduate students ;selective interpreter

classes for non-English-major science and technology students ;the junior /high interpreter training classes ;various interpreter training sessions for professional qualification ,etc . All these educational institutions seem to be unable to satisfy the demands of the interpreter markets . Thus ,many short term interpreter training organizations have emerged ,which cause more problems to the interpreter market ( Lu 2006 ) . The key for resolving the shortage of professional interpreters in China is still to solve the problems of inadequate training in universities and colleges .

This study aims at investigating the causes of inadequate training for interpreters in Chinese universities and based on research findings ,making recommendations to the educational authorities and university teachers on how to improve the level of interpreter training .

## 2 . Methods

The idea reflected in the report is based on the author's personal teaching experience in interpreting classes and some authoritative interpreting theories popular both abroad and at home . The scope of the report covers the issues of interpreter training in Chinese universities from January 1990 to March 2008 .

Data used in the report were obtained mainly from the EBSCOhost databases and book collections at the Deakin University in Australia ,and some are from the academic journals in the CNKI database and articles posted on reliable websites like translating websites and educational websites in China .

Data were processed by meta analysis ,which is known as “a type of research report in which the author integrates the findings of many ( primary source ) research studies by evaluating the results of individual studies and deriving an overall numeric index of the magnitude of results ”( Creswell 2008 23 ) . Meta analysis identified the problems concerned with inadequate interpreter training in Chinese universities and colleges as low status of interpreting ,insufficient university involvement ,non scientific teaching technique ,inappropriate assessment ,and poor student skills .

## 3 . Key Research Findings and Discussion

Several problems were identified concerning interpreter training in Chinese universities as discussed below .

### 3 .1 Low Status of Interpreting

The Ministry of Education has not paid sufficient attention to interpreting . In the national publication Subject Classifications and Codes in 1992 ,the Higher Education Commission listed translation as the third category subject and interpreting the fourth ,subordinating them to linguistics and applied linguistics ( Yue 2000 ) (see the following table 1 ) .

Table 1 . Low Status of Interpreting

Linguistics			
Theoretical Linguistics		Applied Linguistics	
...	Language Teaching	Translation	...
	Translating	Interpreting	

The low ranking of translation leads to the lower status of interpreting and translating classes . Because of this ,there has been less investment in the curriculum for development of interpreting classes in the university budgets . Moreover ,at present ,the vast majority of colleges and universities in China are quite vague about teaching interpreting they have not made clear distinction between translating (the written form ) and interpreting (the verbal form ) ,and classified interpreting into specific disciplines such as accompany interpreting ,conference interpreting ,medical interpreting ,technical interpreting ,court interpreting and so on as other countries do ( Cheng 2003 ) . So there is a big gap between foreign-interpreting teaching and domestic interpreting teaching .

### 3.2 Small Number of Universities or Faculties Involved in Interpreter Training

Universities and institutions providing interpreter trainings are insufficient in China now. About 400 universities and colleges teach translation classes but only about 20 offer interpreting classes (Liu 2005a). There are only four universities having interpreting majors in the whole nation, which are Beijing Foreign Studies University, Shanghai International Studies University, Xiamen University, and Guangdong University of Foreign Studies. The former two mainly deal with postgraduate interpreter training and the later two are mainly involved in undergraduate interpreter training (Lu 2006). What's more, translating and interpreting seem to be taught independently (Liu 2005a). Interpreting is not classified into specific disciplines as mentioned above. Application based teaching and research based teaching are not clearly distinguishable for studies for master degrees. Few universities confer application oriented master degrees in conference interpreting as what is happening at Beijing Foreign Studies University and Shanghai International Studies University. Many universities seem to base their teaching on translating and interpreting principles (Lu 2006). As pointed out by Dr. Liu Heping in his book "Interpreting Theory and Teaching" (2005: 72): "A real problem has not yet solved, that is, should the postgraduate be research-based or application based in the end?" Take Shanghai International Studies University as an example, it enrolled dozens of postgraduate students in 2004 and 2005. The courses offered included "Political Interpreting", "Business Interpreting", and "Interpreting Theories and Practice", etc., but classroom practice for interpreting was very difficult to be effectively done, and there was even no practice taking place in some classes (Liu 2005b).

For the non-English majors, interpreting is just an optional class, with very little time or practice for the students and little attention on teachers' teaching subjects and techniques, and evaluation methods, so it is very difficult for students to become proficient interpreters (Lu 2006). Therefore, the number of graduating interpreters is small each year. There are some graduates (especially some undergraduates) are not very qualified for their professions immediately after receiving training because of insufficient practice. Under this circumstance, many short term training institutions emerged to fill the gap, but they appear only to be able to provide less skilled interpreters and produce limited benefit to the interpreting market.

In recent years, with the development of China's private education, some translation institutes or specialized application oriented training institutions emerged; the examples are Xi'an Translation College, Xi'an Foreign Affairs Institute, and Shanghai Foreign Languages Institute of Trade and Industry. They established the basic market oriented path of development, with emphasis on practical training of qualified personnel to adapt to the market. Therefore, interpreting naturally becomes a "trump card" in these private colleges and universities for creating practical talents. Due to lack of funds, teachers, and students, or lack of students with better skills, private education struggles heavily for survival. Their problems are mainly reflected in: the students lack the basic skills of foreign language, with poor tone of voice, poor speaking, poor hearing, and even poor knowledge, therefore less overall quality. Moreover, private schools lack teachers, and interpreting teaching and theoretical research are relatively weak. Xue (2005) found that the situation of English learning in private colleges and universities as a whole was far from ideal: the mono teaching mode and plan make their teaching ineffective; a serious shortage of teachers greatly constrains high quality teaching. According to scholar Xu's investigation of Shanghai's 8-run colleges and universities, there are significant difference in foreign language teachers between private colleges and public universities. In the private universities surveyed, the vacancy rate of English teachers in the schools reaches 90% (Xu 2004). In addition, private college students are eager to be employed, with an anxiety for a quick success and instant benefits, which intimidates interpreting institutions thus ignore building a scientific training system. The non scientific educational system perhaps has a short term reward, but it is not conducive for an interpreter to obtain a fundamental and long term development, it is even more difficult for them to embark on the path of professional interpreters. So the results in private colleges are not so optimistic with low skill students, unqualified teachers or with an unsystematic teaching mode. They couldn't produce really qualified interpreters.

### 3.3 Non-Scientific Teaching Mode

The teaching mode for interpreter training in Chinese universities is still in its early stage and yet has a long way to go.

#### 3.3.1 Weak Theories

Theoretical research in interpreting started in late 1990s as illustrated in table 2.

Table 2. Number of published articles on interpreting before and after 1996 in two main Chinese Journals

Time	Journals	
	Chinese Translators Journals	Chinese Science & Technology Translators Journal
Before 1996	1	24
1996-2008	47	58

Source: from databases of CNKI for the academic journals in China

Table 2 shows the number of published articles on interpreting in two Chinese representative journals dealing with translation, Chinese Translators Journals and Chinese Science & Technology Translators Journal before and after 1996. The academic articles on interpreting before 1996 were fewer than 50 (Li, cited in Liu 2005b), and these two journals together covered half of the articles. The information shown on the chart indicates that research in interpreting started very late in China.

The development of interpreting theories in China has experienced 3 stages: the first being an empirical stage, which took place before 1996 when interpreting came into the notice of researchers; the second being a descriptive stage for the period 1996-2000, in which interpreting changed from static to dynamic state with researchers describing the interpreting process; and the third being a comprehensive stage starting in 2000, involving introduction of foreign theories, interdisciplinary research and practical research. The latter two stages were concerned with interpreting model and application, but it is only a beginning (Liu 2005c). By 2004, there were about 20 publications on interpreting, of which 7 were translations (Liu 2005c). Those publications were mainly introduction of foreign interpreting, either descriptive or empirical, and were short of forming its own theories. Theories now popular in China are "Interpretative Theory" from Paris, and Liu Heping's the "Teaching Way of Scientific Thinking and Interpretative Inference" (Gao 2007). Interpreting is a practical interdisciplinary subject, which involves theories like translating, psycholinguistics, cognitive psychology, neuro linguistics, cross-cultural communication (Wu 1999) etc. All of these need further research.

The weak theory of interpreting can be seen from another aspect in table 3.

Table 3. Interpreting Research Categories, Content, and Features (by Li 2007)

Research categories	Number of articles	Research Content and Features
Macro Study	53	Mainly about the interpreting principles, features, quantitative assessment, quality standards, error analysis, quality of interpreters, interpreting history, comments, reviews at home and abroad, summary of objective criteria, and theory refining during interpreting activity.
Skill Study	58	Mainly about the procedures, language style, on-the-spot psychology, the general or specific skills of interpreting, and summary of these skills based on practical experience during interpreting activity.
Interpreting - Teaching Study	50	Mainly about Interpreting teaching and training, ideals of interpreting teaching and other related research.

The above table was created by Professor and Dr. Li Shaolong at Guangdong University of Foreign Studies. On the basis of an analytical review of relevant publications (161 articles about interpreting

research) in 14 Chinese academic journals from 1996-2005, Liu found that, though studies on interpretation had made great achievements, serious problems did exist, mainly in the following three aspects:

#### A. Extensive but weak macro theoretical research

For lack of sufficient introduction and absorption of the up-to-date research achievements from foreign countries, the domestic interpreting research ideas and methods are disorganized, leading to weak theoretical research. The existing research results in the recent decade are unsatisfactory in terms of breadth or depth. Summary of experience and inductive speculation cover the dominant thinking of interpreting research, with less drawing upon some relevant subject research ideas and results.

#### B. Monotonous research methodology

In recent years, some scholars (e.g. Gui & Ning 2007) have repeatedly called for active studies on experimenting and sampling to obtain scientific results, while in fact most interpreting scholars preferred research based on personal experience, indirect experience, second-hand data, or introduced data to analyze or discuss, which only leads to inductive summary or critical recommendations with many mistakes.

#### C. Dispersed and imbalanced research objects

High-level interpreters are the focus of the attention of the interpreting scholars, and less or even no attentions are paid to less skilled interpreters and beginners. Therefore there is no comparative analysis or comparative capacity development between professional interpreters and interpreting learners. These cause constraints to healthy development of interpreting and may lead to lack of interpreting talents in the future. In China, the tradition is that prescriptive research is preferred to descriptive research, which is not necessarily rational. To fill the gap, scholars should engage more in ground-based and proactive studies involving experimentation and sampling. So interpreting in China has a long way to go to be scientifically theoretical.

### 3.3.2 Inappropriate Curriculum and Teaching Materials

Curriculum is formulated to deal with issues concerning teachings such as teaching objectives, tasks, basic conditions, content, methods, progress, and result assessment (Liu 2005c). It is essential for a course by providing instructions. In China, there are no unified curricula. Because of weak theories, it's hard to make a comprehensive curriculum for interpreting classes. Universities either make their own curricula or have no curriculum at all (Liu 2005c). The four major universities mentioned above have different curricula, so other universities don't know which one to follow. At present, the interpreting course curriculum, hours of classroom teaching, content, and methods are not standardized. Without a unified and rational curriculum, the organization of interpreting classes are very arbitrary and therefore rather ad hoc (Zhou 2003), which may cause many other problems.

Interpreting teaching of different levels within and outside colleges and universities (for English majors, Non-English majors, private colleges) is not converged into a unified hierarchical system. They don't have sort of ladder teaching. Repetitive teaching and insufficient teaching co-exist, with the former causing great waste of resources (Lu 2006).

Teaching materials of interpreting are rather underdeveloped, mostly linguistic-centered, lacking practice content, so teachers complain that it is hard to teach and students complain there is nothing to learn (Lu 2006). So to teach and to learn interpreting is quite aimless in China. Although there are some specified teaching materials for certificate-conferring classes in the market, but there are few or no materials circling around interpreting skills, or specific topics. Some teachers just download some video conferences from the network, or find some lectures from magazines or newspapers. Therefore, a systematic and scientific interpreting training cannot be guaranteed.

### 3.3.3 Unqualified Teachers

It's very difficult to find interpreting teachers who are good at practice, theory and teaching (Lu 2006). Most teachers are old-fashioned and trained in linguistics, literature and translating. They themselves have not received professional interpreting training, and lack interpreting practice. They are

not quite clear about the content ,method of teaching ,or purpose of interpreting so they have to rely on theory though their theories are quite weak ( Bao 2004 ). In other countries ,teachers themselves are always experienced or professional interpreters . But in China ,it is difficult for these professional interpreters to be university teachers because they are restricted by personnel system . What is more , while at work ,teachers may pay more attention to research than to practice ,because research is required in China ,and it s related to salary or bonus . Teachers cannot focus wholly on teaching . Therefore ,they provide little instruction about practice to students .

### 3.3.4 Inadequate Teaching :Arrangement and Methods

The content of interpreting teaching is quite antiquated , which is a big problem . Now in China , there are about 100 textbooks or handbooks on interpreting ( Liu 2005c ) ,but these materials are still old - fashioned and linguistic centered ,with focus on bilingual transition . Theory and practice are seriously disconnected . Language practice is the main part , mostly dealing with speaking and listening . But interpreting is quite a comprehensive course involving listening ,speaking ,translating ,short memory , information disposal ,etc . ( Altman 2003 ) . Only language practice by itself cannot fulfill all these tasks . With little instruction in practice ,it is difficult for students to follow ,or to grasp the technique of interpreting . Therefore ,teaching content is waiting to be reformed . On the other hand ,the interpreting - teaching methods cannot get away from traditional teaching methods . More attention has been paid to language training ,but less on logical thinking ,though sometimes on the skills . Linguistic experience still remains at the preliminary stage ,and it is difficult for students to judge the whole from a part ( Liu 2001 ) . In teaching ,teachers often have two options :to teach oral language or to teach translating in oral form . There is little concern on how to train students to take notes ,how to deal with eliciting information ,how to train memories ,how to follow reading ,and how to repeat . So students tend to become only translators or only speakers .

Interpreting teaching aims at teaching students the interpreting skills ,and senses about these skills ( Cai 2003 ) . It is to enable students to master the key skills of interpreting ,to be familiar with the characteristics of interpreting in interpreting process ,to understand the essential requirements of interpreters . The fundamental purpose of interpreting training is for students to acquire the basic skills of interpreting ,so they can be competent interpreters as soon as they start their career .

According to Gile (1995 :46 ) ,the process of interpretation is a multitasking process that an interpreter needs to do more than one thing at the same time . Gile put forward the following stage models for understanding interpreting .

A . SI = L + M + P + C ,i.e. simultaneous interpretation = listening + memory + producing (translation) + coordinating .

B . CI = L + N + M + C ,i.e. consecutive interpreting (the first stage) = Listening + notes + memory + coordinating .

C . CI = Rem + Read + P ,i.e. consecutive interpreting (the second stage) = remember + read (notes) + producing /translation .

This model is known as multitasking model . It is built on the concept of cognitive perception ,that is , the human brain s information processing capacity is limited . In other words ,a person s attention is limited in the multi tasking . In a multi tasking process ,it is impossible to spend too much time on one thing ,which requires the interpreter to master a highly skilled processing technology . If an interpreter is not so skilled at any one of the above stages ,or spends too much on one task ,which will be bound to affect tackling too many other tasks ,it will ,of course ,lead to a decline in the quality of interpreting ,or simply not interpreting /translating the message at all . Therefore ,in order to strengthen interpreting - teaching ,it is a must to lay a solid foundation for students to grasp interpreting skills ( especially the undergraduate students ) ,combined with language skills ,which needs much time to practice while teaching /learning .

Besides listening ,speaking and translating ,the students need to enhance ESP group courses ,because ESP courses are closely related to the construction of the foundation ( Cheng & Zhang 2003 ) . The key to

the success or failure of interpretation lies not only in the above-mentioned capacity and quality, but also in the expanding knowledge of certain subjects. Gile (1995), in his interpreting understanding model, and Xiamen University (Liu 2005d), in their interpreting teaching model, both classify the ESP courses as illocutionary knowledge (Execlua Linguistic Knowledge), which is often said the "miscellaneous" or "world knowledge", "encyclopedic knowledge" and so on. Since the interpreting work is involved in many fields and concerned with a large number of subjects, an interpreter must know much about these subjects, so that he will not become lost while doing interpreting. Both linguistic skills and illocutionary knowledge need much time to practice in interpreting teaching.

However, time allocation for interpreting teaching is not enough. Undergraduate interpreting tends to have 72 hours (two semesters). Each semester has 36 sections, with two hours every week. At Xiamen University and Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, the first semester mainly deals with political diplomatic teaching, and the second semester deals with simultaneous interpreting (Lu 2006). Interpreting, as a technique and interdisciplinary course, indeed, needs more time to practice for a student to grasp the skill. Moreover, the advanced students are busy with Band 8 test (a proficiency test for English-major students), graduate papers, finding jobs and preparing for entrance examination for master's study. These will distract students from learning interpreting. So it is difficult for the undergraduate students to become professional interpreters with the present language ability, time, difficulty and intensity of training. The number of interpreting students doing master study is very small. Among them, students for application or research are not clearly distinguishable. Only Beijing Foreign Studies University and Shanghai International Studies University enlist postgraduates for conference interpreters. Other universities seem to focus more on translating or interpreting theories (Lu 2006). From the postgraduate courses (Political Interpreting, Commercial Interpreting, Interpreting Theory and Practice, etc.) and the participation in Shanghai International Studies University, one can see that there is little time for practice teaching and few students selecting interpreting practice course (Liu 2005b). So the inadequate arrangement of courses and the teaching methods lead to the low quality of interpreters.

### 3.3.5 Loose Connection with the Market

Interpreting training in China mostly stays in colleges and universities, i.e. the academic ivory towers, without consideration of the market. Universities do not know what the market needs. Interpreting is a course that combines bilingual language skills with some professional knowledge. Students of interpreting mainly come from English-major. Their study mainly deals with linguistics, literature and translating. The teaching of interpreting mainly circles around the bilingual transition in oral form or written form. Only a small part of students select commerce and trade courses for one or two semesters, so they lack professional knowledge in other fields. Different stages of interpreting are not clearly distinguishable. Middle school, undergraduate, postgraduate, and social trainees are not separated for different tasks. Different markets demanding for different layers of interpreters are not taken into consideration in the teaching content (Aladin 2005). When students learn interpreting, they are mainly trained for diplomatic, cultural or political conference interpreting but nothing else. It is very difficult for the fields of commerce, law, medicine, science and technology, to get suitable interpreters from universities.

Loose connection of interpreting with the market can be inferred from the following statistics. According to the China Foreign Languages Bureau statistics (Yu 2007), the Chinese translation market size is RMB 21 billion Yuan in 2005. A world translation market survey by the International Association of the Localization Industry Standards (LISA), which is an authoritative institution in the United States, shows that the current global annual production value of translation is more than US13 billion dollars (of which the Asia-Pacific region accounts for 60%). In 2006, it reached US22.7 billion dollars. Translation market value in 2007 reached more than RMB 30 billion Yuan. So China's translation market is facing rapid expansion. Take the conference interpreting as an example, it is an important part in translation industry, and has become a new growth point with the increase of international conferences. According to an incomplete statistics (Yu 2007), China hosts more than 2,000 international conventions and exhibitions of different sizes each year. The conference interpreting includes contact interpreting, accompany interpreting, alternative interpreting, and simultaneous interpreting, and so on. Each of these conferences is an important line of communication with other countries. Now in China, the

conference interpreting talents mainly stay in Beijing , Shanghai and Guangzhou . If an international conference is held outside , the conference interpreters will be borrowed from the three regions . AIIC ( International Association of Conference Interpreters , referred to as AIIC ) has altogether 26 members in China , of whom 15 are in Beijing and 11 in Shanghai . Currently experienced simultaneous interpreters all over China are about 100 people or so ( Yu 2007 ) .

So the translation market , especially the interpreting market is quite big , whilst the supply from the universities and colleges is very small . The big gap needs to be filled urgently , the educational institutions and scholars should survey the market well , make reasonable teaching plan , then carry out suitable targeted interpreting teaching , so that the interface between the market and educational institutions could be connected closely .

### 3.4 Inappropriate Assessment

The evaluation and supervision of interpreting are not appropriate . The proficiency of interpreters cannot be assessed properly ( Lu 2006 ) .

In China , there are three types of interpreters : the governmental interpreters , the academic interpreters , and freelance interpreters ( Yu 2007 ) . The governmental interpreters are those working in the Foreign Affairs Department and responsible for the translation of official tasks , and most of them have strong academic backgrounds and have received professional trainings . The office of Ministry of Foreign Affairs is on their behalf . The academic interpreters are professors and teachers who are involved in interpreting teaching in universities and colleges , mainly Beijing Foreign Studies University , Shanghai International Studies University , the University of International Business and Economics , etc . The freelance interpreters are becoming the major part in interpreting market , most of whom have received systematic training , some with strong academic backgrounds , and there are also some of them from other industries . But all three types of interpreters are still small in number . At present , China has no unified comprehensive certification system for the qualification of interpreters . Except the AIIC and the United Nations translators / interpreters , the qualification of other interpreters is mainly judged by their professional background , as well as the period of their international interpreting activity .

Now both in and out of educational institutions , the evaluation and supervision of interpreting are not appropriate , especially for the informal interpreters . The proficiency of interpreters is assessed properly ( Lu 2006 ) . There are only a few accredited institutions to organize tests for translating and interpreting : the National Certificate Test for Translating , Qualification Test of Translating for Professional Level , and Test for Professional Interpreting Qualification in Shanghai . Some of these institutions have short-term training programs . They cater for students by propagandizing the passing rate to attract more trainees from universities , and most of the short-term trainings just circle around examinations , even by guessing the testing content . Students can only test their performance through these examinations , neglecting that interpreting is a step-by-step technique training in proper sequence . The aim of short-term training is therefore difficult to realize . Even worse , there is no organization to supervise these short-term training institutions , which disorganize the interpreting market .

### 3.5 Uneven Quality Students

Because of the reasons above , it is not surprising that some programs produce interpreting students that fall short of the standards required by the interpreting market ( Liu 2005b ) . At the 2007 Promulgating Conference of National Standard News , experts voiced worries about the problems of inaccurate and incomplete interpreting in the market , leaking interpreting , incorrect interpreting and non-standard operations are still quite common phenomena . Take the simultaneous interpreting as an example , some interpreters considered it good if transferring 30 % of the original message , but such interpreting will lose much important information , unable to keep the original meaning intact . It is far below the international standard of 98 % , and the drop of 60 % reflects the non-standard management in Chinese interpreting market ( Yu 2007 ) . Chinese universities and interpreters should make more efforts to make up for the gap .

Zhang Nanjun ( cited in Yu 2007 ) , deputy director of the China Translation Association said that

perhaps some of the interpreters are right in their interpretation ,however ,there are many different special terms in different industries ,and sometimes the proper nouns can't be well translated in place ,causing deviation of interpreting standard .In addition ,because of the great temptation of profit ,a large number of badly run translation companies and poor interpreters have entered into the market ,which has brought crisis into the interpreting industry .So a national standard is waiting to be set up to manage the interpreting market .

#### 4 . Recommendations

Since colleges and universities are the main sources of interpreters in China ,so it is an urgent task to tackle the problems in college and university interpreting training . Nevertheless ,that to solve all the problems and to train enough qualified professional interpreters for the market is not a simple task . At present ,some urgent problems could be solved if proper measures are put in place . Recommendations to the educational authorities and university teachers are as following :

##### 4 .1 Raising the Status of Interpreting by the Educational Institutions

The educational authorities should attach more importance to interpreting ,so that the status of interpreting can be raised . More investment should be put in research and training ,then more concern will come from all sides of society . With enough monetary ,material and human resources ,interpreting will certainly develop in a healthier way .

More colleges and universities should be involved in interpreting training . Only four major universities with interpreting majors and twenty other universities with interpreting courses are not enough ,so more universities should be permitted to teach interpreting especially practical interpreting . What's more ,the non -English major students should be encouraged to take interpreting courses ,for they are easier to be trained as special interpreters .

##### 4 .2 Training Teachers Overseas

In interpreting training ,teachers are the backbones . Qualified teachers are most urgently needed in China . This can be solved by sending teachers to other countries to be well trained . Australia ,North America ,and some European countries have longer histories of interpreting and are experienced in training interpreters . To send teachers to be trained overseas perhaps is the quickest way to solve the shortage of qualified teachers in China . On the other hand ,the personnel system should be broken ,so that some famous or professional interpreters could take parttime jobs or teach in colleges and universities . If there are enough qualified teachers ,other problems would be solved easily and quickly .

##### 4 .3 Establishing a Scientifically Unified Teaching -Mode in Universities

A scientifically unified teaching mode refers to a mode ,in which ,with correct educational ideas and scientific theories for instruction ( Picken 1987 ) . Universities should set up a training mode to teach different layers /stages of students ( both dependently and independently ) with different content but with scientific methods for different purposes and demands in the market ,with effective microcosmic management and macroscopic evaluation or supervision . For such a unified teaching model ,several things should be done .

###### 4 .3 .1 Strengthening Interpreting Theories

Interpreting theory can be strengthened in 3 ways . One is to introduce more theories from other countries to replenish the present theories in China . In the field of interpretation ,besides the dominant "Interpretative Theory " represented by Danica Seleskovitch ( 1968 ) in Paris Advanced Translating School ,there are some other influential theories worth introducing : Anderson's "three step cognitive mode from thinking to discourse " ; Jeff and Lambert's "the whole information processing mode of interpretation " ; Gile's "multitasking mode about simultaneous interpretation (energy distribution mode )" (see "Basic Concepts and Models for Interpreter and Translator Training ") ; Setten's mode is based on "the relations between speech perception ,speech recognition and speech activities " . In addition , Lambert and Dilinger also made some processing mode ; Daro , Fabbro , and Paradis ,discussed the interpreting process from the perspective of neurologically linguistics ( Zhong 2001 ) .

The second is that teachers or researchers should make more efforts to find out proper theories fitting Chinese situation from their own experience. Liu Heping's "the Teaching Way of Scientific Thinking and Interpretative Inference" is one of the famous examples in China.

The third way is to widen interdisciplinary researches such as in linguistics, translating, neuron- psychology, cross culture, cognitive psychology, and information disposal, etc., from which, researchers could infer, conclude, and refine theories for interpreting.

#### 4.3.2 Compiling Unified Curriculum and Adequate Materials

Unified curriculum should be compiled scientifically to solve series of problems in interpreting training. The curriculum should make clear the aim, content, methodology, procedures and evaluation, etc. Lu (2006) suggested making a unified curriculum based on cognitive linguistics, interpretive theory and Gile's interpreting formula, and then compiling relative books for different layers teaching. Such recommendation might well prevent the blindness of interpreting teaching.

Teaching materials should step out of traditional linguistic centered content. More attention should be paid in skill training and professional knowledge. Besides, interpreting content should be classified in details such as simultaneous interpreting, consecutive interpreting, court interpreting, medical interpreting and so on, so that students could get targeted training to be qualified for their professional jobs in the future.

The practicing materials should be fresh and vivid, such as the standard speed materials in VOA and BBC. While selecting materials, the high grade trainers should pay attention to the expansion of knowledge. Students should be encouraged to concern related news, to listen to foreign broadcasting, or to surf on the Internet to know the latest news in various fields. Teachers should be alert to the international and domestic events, news, press conferences, newspapers and periodicals, and try to find some useful materials and then use them in classes. These ways will not only help students to expand knowledge, but also learn fresh language, as well as improving their listening and speaking abilities. There has appeared a sort of "plateau phenomenon" in high grade students while interpreting, to a large extent, they lack of related knowledge (Bao 2007). Imagine that how can an interpreter express ideas if he has no thinking at all?

#### 4.3.3 Adequate Teaching: Appropriate Arrangement and Ways

Interpreting should be taught not only as oral language or written translating, but also as a technique. Therefore, more time is needed and more practice should be done in order to improve the students interpreting ability.

Interpreting teaching should be carried on in several stages, starting from the basic linguistic skills (listening, speaking and translating) to grasping a language, to dialogue interpreting, to ordinary practical interpreting, and then to professional interpreting. The interpreting classes should be divided into different levels, then trained step by step. Simultaneous and consecutive should be interchanged, common classes and advanced classes should be paralleled (Baker 1998), and the gap between English-major and non-English major should be filled with professional knowledge. Then students could be changed from single language ability to diversified abilities.

It is particularly important for the undergraduates to strengthen the base related ESP courses, for undergraduate period is the best time. These courses include business language, marketing language, legal (court) language, news language, medical language, science and technology language, etc. These help students to lay a strong foundation in many fields, and help the students transfer from the original knowledge type or expertise type to more complex capacity type and more comprehensive type.

English-major teaching should break the original "academic type" closed in "ivory tower" to application and more complex patterns and train enough talents to meet the needs of society. Foreign language teaching should be combined with subjects of humanities, natural content, imparting knowledge should be integrated with developing capacity and quality, so the problem of "time-consuming and inefficiency" (Mu 1999) could be solved.

More attention should be paid to non-English major students, for they are specified at least in one area. If the students with good foreign language ability are selected and provided with certain training in interpreting, they will be more qualified interpreters after graduation.

Teaching form should be reformed. Most domestic colleges and universities tend to arrange interpreting courses at undergraduate senior stage, 2 hours per week for one year, there are also one and a half years (such as in Xiamen University). The early stage is mainly about consecutive interpreting, and the later stage is aided by diplomatic, political interpreting, simultaneous interpreting, and so on. Some suggestions could be adopted in teaching form. For example, interpreting could be matched with interpreting workshop (Altman 2003). Experts should be invited to give open speeches about economic, financial, legal, environmental protection, foreign affairs, journalism, and artistic topics, etc, and at the same time, students are required to prepare the pre-translated words and some of them can try the on-site interpretation. Some teachers with related courses can also be invited to give speeches. This will not only enable students to understand the relevant knowledge, but also help them get some simultaneous training. One teacher does not have to be responsible for interpreting teaching on end, and other teachers can take turns to go because teachers are good at different aspects (Wadensj 2001). Since time is limited, if the students are exposed to more teachers, this can help them learn more.

At present, China lacks of ideal interpreting materials. The ideal materials should include books, with voices and pictures to match them (Baker 1998). However, teachers should not organize their class activity according to the books step by step. They should collect and make full use of other materials such as live voice or text material. Teachers can use some advanced equipments to explore the network to get some audio-visual materials, then use them in some virtual scenes, so that their teaching will embody the spirit of "advance with the times", such effect may be better. In well-conditioned departments, multi-media laboratory can be used to set up a timely updated interpreter training system, in which students can have interactive training (Wadensj 2001). This could alleviate the shortage of teaching materials and teaching time.

It goes without saying that interpretation class is challenging, for teachers are required strictly. Teacher's tone of voice, verbal expression, language ability, translation ability must be the first class. Interpreting teachers should have a deeper understanding of the characteristics of interpretation, should also be familiar with the various forms of teaching, and master a variety of advanced teaching methods and so on. More importantly, the teachers should arouse the students' enthusiasm, initiative and mobilize them to participate in the class activities. In classes, two tendencies should be avoided: the oral-translation training, and the spoken language training, though translation and spoken language are the essentials in interpreting. Interpreting skills should be designed as the main teaching content, such as how to train students to take notes, how to do more than one things at the same time, how to better short-term memory, how to practice following reading, repeating, public speech skills, voicing, digital skills and so on. At the same time, different subjects should be taken into account during the training. In teaching, teachers should use various methods, like voices, images, text and internet and all other means to mobilize students so as to make the interpreting classes as lively as possible.

#### 4.3.4 Taking the Market into Consideration

The interpreting training should meet the demands of the market. Universities should observe the development of the market, and set up a flowing channel connected to the market, so that the universities and market could communicate freely. At present, universities should not only train diplomatic, conference interpreters, but also train interpreters for science, law, medical and some other technological interpreters that are urgently needed in the market.

#### 4.4 Setting up a Strict Assessing System

A strict assessing system should be set up to test fairly the performance of interpreters. Evaluating principles should be made out, different rules for different interpreting such as consecutive interpreting, simultaneous interpreting, court interpreting, etc, should be standardized in details to give a clear way for the learners to follow. Then a macrocosmic supervising system should be established in order to prohibit low quality students or trainees entering the market and to prohibit some illegal short-term training

organizations disorganizing the interpreting market .

To further regulate the overall level of the interpreter now in China ,it is a must to manage well the professional training in all colleges and universities ,because they are the main sources of interpreters . For some specialized interpreting ,the best way is to provide some technique training based on the original translation level ,and to enhance the special ability for interpreters .If the source is clean ,the flow will of course be bettered .

## 5 . Conclusion

All in all ,construction of interpreting teaching is a comprehensive project ,which involves all aspects in language teaching . Though there are many defects ,but we have also made some enjoyable achievements ,based on which ,some further research and practice could be carried on .If we could find out problems ,analyze them ,and then take measures to solve them ,we will of course push our interpreting construction advance forward . At present ,raising the status of interpreting by authorities , training teachers overseas ,establishing a scientific unified teaching model and setting up a strict assessing system may be the main measures that should be put in place urgently to improve the level of interpreting - training in Chinese universities ,in order to solve the problem of shortage of professional interpreters in China .

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