

Crezee, I. H. M. (2013). *Introduction to healthcare for interpreters and translators*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 338 p.

Introduction to Healthcare for Interpreters and Translators is a much needed comprehensive guide, which serves to introduce interpreters and translators to the world of healthcare and healthcare interpreting. The book aspires to reach a broad audience of trainers, students and practitioners in line with Crezee's background as a health professional, practising interpreter and interpreter trainer. The book is an example of multidisciplinary cooperation at its best, with a foreword by renowned interpreting scholar Sandra Hale and contributions by trained health professionals Maureen Kearney, Dana Lui and Linda Hand.

The emphasis throughout is practical as evidenced by the many examples and helpful anecdotes, which underline not only the importance of quality healthcare interpreting but also the great challenges involved in providing such quality. The promise made to the reader in the author's notes, that is, that the language throughout the book has been kept "fairly plain" has indeed been fulfilled. The summary-of-main-points boxes with bullet points provided at the end of each chapter also add to the accessibility of the publication.

The book's contents, structure and layout reflect students' wishes and feedback, which helps to ensure the relevance of the textbook. Its 28 chapters are organised into three parts:

- (1) Part I: Interpreting. Chapters 1–4
- (2) Part II: Interpreting in healthcare settings. Chapters 5–16
- (3) Part III: Healthcare specialities. Chapters 17–28

Part I deals with interpreting contexts, interpreting research, interpreting training, culture and terminology. Chapter 1 is an introduction to the book, and includes a brief historical overview of the development of the interpreting profession and the growing demand for interpreters as a result of increasing globalisation and migration. Because the focus of the book is on English-speaking countries, this chapter concentrates on migration in the UK, the US, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, before proceeding with a brief summary of health interpreting research. Especially the New Zealand and Australian migration contexts and research are cited, probably a result of the author's own context, but also reflective of the impressive amount of research on community interpreting originating from these countries. Chapter 1 also comments on the teaching of healthcare interpreting, the challenges involved and practical advice on curriculum design. Chapter 2 discusses the main challenges of the healthcare interpreting context related to the role of the interpreter, such as codes of ethics and duty of care. The author underlines the importance of accuracy, as well as some of the important skills of interpreters such as note-taking and knowing both medical terms

and everyday expressions such as “waterworks” and “crook” (p. 21). Chapter 3 discusses cultural differences in relation to, for example, non-verbal communication (including eye contact, physical closeness and hand gestures) and their implications for interpreting. Different understandings of sickness and health, patient behaviour, pain, causes of sickness and diet are introduced. These are discussed in an admirable way, with a focus on various perspectives and real-life examples—a difficult feat in a brief overview. The chapter concludes with advice for interpreters having to navigate the stormy waters of cultural differences and with suggestions for further readings. Chapter 4 is a chapter dedicated to medical terminology including the history of medical terminology, spelling and pronunciation, common combinations of medical terms, common nouns and verbs used for procedures, and common prefixes and suffixes. Helpful tables are used throughout this chapter, which list examples of medical terms and their meanings.

The second part *Interpreting in healthcare settings* consists of 12 chapters, which give the reader an understanding of the structure of healthcare systems. This includes a discussion of the roles played by primary physicians, general practitioners (Chapter 5) and various relevant departments (e.g., outpatient clinics, specialist clinics (Chapter 6), hospitals (Chapter 7), emergency departments (Chapter 8), intensive care units (Chapter 11)). One chapter introduces the institutionally salient concept of informed consent (Chapter 9), and is followed by a chapter on pre-operative and post-operative procedures (Chapter 10). Chapters 12–16 deal with obstetrics, child health, speech language therapy, mental health and oncology. In these chapters, the reader is provided with commonly asked questions, commonly used tests, and the titles and roles of relevant health professionals, all of which are extremely valuable for the interpreter preparing for an assignment. It is especially admirable that the reasons why health professionals ask particular questions or order specific tests are presented, as this provides the reader with an in-depth understanding of the purposes of such questions and tests. Most of the chapters in this section conclude with useful sections entitled “Some notes for interpreters and translators”. The advice given in these sections is notably practical and of great relevance for the novice interpreter preparing for the field, such as how to interpret for semi-conscious patients, how to deal with long waiting times and how to interpret in speech language therapy settings. Information is also given on interpreter roles and ethics: for example, “As for the number of cigarettes the person actually smokes, even if the interpreter knows that the person smokes two packs a day, he or she will have to interpret whatever the client says” (p. 51). Valuable advice is also given (in the oncology chapter) in relation to interpreting the delivery of bad news, especially when faced with a health professional who is not familiar with interpreter ethics and may ask the interpreter to comfort the patient or “get the patient to talk” (p. 164). A few of the chapters regrettably do not have this useful section. However,

the advice can then instead be found in other sections. This is the case, for example, for the mental health chapter: “The interpreter should also stress that no two individuals are quite the same and that factors such as personality, age, gender, religion, amount of exposure to other cultures, length of time in the new country and individual life experiences may have shaped the individual to a large extent” (p. 147). This is an interesting point put forward in relation to the roles and responsibility of interpreters and psychiatrists, respectively. Similarly, the chapter on obstetrics offers practical advice to the interpreter preparing for the field: “Note the interpreter may need to stay close to the mother and interpret the health practitioner’s comments and instructions. If the interpreter feels faint, he or she may have to sit down” (p. 111). In the chapter on child health, interpreter-specific information is given in the introduction, where the interpreter is reminded that child health can be “extremely taxing [because of] parents’ strong emotional involvement” (p. 117), and interpreters are reminded that they may have to “seek debriefing from a counsellor or supervisor after difficult interpreting situations” (p. 117).

The third part of the book focuses on the following 12 specialities of healthcare: neurology, cardiology, the respiratory system, haematology, orthopaedics, muscles and the motor system, the sensory system, the immune and lymphatic system, the endocrine system, the digestive system, urology and nephrology, and the reproductive system. These chapters make the book especially suitable and valuable for translators and interpreters who are not trained in healthcare, as they describe the major specialities of healthcare in a lay-friendly and well-structured manner. These chapters are organised in a way that enables interpreters to prepare for assignments by reading up on anatomy and physiology relevant for these specific specialities as well as commonly used terminology and conditions, investigations, and treatment and medication options.

Throughout the book, the author provides illustrations of medical equipment that the healthcare interpreter is likely to meet. Examples include various asthma inhalers (p. 196) and types and sites of stoma pouches (p. 272). Illustrations are also provided to support anatomical and physiological explanations related to the various medical specialities. These are immensely useful as they can support the understanding of complex body systems prior to working in the field, while they can also be used in the interpreting setting to aid patients, health professionals and interpreters in their dialogues, for example, when explaining the location of pain.

In addition to the three main parts, the reader is provided with several useful elements. These include: (1) an alphabetical appendix of common investigations with references to page numbers in the book, (2) a reference list, which is helpfully divided into two parts: first, all the sources from the interpreting-related part 1, followed by a separate section with suggested further readings on healthcare systems and

medical specialities, (3) a list of useful websites managed by trusted professional bodies and thus continuously updated and reviewed and (4) an elaborate index on health-related terms, conditions, equipment, procedures, etc. The index only focuses on health-related topics and it could have been useful to include an index on translation/interpreting-related words such as ethics, equivalence, interpreter roles, etc.

Another regret is that, with a few exceptions, the relevance of certain sections for the medical *translator* is not made explicit. Furthermore, a brief overview on recent developments in the field of health communication in relation to health literacy, patient empowerment and patient-centred communication would have been valuable.

However, these are minor blemishes. With *Introduction to Healthcare for Interpreters and Translators*, Ineke Crezee has succeeded in producing an informative, comprehensive and practical resource for students, trainers and practitioners alike. As a non-health professional, I am not in a position to judge the quality of the medical contents as such. However, I can say that the information provided is clear, detailed to a good degree and relevant for practising health translators and interpreters. The book provided me with many new insights into the fascinating and intricate world of medicine and the experiences of healthcare interpreters.

As the author mentions in her author's notes, trainers might also find the book useful: I agree, and it has already been added to my translation students' reading list.

Matilde Nisbeth Jensen

Aarhus University, Denmark
matnj@bcom.au.dk