

## Dissertation Abstracts

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## Dissertation abstracts

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*All views or conclusions are those of the authors of the articles and not necessarily those of the editorial staff or the publisher.*

## **A Policy-Focused Examination of the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters in Australia**

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### **Abstract**

The establishment of translation and interpreting services in Australia and the changing role of government in this endeavor represent significant and innovative milestones in the ambit of Australian migration policy. This work describes the developments which culminated in the creation of the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) and which resulted in a then-unique system for the provision of language services. This thesis analyzes these developments employing the multiple-streams framework, a policy process model developed by Kingdon (1995), previously utilized in other contexts but not as yet in translation and interpreting services. The analysis illustrates how these developments were part of translation policy, a concept which has only received sporadic and scant academic attention. A fundamental definitional problem exists in the area, whereby translation policy has been regarded as a policy applicable to non-official (often labelled *minority*) languages within political systems, and most often in a discussion of status planning within a language(s) policy framework (Diaz Fauces 2005; González Núñez 2016; Meylaerts, 2011; Ozolins 1991, 2010).

The kind of policy developed in Australia and which is the object of this study encompasses a view of translation as a service belonging to the realm of public policy. The findings indicate that the policy in question was the outcome of a philosophy of the migration program rooted in the concept of nation building and supported by a bipartisan political approach more than in the realm of language policy.

This research informs policy development in many parts of the world which are now experiencing massive movements of people between states and continents, as well as the formalization of policies dealing with interpreting and translating services.

Keywords: Interpreter and Translator accreditation; policy; Australia; migration and language services

## **Investigating the Impact of ASL Proficiency Levels on ASL-English Interpretation**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to investigate how select language features in signers with varying American Sign Language (ASL) proficiency levels may impact novice ASL-English interpreters' interpreted work. Interpreter

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education programs have long sought to define what constitutes effective interpreting practice, including but not limited to how best to respond to the challenges of the Deaf community's shifting demographics. Due to inter-language influence between English and ASL, signers typically demonstrate varying proficiency levels in ASL. In this study, stimulus video material was created from preselected video recordings of individuals who had previously taken the ASL Proficiency Interview (ASLPI). In particular, two language features were examined: depiction and fingerspelling – and The correlation between the linguistic features and the impact of each on the interpreted work were analyzed. ELAN (an annotating software program) was used in assessing ASL source texts for the language features. Novice interpreters' interpreted work of the stimulus video material was recorded, transcribed and analyzed. The analysis used both propositional accuracy and subjective quality measures. The stimulus video material and interpreted work were then compared to find emerging patterns. Findings showed that ASLPI Level 4 signers produced the most language features, while ASLPI Level 5 signers produced the most fingerspelled words. Interpreters performed better with ASLPI Level 3 and Level 4 stimulus materials as compared to Level 5. Overall, interpreters struggled with complex signed phrases that included more language features. Fingerspelled words in the stimulus video materials impacted most of the interpreted work products.

Keywords: language features, proficiency levels, ASL-English interpretation, novice interpreters, fingerspelling

## The Use and Effectiveness of Situated Learning in American Sign Language-English Interpreter Education

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Degree: Ph.D. dissertation, Gallaudet University

### Abstract

The purpose of this study was to describe the use and perceived impact of situated learning activities in ASL-English interpreter education in the United States. A mixed-methods approach consisting of two separate studies was employed for the investigation. The first study was a survey of interpreter educators to discover the extent to which situated learning is used in interpreting programs. Questionnaire results and follow-up interview data were collected. The second study was a case study of a short-term, intensive interpreting program that utilized a situated learning approach to provide authentic interpreting experiences for students. Data collection included interviews with faculty, staff and students as well as analysis of the curriculum and student work samples.

Based on a review of research in the situated learning and ASL-English interpreter education literature, a continuum of situated learning activities in interpreter education was developed as part of this study. The continuum organizes interpreter education activities from least to most authentic. It was used for questionnaire development in Study One and for analysis of case study data in Study Two. It was found to be a useful tool for curriculum development and evaluation.

Results of this research show that educators and students found situated learning experiences to be valuable in building confidence and interpreting skills in real world settings. Although other, less authentic learning experiences were more commonly part of interpreting curricula, situated learning was seen as an important way to scaffold students toward authentic learning experiences. Teamwork and partnerships were seen as key factors in providing situated learning experiences for students.

Keywords: experiential learning, apprenticeship, authentic, curriculum, ASL, context



## Dissertation abstracts

### **Translator Education in Context: Learning Methodologies, Collaboration, Employability, and Systems of Assessment**

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#### **Abstract**

Translator education within a higher education context aims for student-centred collaborative learning that produces employable graduates. There is a close connection between curriculum and the translation labour market, with competence models in Europe and through NAATI in Australia ensuring that market demands are met. This study used an ethnographic case study approach to investigate features that support and inhibit learning in translator education programs. Fieldwork, including observation, informal chats and semi-structured interviews, combined with document analysis was undertaken over an eighteen month period at three sites: one in Spain and two in Australia. An iterative analysis created a dialogue between literature and data. The research revealed that high-stakes, student-centered translator education programs that are grounded in requirements for employability have to contend with the consequences of testing. This was particularly the case in Australia, where NAATI certification testing was integrated into education programs. However, it was equally the case in Spain where competitive practices secured learners a place in the program and then continued to impact their learning in the classroom.

