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

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Declaration

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed. I acknowledge the support I have received for my research through the provision of an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship.

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Abbreviations

ANECA  National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (Spain)
AUSIT  Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators
COPQ   Committee (later Council) on Overseas Professional Qualifications (Australia)
ECTS   European Credit Transfer System
EMT    European Master’s in Translation
IELTS  International English Language Testing System
INT    Improvements to NAATI Testing
NAATI  National Accreditation Authority of Translators and Interpreters (Australia)
PACTE  Process of Acquisition of Translation Competence and Evaluation
T&I    Translation and Interpreting
Abstract

Translator education within a higher education context aims for student-centred learning that is collaborative and that produces employable graduates. Curriculum is designed with learning activities that encourage collaborative, project-based learning with authentic assessment tasks. There is a close connection between curriculum and the translation labour market, with two mechanisms ensuring that market demands in Europe and Australia are met: competence models and NAATI. In Europe, translator competence models, which were pioneered by the PACTE (Process of Acquisition of Translation Competence and Evaluation) Group and then later developed by Dorothy Kelly and the EMT Project, influence curriculum design so that it reflects student-centred principles and remains closely aligned with translation market demands. In Australia, the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) similarly connects translator education with the translation labour market. The opportunity to attain NAATI Professional certification is included in programs which are designed to produce employable graduates for the translation industry.

This research uses an ethnographic case study methodology to investigate features that support and inhibit learning in translator education programs. In order to do this, I selected two quite different places: Spain and Australia. Given the number of differences between the two settings – language, culture, education systems etc. – one was not strictly compared with the other. Rather, contrast was used to emphasise these differences and to provide insights by highlighting areas as interesting and curious where they would otherwise be considered ordinary. Fieldwork, including observations, informal and semi-structured interviews, and document analysis, was undertaken at one site in Spain over the course of one academic year, and at two sites in Australia over the course of three months for each site.

The research revealed that high-stakes, student-centred translator education programs that are grounded in understandings of employability have to contend with washback and testing consequences and impacts. This was particularly the case in Australia, where NAATI certification is integrated into education programs. However, it was equally the case at the site examined in Spain where competitive practices secured learners a place in the program, and then continued to impact learning that took place in the classroom.
Introduction

The inspiration for this research came while tutoring a translation practice course. I had the impression that something was askew with how teaching, learning and assessment were connected. It appeared to me that learners were limited in what they could learn and how they went about it. I thought this was because of the National Accrediting Authority for Translators and Interpreters’ (NAATI) exam being placed within the education program. Translating and Interpreting (T&I) programs that lead to NAATI certification are obliged to include an assessment task that determines eligibility for certification. In the majority of cases, this is a timed translation exam, for which NAATI provides marking guidelines that follow an error deduction system. That is, points are subtracted from a total score for each ‘error’ contained in the text, with errors of meaning costing more points than a punctuation error, for example. Learners wanted to ensure they could attain NAATI certification, and rightly so, given that it is the industry standard in Australia. However, they were fixated on what terms or punctuation would lead to mark deductions. And classes risked becoming a strategy-building exercise to outwit the examiner. Barry Turner, Miranda Lai and Neng Huang recognised this risk and highlight that learners tend to focus on specific errors that could lose them points rather than looking at their translation as a whole text (Turner, Lai & Huang 2010, p. 16).

During my time tutoring, I did not like a conflict that was emerging: this is how you translate in the real world, but for the NAATI exam you should play it safe and translate like this. There seemed to be an understanding among learners that the NAATI exam called for a more literal approach to translation, whereas in the real world a more free approach could be taken. Mira Kim hints towards it when she claims that error-oriented assessment used by NAATI “discourages students from making their own translation choices creatively, and instead encourages them to copy the teacher’s translation style” (Kim 2009, p. 127). In the hope of deepening understanding of what was happening with teaching, learning and assessment in translator education programs, I wanted to know what happened in an education program where NAATI was not present and did not influence curriculum design. I suspected that without the presence of NAATI, learning could encompass a more holistic approach within translator education. The beginnings of a research project were brewing.

When initially designing the project, I wanted to explore how learning and assessment are affected by the presence of NAATI. I identified three aspects that could provide different
understandings of learning and assessment: learners, educators and institutions. I wanted to understand the intended purpose of assessment, the constraints the institution had to work within, and how learners and educators experienced the teaching, learning and assessment process. Although this was the original focus of the project, over time, other matters of equal if not more importance were highlighted and the focus of the study shifted. Rather than focusing on NAATI and assessment specifically, I looked more broadly at learning in higher education translator programs.

The research question that guided the project was:

What features support and inhibit learning in translator education programs?

Although the focus had broadened in the sense that I was no longer looking at one single element in the learning process – assessment – it narrowed in that I identified three key areas of literature that the project would engage with: 1) student-centred learning practices, with a specific focus on collaboration, 2) employability, and 3) testing consequences, washback and impact. Each body of work not only shaped the literature review, but also informed data collection. The shift in focus meant that I could explore a range of elements in higher education translation programs. I had the scope to explore the motivations of learners enrolling in translator education programs in Australia and Spain, and to know what their aspirations and plans were once they graduated. Regarding teaching and learning methodologies and practices, I could delve into how learners and educators engaged with them, and how the spaces available to them affected teaching, learning and assessment. Classroom interactions between learners, and between learners and educators, were pivotal to understanding these themes. By examining how individuals and groups interacted with each other in the classroom, I gained insights into areas that did not sit within the teaching, learning and assessment process, but that still offered valuable understandings of translator education in a higher education context.

This work sits at an intersection of these three bodies of literature, as they each contribute to painting a picture of a higher education context that is relevant to translator education. Each theme builds upon and is informed by an understanding of student-centred learning. For this reason, there is a disproportionate amount of the thesis dedicated to this theme when compared to the other two. Literature relating to student-centred learning is covered in considerable detail in Chapter 1, and Chapter 6 describes how it was enacted at each of the three sites examined. And although I have divided the literature review and discussion chapters into the three themes mentioned above – student-centred learning, employability, and testing consequences, washback and impact – they were observed as occurring, and therefore analysed, in complex interdependent ways.
Methodologically, the project draws from two disciplines – Translation Studies and Sociology of Education. I used ethnographic case studies to uncover the complexities of translator education in two different settings – Spain, which is not under any influence from NAATI or a similar body, and Australia, which is. Ethnography and case study are common methodologies used in Sociology of Education research, with studies that use classroom events as the basis for analysis tending to favour it. While case studies are popular in Translation Studies, and particularly in the area of translator education, ethnography has only recently gained a small degree of popularity and is an emerging methodology. In this research, case study design provided a logical and rational basis for selecting the sites that I did, whereas ethnography provided an ability to capture the wider context of what was happening at each site. As mentioned earlier, elements outside of the teaching, learning and assessment process that were uncovered in the research turned out to be some of the more interesting aspects, and it was ethnography’s blurred boundaries between the site being examined and its wider context that allowed these interesting areas to be included.

Drawing on different methodologies and epistemologies was facilitated by the thesis being supervised by individuals who have expertise in multiple areas. One supervisor is a historical sociologist, and the other an expert in language testing and teaching. Although these approaches can be conflicting at times, I have drawn on each as appropriate to the relevant stages of the project. For example, analysis of NAATI’s testing procedure in relation to testing consequences, washback and impact was only possible by using the terminology and knowledge from language testing research, which has positivist roots and uses precise research designs. Documenting and analysing ethnographic data on the other hand, was guided by interpretive-constructivist understandings.

Contrast was a methodological tool used throughout the project. I took advantage of it to highlight differences and similarities between two settings of translator education: one that operates under the influences of NAATI and one that is not constrained by its requirements. I examined three sites in total within these two settings; one in Spain and two in Australia. Two sites were required in Australia because of difficulties in negotiating access, which I discuss in more detail in Chapter 4. A common assumption when two settings are used is that one is being compared with the other. In the case of this research, where the settings are so markedly different from each other in terms of language, culture, and the social, political and economic context, strict comparison is not appropriate. So rather than try to compare two settings that differ in every way possible, I use contrast as a methodological tool. Contrast brings to light aspects that may be taken for granted if not recognised as different, unique or unusual in relation to something else. The idea was to contrast one setting against the other so that interesting elements of the teaching, learning and
assessment process were illuminated by being recognised as different. By placing examples of translator education programs in contrast to one another, interactions that may have otherwise been accepted as ‘the norm’ or uninteresting were illuminated for their uniqueness or curiosity.

Organising the structure of this thesis was an agonising and thoughtful process. At first, I wanted to integrate the literature review into the discussion chapters and sprinkle the descriptive ethnography throughout. However, after much thought and deliberation, I decided that a traditional thesis structure would not only suffice, but would allow the ethnography to be presented in relatively large chunks, which would help the reader create a holistic image of each site. Another difficult decision was where to place the methodology chapter. While it could have made logical sense to introduce the methodology early in the thesis so that the rational basis for choosing Spain and Australia as the two settings was clear from the beginning, I chose to leave this explanation until Chapter 4. My reason for this was that I wanted the reader to understand the literature that informed the thesis, and to have a general understanding of the Spanish and Australia context for university translator education, including the role and function of NAATI, before detailing the methodology. The thesis is unbalanced in terms of how much space is given to discussion of NAATI and translator education in Australia. This is because the primary concern of the thesis is assessment, and specifically NAATI’s testing procedure which appears in translator education programs in Australia. Although other points are discussed, and Spain is used as a contrast, the focus remains on assessment in an Australian context.

In the remainder of this chapter, I outline the research aims and the significance of the work. I then introduce some core concepts that are needed to understand the context of the work. I briefly outline the function of NAATI, and the European Higher Education Area and Bologna Process, as these are integral to understanding the context of translator education in each of the two settings. I then introduce the idea of high-stakes tests, that is, tests that have significant impacts on the lives of those that take them. Concluding the chapter is a detailed summary of the remaining chapters of the thesis.

Research Aims

This thesis aimed to explore the teaching, learning and assessment process in translator education programs. With specific reference to the NAATI testing procedure used in Australia, the project sought to investigate how assessment impacts teaching and learning. The thesis’ central focus was assessment; however, the wider contexts of translator education in Australia and Spain
were included in the hope of capturing teaching, learning and assessment in a holistic manner. The project aimed to understand teaching, learning and assessment in translator education by examining their intricacies within the context of higher education in Spain, and more broadly the EU, and in Australia.

**NAATI**

NAATI is the certification authority for translators and interpreters in Australia. It has existed since the early 1970s and was created to regulate who was qualified to provide translating and interpreting services to culturally and linguistically diverse communities. The vast bulk of services provided is for community purposes and include translating personal documents and information brochures for community service organisations. Australia is different from Europe in that translation services have historically been in the area of community translation, whereas much of Europe has been grounded in literary translation.

NAATI has received consistent criticisms throughout the years. I will go into more detail about these in Chapter 3; however, suffice to say at the moment that most criticism of NAATI centres on the assessment instrument that is used to decide whether a candidate will be granted Professional certification. This instrument is a timed translation task. It is product focused and the candidate produces a target text (translation) from a source text (original); procedural elements of translation are not documented or assessed. The marking system is an error-deduction system, whereby marks are deducted for what the examiner identifies as errors. NAATI provides guidelines that suggest the number of points to be deducted for particular errors, with major and minor errors attracting more and less point deductions respectively. A major hurdle with these guidelines is that they are considered an in-confidence commercial document that cannot be circulated among learners. This creates a tension between current best practice pedagogy, which aims for transparency in assessment procedures, and protecting the commercial rights of NAATI. Notwithstanding the assessment procedures difficulty when placed in an education program, the most prevalent criticism of it is that it has not undergone validity and reliability testing, as have other high-stakes language tests, such as the IELTS.
The European Higher Education Area and the Bologna Process

At the time of fieldwork, the higher education sector in Europe was undergoing major change. The signing of the Bologna Convention (1999) had marked the beginnings of the region-wide modernisation, which has become known as the Bologna Process. The convention laid the foundations for education to be homogenised across the region and the Process has been a continual effort as more countries participate. The aim is to improve education provision so that Europe is more competitive in the globalised, post-industrial ICT era that we live in (Montero Curiel 2010, p. 22). The European Higher Education Area was created to form a network of member countries that have committed to designing and developing higher education in their respective countries so that it follows European frameworks with highly transparent curriculum. Student-centred learning was highlighted as being a significant outcome of the Bologna Process (London Communiqué 2007). Universities in participating countries are required to structure higher education in three cycles – Degree, Postgraduate and Doctorate – and to follow a student-centred learning approach. A European Credit Transfer System has been developed as an attempt to homogenise the level of teaching in each education cycle and to facilitate the mobility of learners throughout the region.

In Spain, the education system has had to undergo a redesign of the way education is delivered so that it follows the reforms advocated by the European Higher Education Area and the Bologna Process. The new system proposed by the European Higher Education Area is profoundly different to the education system Spain had before. The previous strict and rigid centralised system meant that undergraduate degrees were largely career-based and offered very little flexibility with the curriculum. Teaching was approached in a teacher-centred manner and the traditional lecture and note-taking method was widely used. Knowledge was transmitted from the teacher to the learner and a final exam was the primary way of testing whether knowledge had been retained.

Various regional and national education reforms have taken place over the past two decades in Spain, all attempting to improve education provision and to adapt to the European Higher Education Area frameworks. The 2015/16 academic year marks the completion of the transition process to the new model under the Bologna Process (Crisol Moya 2012, p. 58). All higher education qualifications from the 2016/17 academic year onwards will be structured in the three cycles of degree, postgraduate and doctorate; they will follow the European Credit Transfer System to regulate the amount of work and hours expected in each course and program, and curricula will be
designed with student-centred learning at its core (González Geraldo et al. 2010; González González, Montaño Arquero & Hassall 2009; Rabadán Rubio et al. 2013)

High-stakes Translator Education Programs

Translator education programs in Australia and Spain have high-stakes for learners. I examine high-stakes tests in more detail in the Chapter 3: NAATI Certification; however, suffice to mention at this point that NAATI’s certification testing procedure, which is integrated into programs in Australia, raises the stakes for learners. Angelelli (2009, p. 14) highlights that translator certification tests are high-stakes. In the case of NAATI, it is notoriously difficult to pass their testing instrument, and is linked to migration applications, which raises the stakes higher for those wishing to migrate to Australia. Translator education programs attract a large number of international student enrolments, and although there are education and language requirements that have to be met, gaining a place as an international student in such translation programs is a relatively easy affair. The difficult part is to graduate with NAATI certification. In Spain on the other hand, the situation is reversed. Entry into translator education programs is highly competitive and requires learners to undertake demanding entrance examinations. Such programs with an English stream attract consistently high scores to be offered a place to study the program. However, once accepted, it is relatively easy to complete the required work in order to graduate and be able to enter the translation labour market in Europe. Below, I will detail these high-stakes situations for Australian and Spanish translation learners.

Australia

Learners of Australian translator education programs are diverse. They often have varied academic and professional backgrounds, and a minority have worked or studied in translation previously. Spanish speakers are among the minority of learners enrolled in translator education programs, with approximately 90 per cent of enrolments across all languages being Chinese speakers. Korean and Japanese speakers account for the next highest enrolments, with other popular languages being Spanish, Italian, French, Arabic and Indonesian, among others. Enrolments for Spanish speakers are consistently low, and a cohort of five learners would be considered high for any one semester.

Translator education programs that incorporate the NAATI test are high-stakes for learners. To enter the translation profession in Australia, the NAATI test must be successfully completed. It is
notoriously difficult to pass and many candidates opt to study an education program that includes the test to increase their chances of passing. When the test is undertaken independent of an education program, approximately 20 per cent of candidates are successful. When taken within an education program, the pass rate increases to approximately 40 per cent (Robert Foote, personal communication, 25 June 2014). Although the pass rate significantly improves for learners undertaking NAATI-endorsed translator education programs, it remains that less than half will pass the NAATI test and be able to practice as translators in Australia.

Almost all translation and interpreting learners are international students. Higher education is a large trade export for Australia and translating and interpreting programs account for a noteworthy share of the market. The number of enrolments in any one year can vary dramatically; however, the proportion of international students remains more or less the same, at around 95 per cent of all enrolments.

Studying in Australia as an international student requires a significant financial investment. International student fees for a Master degree in Translation and Interpreting commencing in 2016 are just over AU$50,000 in total for the program (RMIT University 2016). On top of fees are costs associated with accommodation and home setup, visa applications, IELTS tests, medical insurance for the duration of the program, living and transport costs and possibly a student services and amenities fee. HSBC reported on the cost of international study in Australia in comparison to other popular education destinations and found that Australia is the most expensive country to study in. They estimate the total cost of living per year is AU$23,500, which would make the total cost of studying a master degree in translating and interpreting in a major city in Australia AU$97,000 (HSBC 2014). The high costs to study in Australia as an international student, which is the circumstance for the vast majority of learners in translator education programs, makes such programs high-stakes for individuals.

NAATI-endorsed programs carry extra weight for international students who plan to be long-term immigrants in Australia. The Australian government’s Department of Immigration and Border Protection uses a points system to determine one’s eligibility to migrate. Given that points can be earned by various means, careful strategy can increase one’s chances of migrating. Completing an education program in Australia has been a pathway to permanent residency for the past couple of decades, as holding a tertiary qualification adds points to a migration application. Also attracting extra points is holding NAATI Professional certification in one of its recognised community languages. Acquiring migration points from studying diminishes the time and effort needed post-graduation to meet migration application requirements. Success in the NAATI test therefore
increases the chances of international learners being able to follow a migration pathway and become permanent residents.

Spain

Quite different to the learner profile in Australia, learners of translator education programs in Spain are rather homogenous. For the most part, they are 18-24 years old and are local students. Working part-time while studying is not the norm in Spain and more often than not learners are supported by scholarships or their families for the duration of their undergraduate degrees. International enrolments at Spanish universities differ considerably to those enrolled in Australian programs. While international students are not a common feature in Spanish universities, a few completing an Erasmus exchange program is not unusual, as Spain is one of the preferred host countries of the program. Learners on Erasmus are usually completing a short exchange program of one or two semesters and will return to their home country and university to complete their studies. For English streams in Spain, Erasmus learners could be from any European country, provided they are sufficiently fluent in English and Spanish.

Translator education programs in Spain are most commonly in the form of undergraduate degrees. They generally span over four years and include second, third, and possibly additional language acquisition before covering translation specific courses. For an English stream, learners are expected to enter with a B2, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. For any subsequent languages they are able to begin without any prior knowledge. However, to gain a place in such a program, one must be quite successful in competitive university entrance examinations.

Undergraduate programs in Spain have a high-stakes entrance test. To be offered a place at university, learners must take a general and a discipline-specific university entrance exam, called Selectividad, and both scores are used by universities to determine who they will offer places to. Acceptance into a program is based on whether an individual’s nota de Selectividad, or entrance score, is above the nota de corte, or the lowest score accepted by the university for entrance into the program. The nota de corte is variable and changes from year to year depending on demand and the number of places offered by the university. Generally, English streams of translator education programs attract higher entrance scores than other languages, even within the same program at the same university. They are more popular, and as a result, more competitive, as a higher number of learners are interested in English as their L2 (second language) than other languages. In 2016, the highest nota de corte for a translation and interpreting undergraduate program was 12.167 out of a
possible 14, which places the score as high as those needed to study Law and Medicine. The lowest entrance score for an English stream of translation was 5.47, and although this score is significantly lower than the highest ranked translation program, it and another with a score of 8.5 are the only two of the nine programs on offer that have an entrance score under 10. By way of comparison, Medicine sits around 12, International Relations around 10, and Law combined with International Relations around 12 (El País 2016). The high scores required for entry into translator education programs highlights the high-stakes and competitive nature of the Selectividad examinations. Once admitted to the program, however, the high-stakes for learners significantly diminish. Completion of an undergraduate degree is usually the industry standard to work as a professional translator in Europe, and provided that learners attend classes and complete assessment tasks, graduating with the qualification is not particularly difficult. I now turn to the structure of the thesis and detail the contents of each chapter before continuing a more in-depth discussion of the points raised in this introduction.

**Thesis structure**

This thesis is comprised of an introduction, eight chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter is a literature review of the bodies of work that have informed the research. The second is a background chapter that provides information about translator education programs in Australia and Spain that the reader will require to make sense of the remainder of the thesis. The third chapter is dedicated to explaining in detail the function and workings of NAATI and its certification system. The methodology is explained in the fourth chapter, and the fifth is a descriptive ethnography of the three sites used for data collection, which focuses on the education programs and learner profiles. Following this are three discussion chapters. Chapter six covers student-centred learning at each site, including the use of space for the completion of collaborative work. Chapter seven discusses employability and its implications for the programs at each site; while chapter eight explores consequences, washback and impacts of high-stakes testing that takes place in the two settings – Spain and Australia. The conclusion draws together the issues raised in the discussion chapters and makes recommendations for higher education translator education programs. More detail of each chapter is set out below.

Following the introduction, in the first chapter, I review literature relevant to student-centred higher education. I cover debate on how the approach was implemented and the use of collaborative learning within it. Teaching, learning, assessment and program development discussions are examined with particular emphasis on translator education programs. I detail
debates of employability in higher education broadly, and in translator education. And finally I outline understandings of consequences, washback and impacts of high-stakes tests.

The second chapter paints a picture of translator education in Spain and in Australia. A brief history of higher education and translator education is presented for Spain, as well as a glimpse at the economic crisis that was still having a significant impact during the time of fieldwork. For Australia, I go into more detail about the internationalisation of higher education and how it impacts enrolments of translation programs, as well as outlining the developments of translator education moving from the vocational education system to higher education.

A comprehensive description of NAATI is presented in the third chapter. I begin with a brief history and then detail the different forms of certification and how individuals can attain it. The NAATI testing instrument is outlined. Details of the test and how it is marked are lacking due to the instrument being protected by commercial in-confidence status, which is in-line with NAATI being a private company. Notwithstanding the limitations on detail I can provide, I outline the format of the test and general details of how an error-deduction marking system functions. I then make comment on the high-stakes nature of the test and the considerable investment made by learners who are enrolled as international students in Australia.

In the fourth chapter, I present the methodology. I have used an interdisciplinary design for translator education research by using ethnographic case study. Elements of case study design are integrated into an overarching ethnographic approach. I present techniques for capturing multiple perspectives, ethical considerations for cross-cultural research are touched on, and I detail how I dealt with last minute site changes. Data collection and recording techniques, including recording rapid thoughts, turning informal chats into in-depth interviews, conducting (un)obtrusive observations and writing field-notes are detailed, along with my experiences of each while in the field. I finish by detailing the analysis strategies used and outlining how a multi-theoretical analytical approach aided me to engage in a dialogue between the data and literature.

The fifth chapter contains thick descriptions of some aspects of the three sites examined in the project – UniEspaña, UniOz 1 and UniOz 2. I describe the translation programs at each site, detailing their structures and the qualifications that learners are able to complete. I then comment on the learner profile at each site, commenting on interpersonal dynamics and group characteristics. Descriptions of other aspects of the sites, including the physical surroundings and the learning spaces available to learners are also provided.
Chapters six, seven and eight are dedicated to discussion. Chapter six examines student-centred learning at each of the three sites. The way that educators and learners engaged in the approach is analysed, with particular emphasis on collaborative learning. The way that learning spaces were used to complete collaborative work is then considered. Chapter seven discusses employability in general terms for translator education programs in Spain and Australia. Learners’ motivations for studying such programs and their post-graduation aspirations are then examined in relation to the professions they expect to enter. Chapter eight, the final discussion chapter, is dedicated to how the NAATI test in Australia and the Selectividad, or the university entrance examinations in Spain, affected teaching, learning and assessment at all three sites. These are discussed in relation to testing consequences, washback and impacts, which were raised in the literature review. I make a case for validation studies to be carried out for the NAATI test, discuss how washback was experienced by learners and educators, and what the social and political impacts of the high-stakes tests are.
Chapter 1: Higher Education and Student-Centred Learning

Introduction

Student-centred learning, employability and testing consequences, washback and impact are three pertinent areas of understanding that have guided fieldwork and analysis. In addition to literature directly related to translator education in these three areas, broader debates within higher education are drawn upon to illustrate their relevance to Translation Studies. In many cases, debates in translator education can be placed in context and understood from a multidisciplinary perspective when integrated into broader debates covering the same area of research. However, at times, it is evident from the progress made in other disciplines that Translation Studies, and particularly studies concerned with translator education and training, could learn a great deal from engaging more in existing and past debates of higher education, career development and language testing research. Below I outline the dominant areas of discussion within translator education research before detailing debates surrounding student-centred education; teaching, learning and assessment; program development; employability; and testing consequences, washback and impact.

Translator Education

Translator education research is wide and ample. The journal Interpreter Translator Trainer specialises in issues in translator education and is approaching its tenth year of publication. While this journal is the only one with such a specialty, research in the area is reported in various other publications dedicated to Translation Studies, Language Studies or other related disciplines. There is the scope for research to cover various issues relevant to translator education; however, the bulk of research I encountered is based around classroom practice, and teaching and learning methods, with an emphasis on teaching and learning methods. Yan, Pan and Wang (2015) highlight this situation in their review of Translation and Interpreting education and training articles published between 2000 and 2012. They claim that 72 per cent of articles reviewed cover research related to teaching, whereas only 18 per cent and 10 per cent cover learning and assessment respectively. Colina and Angelelli (2015, p. 1) note that “researchers investigate how students actually learn to translate and interpret and what methods are more conducive to that learning”. While I combined teaching and learning when classifying research and Yan, Pan and Wang (2015) separated them, it
still remains that the vast majority cover this area and fewer studies delve into debates of assessment, program development, employability, and washback, consequences and social impacts of testing.

A focus on teaching and learning is prevalent in the many articles I reviewed and classified as such from within translator education research. After conducting a review of literature that discussed learning in a translator education context, it was evident that the vast majority used learning activities or teaching methods as the basis of discussion. Project-based learning, which Kiraly (2005) defines as authentic project-work where learners learn collaboratively by completing translation projects for real clients, has evolved over the past decade or so to include a broader range of learning situations. However, the majority of authors consider project-based learning to be collaborative, and to include learning activities that consist of a sequence of tasks. García González and Veiga Díaz (2015) propose project-based learning and collaboration as ways to develop translator competence, Pym and Torres-Simón (2015) examine multiple translation strategies used by translation learners from Asia and Europe, Olvera-Lobo and Gutiérrez-Artacho (2014) propose a Professional Approach to Training model that incorporates social networks, Li, Zhang and He (2015) analyse the reception of project-based learning by learners, Martín Ruano (2015) puts forward transformative theorising as a point of reflection and learning for those studying to become legal translators, Lee (2015) presents reflective journals as a learning tool, Washbourne (2014b) suggests that life-long learning can be expanded through the use of self-directed learning, while in another paper (2014a) she offers dialogic feedback loops as a way of promoting student-centred learning. As can be seen from this list compiled from the past few years, there is an over-emphasis on translator education research that retains a focus on teaching and learning methods in a classroom environment.

Internships or practicums are one area outside of the classroom that has been examined in depth within the literature. Authors discuss the benefits of offering learners a period of working within an organisation or translation company, be it public or private, as a way for them to develop their translator competence in an employment context. See Ho (2014), Jiménez-Crespo (2014), Nam (2016), Wu (2016), and Valero-Garcés (2017) for such examples. The European Master of Translation (EMT) Project, which has debated internships for some time, has collaborated in several placement or internship initiatives. Learners from institutions within the EMT Network are involved in translation placements offered by the EU’s Directorate-General for Translation (EMT Board 2017) and the Transnational Placement Scheme for Translation Students (Agorà) (Università di Bologna
2017), as well as internships organised by the European Union of Associations of Translation Companies (European Union of Associations of Translation Companies 2017).

Aside from the discussion of internships and placements, I came across few studies that dealt with learning and assessment in translator education programs by examining elements external to classroom events to provide a wider context of the learning and assessment process. Garant’s (2009) study aimed to look at potential washback effects that assessment had on translator education programs as a whole. While I go into more detail about washback (backwash)\(^1\) in the section later in this chapter titled ‘Washback, Consequences and Impact of Testing’, it is “the impact that a test has on the teaching and learning done in preparation for it” (Green 2013, p. 40). Finding that educators in Finland who began their careers in language institutes tended to view translation as a technical skill and educators who began their careers in Translation and Interpreting departments tended to view it as a profession, Garant inferred that this difference would manifest in differing assessment practices. Although she vaguely touches on washback, the study’s focus remains on teaching and assessment methods rather than on the wider implications of washback on the learning and assessment process. Schmitt (2012) looks beyond the translation classroom in his discussion of achieving high quality translator education. He examines supra-national frameworks that influence the design and delivery of higher education translation programs in Europe, claiming that the combined efforts of such frameworks could improve translator education at the program level, and in turn improve public perception of translators. Although he touches on influences beyond the classroom that are pertinent to the European context, his discussion centres on developing the way the translation profession is viewed and valued by those external to it; he believes that improving translator education will do this. With the exception of these two studies mentioned, I did not encounter research that addresses the wider context of translator education and includes events and processes that take place in and outside of the classroom. This highlights it as an avenue for future research.

Below I present current scholarly dialogue within higher education and translator education research that encompasses student-centred learning. In particular, I detail key debates concerning the approach, which include learning spaces, teaching, learning and assessment methods, and program development.

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\(^1\) Washback and backwash appear interchangeably in the literature, with the time, place and academic field from which the research is produced impacting which term is used. For ease of reading, I will use washback throughout this thesis, even when referring to work that uses the term backwash.
Student-Centred Learning: a journey to higher education

Student-centred learning is a modern and progressive approach to learning and teaching. It follows a trend of constructivism that emerged in primary and secondary education (Snowman et al. 2009) and has gained popularity worldwide. Numerous variations and interpretations of constructivism exist within education literature. Von Glasersfeld (1984) discusses constructivism from a philosophical perspective and claims that knowledge is created, or constructed, by individuals, and that the knowledge they construct is based on their experiences in the world. Lord (1997), applies this to science education and understands constructivism in terms of a process of inquiry that is led by the learner, which he believes is well aligned with scientific study and thus relevant to biology learners. Gil-Pérez et al. (2002), another from science education, stresses the active participation of learners in the construction of knowledge. Mayer (2004), although sceptical about the benefits of constructivist teaching, highlights the collaborative element of social constructivism and makes note of the prevalence of group work in this context. Donald Kiraly, an influential theorist from Translation Studies, similarly highlights the social element and believes that collaboration is a key factor in empowering learners to create their own knowledge (Kiraly 2000, 2005, 2012, 2015; Kiraly & Costa 2016). Among the differing interpretations there is nevertheless a consensus that constructivism is the construction of knowledge from individual experiences and personal interpretations. In this way, learners are encouraged to create their own meaning by drawing on their values, and current and past experiences (Ben-Ari 2001; Hennessey, Higley & Chesnut 2012; Matthews 1997; Snowman et al. 2009, pp. 334-71; Tobias & Duffy 2009).

Within student-centred learning, constructivism is applied to the way learners construct knowledge and therefore learn. It involves viewing education from the perspective of the learner, with the focus being on what is learned, rather than on what is being taught. Baeten, Struyven & Dochy (2013) outline the key elements to the approach, which highlights its constructivist understanding:

Student-centred teaching methods are characterised by three features, i.e. (1) an active involvement of the students in order to construct knowledge for themselves by selecting, interpreting and applying information in order to solve assignments, (2) a coaching and facilitating teacher, who is present to help students out with questions or problems and safeguards their learning process, and (3) the use of authentic assignments, for instance practical cases and complex vocational problems (pp. 14-5).

Primary education has been delivered in this way for a number of years. The Montessori model, which emerged in the late 19th century, is directed towards early childhood and primary
schooling and is an approach to education that places the child at the centre of learning. Although not the first approach to do so, it is well-known for its comprehensive philosophy and pedagogy that is child-centred (Whitescarver & Cossentino 2008, pp. 2572-3). The Montessori model remained on the peripheries of education systems around the world until theorists such as John Dewey, Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky brought student-centred learning into the mainstream in the twentieth century. While the approach was unevenly adopted, in general, secondary education followed after primary education adopted student-centred learning, and in more recent decades higher education institutions have begun to embrace it.

The uptake of student-centred learning in higher education has differed in the last decades of the twentieth century around the world. Gaining popularity Australia, the UK, North America, and some Northern European countries, it is now being taken up across the globe. Within Europe, the European Higher Education Area and the Bologna Process have been the primary instigator for education systems that were not previously using a student-centred approach to begin to implement it. On a global level, low and middle income countries have now also taken up the approach, which is considered the hallmark of a successful education system within the current knowledge economy. Due to the varied and diverse contexts within which student-centred learning exists, academic discussion in the area can be categorised in terms of the length of time the approach has been in use in particular contexts. Those that have used the approach for an extended time tend to discuss it in terms of constructive alignment, whereas those more recently introduced to it tend to debate issues surrounding implementation. The volume of debate surrounding the implementation of student-centred learning dominates discussion, as the number of education systems that are undergoing implementation, or have undergone it in the past couple of decades, is increasing.

**Implementation**

Implementation of student-centred learning is discussed from an overall perspective of program delivery in higher education institutions. It is worth noting that current debates about implementation predominantly originate from countries or academic fields where student-centred learning has recently been implemented, and that the issues discussed replicate those discussed in the early stages of implementation from countries and disciplines that had put the approach into effect some time ago. Saleh, Al-Tawil and Al-Hadithi (2012) assessed existing teaching methods at a college in Iraq, focusing on educators’ knowledge of student-centred learning. They found significant gaps between existing practices and a student-centred approach, namely that there were high numbers of learners in lectures, that teacher-centred methods were used, and that infrastructure and facilities were unsuitable for student-centred learning. They believed that
continual professional development of educators, along with smaller class sizes and improved facilities would contribute to moving towards a student-centred approach. In Flanders (Belgium), Baeten et al. (2016) looked into the preferences of learners and educators regarding the type of instruction they received and imparted respectively. While learners preferred to receive direction from educators, and particularly in their first and second years, neither learners nor educators preferred passive learning. From these findings, the authors concluded that combining student-centred learning with teacher-centred learning would enable a wider audience to be accommodated in education programs. Looking more closely at the mechanics of student-centred learning, Dobbins et al. (2016) investigated how learning outcomes were used among different faculties in the same UK institution. They claim there is a continuum of use that ranges from enacting them within a student-centred learning model, to using their transparency as a safe-guard against student-as-customer complaints. In another study that looked beyond individual courses and programs, White, P et al. (2016) investigated the implementation of an active learning strategy across a faculty in Australia. Educators were influenced by the faculty-wide strategy when deciding whether to use active learning and relied on collegial collaboration to further their professional development in the area. In a study that aimed to understand the pedagogies used in nursing education programs, Mackintosh-Franklin (2016) reviewed a range of nursing programs in the UK. They found that there was no predominant or explicit pedagogy used and that the programs remained based in knowledge-acquisition and practical training. They highlight an overemphasis on the end purpose of the nursing education programs, that graduates are ‘fit for market’ upon completion, which is to the detriment of developing student-centred pedagogies. Connecting student-centred learning with academic success, Severiens, Meeuwisse and Born (2015) in the Netherlands examined any potential link between the two. They argue that academic success in a student-centred program is different to that in a lecture-centred program, and that a sense of belonging, time spent studying and learner effort are additionally connected to academic success. Sin and Manatos (2014) explored influences on institutional policy and academic practices within the context of the Bologna Process and EU policies concerning student-centred learning. They concluded that while higher education institutions embraced student-centred learning, institutional policy impacted academic practice to some extent. However, it was unclear how much EU policy influenced student-centred practices, as the inclusive nature of institutional policies, which reflected EU policies, were not always visible in practice.

As can be seen from the selection of research presented above, disagreement abounds regarding implementing student-centred learning in a higher education context. In particular, a variety of implementation methods have been proposed with some being considered successful and
having positive outcomes for educators and learners, while others are highlighted as needing further development. In remains unclear across a variety of contexts around the globe how student-centred learning, as an overarching approach to learning, is best implemented to support educators and to enhance learning.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, discussions of implementation originate from education systems or academic fields that have recently put student-centred learning into effect. For those areas and education systems that have a longer history of using the approach, a key area of debate centres on enhancing student-centred learning through constructive alignment.

**Constructive Alignment**

Constructive alignment is a tool that is believed to enhance student-centred learning. The degree to which constructive alignment occurs is a point of interest in the literature. Velasco Quintana, Rodríguez Jiménez and Terrón López (2012) contribute to this body of work by proposing collaboration between educators as a way of aligning assessment tasks with competences, or learning outcomes. Following the principles of constructive alignment, assessment tasks and learning activities should be able to be directly linked to the outcomes of the relevant course, program and university, ensuring that what is assessed is relevant to what learners are supposed to learn (Biggs & Tang 2011; Kelly 2005; Oliver 2013, pp. 454-5). In her study into Curtain University’s graduate attributes, Oliver (2013) highlights the importance of alignment in aiding the contextualisation of outcomes to their respective educational programs (p. 460). Her work reflects common views of constructive alignment’s success being contingent on the strength of the links between outcomes, learning activities and assessment tasks, and how embedded outcomes are in classroom practices and systems of assessment. Biggs and Tang argue that “constructively aligned teaching is likely to be more effective than unaligned because there is maximum consistency throughout the system” (2011, p. 99). Harry Torrance shares this view and highlights the importance of the assessment process and its impact on learning, claiming an improved process will lead to greater alignment (1994, p. 224). An overall increase in academic achievement was found in a study by Helen Larkin and Ben Richardson that measured academic improvement following a constructive alignment initiative (Larkin & Richardson 2012). Although there is a large pool of research advocating for constructive alignment and arguing that it is useful to increase academic performance, the extent to which various skills, or outcomes, are successfully aligned remains a point of discussion.
Interpersonal skills, and in particular team work, are consistently integrated into university programs’ learning outcomes and graduate attributes. I now turn to discussion of collaborative learning and its role within student-centred translator education programs.

**Collaboration within student-centred learning**

Translator education programs are increasingly taking a student-centred approach that incorporates high levels of collaborative learning. Given that student-centred learning involves viewing education from the perspective of the learner, the focus is on what is learned, rather than on what is being taught. Approaching teaching and learning from the learner’s perspective is a shift from previous teacher-centred transmissionist approaches that placed the teacher at the centre. Kiraly (2000) aptly sums up a traditional transmissionist approach when he claims:

> The learner comes to the classroom as a passive listener, a consumer of knowledge. And if knowledge can be packed for distribution, then it can be conveniently dissected into digestible chunks for transmission... As the teacher is considered the fountain of knowledge, then naturally it is the teacher who should have control of the knowledge distribution process in the classroom (p. 22).

Student-centred learning has only recently begun to be adopted on a large scale in Europe. Although it has a long history in some Northern European and other high-income countries’ education systems, it is only in more recent years that many European education systems have explicitly committed to the approach. The Bologna Process has contributed to its uptake, as universities join the European Higher Education Area in an attempt to harmonise education provision across Europe. Student-centred learning is an explicitly stated aim of the movement and curricula are being redesigned with student-centred teaching and learning methods replacing traditional teacher-centred ones. The European Master’s in Translation (EMT) project, which is similarly attempting to harmonise Master degrees in translation across Europe, has reinforced the use of student-centred learning, with a specific focus on collaborative learning.

Collaborative learning is a widespread tool used in a student-centred approach. It became popular in the 1980s and 1990s and was offered as an alternative to traditional teacher-centred learning methods, namely the lecture → listen → note-taking process. It calls for learners to be active participants in generating knowledge in a collaborative manner, which targets cognitive skill development. It is commonly centred on problem solving so that learners have the freedom to “learn according to their individual abilities and learning styles” (García González & Veiga Díaz 2015,
In this way, it enables a range of skills to be incorporated that learners can develop at their own pace. Through collaborative activities learners are able to learn how to give and receive constructive criticism, to build team spirit, and to expand ideas and knowledge through engaging in critical discussion. Assessment procedures used within collaborative learning are varied; however, regardless of the method used, it is important to have clear criteria of how the learner will be assessed and how to determine whether they are deemed competent.

Technology has played a large role in the uptake of collaborative learning. Online platforms and online delivery of courses have allowed for greater observation of collaborative processes by educators, which can in turn lead to more constructive feedback for learners. Discussion forums, wikis and blogs are commonly used as a space for learners to share ideas and engage in academic debate. Email, social media and other forms of internet-based communication are methods commonly used by learners to organise logistics, develop team dynamics and share ideas and work.

**Learning Spaces and Collaborative Learning**

Just as face-to-face collaboration requires physical spaces, virtual collaboration requires virtual spaces. Technology has aided the uptake of collaborative learning, and in an education setting where collaborative work is a favoured activity, the provision of space becomes a pertinent issue. Traditional learning spaces in universities that use a student-centred approach, one that places the actively participating learner at the centre of learning, have included the lecture theatre, tutorial classroom, and a variety of informal meeting spaces throughout the university campus. Online learning platforms such as Moodle or Blackboard have also become a standard feature alongside classrooms. This recognises that in addition to the physical spaces needed for classes, learners require virtual space if they are to engage fully in collaborative learning. Modern understandings of space therefore call for a more fluid, flexible and adaptable design that incorporates both physical and virtual spaces (Keppell & Riddle 2012; Rafferty 2012). Technology has been an impetus for this change in understanding, as learners are constantly connected through portable devices such as mobile phones, tablets and laptops. A consequence of this increased connectivity is that the boundaries between learning and social spaces have become blurred, as virtual space is brought into focus. The breakdown of traditional barriers calls for a renewed understanding of how space is used by learners, particularly the use of virtual space when completing collaborative work.

The Bologna Process is contributing to the rise of collaborative learning in higher education throughout Europe. Although collaborative methods have a long history in the UK and some
Northern European primary, secondary and higher education, the implementation of the Bologna Process has led to countries with vastly different education systems, with Spain being one such example, officially adopting a student-centred approach that makes use of collaborative learning. The Bologna Process began with the aim of standardising education provision, promoting competitiveness, and facilitating student mobility across Europe (French Bologna Secretariat 2014; Neave & Veiga 2013, p. 60). To achieve this, the European Higher Education Area was created to form a network of member countries that have committed, among other things, to use a student-centred approach that includes collaborative learning. For many Spanish institutions, a student-centred approach is a significant change from their prior approaches, which emphasised formal lectures, individual study and final examinations. Collaborative work has been promoted in the Bologna Process so that student-centred learning is at the core of curriculum design.

Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning methods are increasingly used in institutions of the European Higher Education Area member countries (Almiron Roig (2012); Arumi Ribas (2010); del Rincón Igea and González Geraldo (2010); Hernández (2012); Julián Clemente et al. (2010)). Continuous assessment, where a learner’s progress is monitored by various assessment tasks over the semester, is often discussed in relation to collaborative work, with many scholars arguing that it contributes to workload changes. Studies by Almiron Roig (2012); Crisol Moya (2012); del Rincón Igea and González Geraldo (2010); Rabadán Rubio et al. (2013); Santana Bonilla, Rodríguez Hernández and Barroso Jerez (2009) look at how continuous assessment and collaborative work are undertaken after the implementation of the Bologna Process. A common theme among them is that learners and educators alike have experienced an increased workload, although there is disagreement on possible reasons. While virtual space is highlighted as a way in which workload can be reduced and continuous assessment expedited, it is not clear how physical, virtual and social spaces are used by learners and educators while engaging in collaborative learning.

Spatial Considerations, Collaboration and Bologna Implementation

The Bologna Process is often discussed in terms of actions and changes that will facilitate its implementation. In order for a student-centred approach to be achieved, variations in learning methodology are often involved in the implementation process. Arumí Ribas (2010) argues that new materials and learning tools are required in translation programs that have been redesigned under Bologna. She highlights that priority is given to innovative uses of information and communication technologies rather than reflecting on the changing roles of educators and learners. Almiron Roig
(2012) stresses that technology plays a pivotal role in increasing active learning, while highlighting the benefits of using blended learning in the form of peer and self-assessment via an online platform. He claims that assessing in this way can assist with reducing educators’ workloads associated with continuous assessment. In both studies, the authors’ discussions of how technological tools and blended learning environments are practiced under the Bologna Process highlight the importance of understanding how virtual space is used.

Spatial considerations in higher education have become a focal point of research in the past five years (Fox & Lam 2012; Keppell, Souter & Sellers 2012; Lynne, Henk & Michael 2012; Newbegin & Webster 2012; Souter et al. 2011). Studies have coincided with design and construction projects so that physical space is designed to support collaborative learning. Souter et al. (2011), Fox and Lam (2012), Rafferty (2012) and Sundberg (2013) are examples of research that has informed design and construction projects so that physical spaces in universities are flexible and adaptable and will support collaborative learning. Souter et al.’s (2011) Spaces for Knowledge Generation project highlights the role of space in the teaching and learning process. Keppell and Riddle (2012) highlight the importance of learning spaces being adaptable and flexible so that collaborative and individual learning are accommodated. Lynne, Henk and Michael (2012) stress the need for pedagogically informed learning spaces that are a blend of physical, online and mobile spaces. Fox and Lam (2012) extend this idea of blended learning and believe that the blog, as a collaboration tool, will enable learners to traverse physical and virtual, and formal and informal learning spaces. They further stress the need for physical space and fixtures in the classroom to be flexible and mobile. Rafferty (2012) highlights the value of challenging the parameters of learning spaces so that space is engaged with in innovative ways. Of the studies mentioned, none consider the possibilities of flexible and mobile virtual spaces in the same way as has been done with physical spaces. Given that these studies accept student-centred approaches to learning as the norm, space is an important consideration, and particularly for universities adapting to the Bologna Process. However, of the limited number of studies that consider spatial issues under Bologna (Almiron Roig 2012), few examine space in relation to collaborative work. And while previous research that examines spaces in higher education has provided important and stable foundations to explore spatial issues, with a particular emphasis on physical space, it remains unclear how physical, virtual and social spaces are used for collaborative learning in a higher education context.

The significance of learning spaces and collaborative work for student-centred learning becomes even more apparent when considering teaching and learning methods used in the classroom, and the tools and technologies used to support them. Each of these elements is integral
to enacting a student-centred approach, and in the following section I detail key debates centred on classroom methods, technologies and tools discussed within translator education research.

Teaching and Learning

As mentioned earlier, the vast majority of research conducted in the broad area of translator education falls within discussions of teaching and learning. Among debates relating to teaching and learning, three main categories appear: technological tools, learning tools, and learning approaches. Technologies are offered as ways of enhancing learning, with communication and collaboration repeatedly highlighted as benefiting from technological tools. Learning tools are similarly offered as ways to enhance learning, and they range from student-centred supports to theoretical tools. The bulk of work within teaching and learning debates covers approaches to learning. Authors propose a variety of approaches, which sit within the student-centred paradigm. Below I will detail notable examples of each of the three categories before moving onto debates concerning how to assess learners.

Technological tools are discussed in terms of their usefulness in encouraging various learning behaviours. Olvera-Lobo and Gutiérrez-Artacho (2014) adapted an e-learning environment to professional practice by using social networks within a social-constructivist approach. They found that learners connected changes in their academic performance with improved communication, which was facilitated by social networks within e-learning environments. Social networks were therefore considered a good communication platform between educators and learners, facilitating a social-constructivist approach to learning in the classroom. Similarly highlighting the advantages of technology for communication, Prieto-Velasco and Fuentes-Luque (2016), in their study that uses Web 2.0 tools to simulate a translation project that is grounded in situational learning, found an overwhelming majority of learners valued the collaborative benefits of the Web 2.0 tools, which facilitated interaction between team members. Galán-Mañas and Pearson (2011) evaluated virtual tools in relation to how best suited they are to blended learning settings. They claim that many learners are new to blended learning and that it is important that the technology is well suited so that learners can identify what they have to do, how they do it, and with which tool. They further highlight the success of blended learning depending on virtual tools and sessions complementing face-to-face instruction. Rodríguez-Inés (2013) offers electronic corpora as a way of enhancing learning and argues for its inclusion in translator education programs. As can be seen from the abovementioned research, technology plays a large part in communication, and as such in learning methodologies that require the learner to be an active participant.
Encouraging participation in class is one way of enhancing learning, and learning tools are proposed by a number of authors who discuss just how this can take place. Lee (2015) examines the role of the reflective journal in a postgraduate translation practice course. She claims that through the use of the journal, learners are encouraged to explore and be experimental when solving translation challenges. She concludes that when reflective journals are combined with other learning activities, such as peer review, self-editing, presentations and discussions, they can create a cooperative effect on learning. Offering another tool, Pardo and Wheeler (2015) highlight the usefulness of the dual-language text and call for it to be reconsidered for its pedagogical significance. They claim that dual-language texts can be used to explore theory and practice, and that learners and educators would benefit from combining research, pedagogy and practice. Martín Ruano (2015) similarly highlights the advantages of theory. She claims that transformative theorisation promotes ethical action because it encourages a persistent interrogation of beliefs, which she considers advantageous for pedagogy. When discussing a connection between theory and practice, Pym and Torres-Simón (2015) claim that there is a false divide between them and that learners are able to reflect on their practical work by reflecting on theory. While this array of tools that authors offer as ways of enhancing learning is a notable contribution to the literature, it is the overarching learning models that have informed their development that are discussed in greater detail.

Proposed learning models dominate debate of teaching and learning within translator education. Project-based, workplace integrated, situated, self-directed, task-based, competence-based and strategy-based learning are all offered as models of learning, and along with Activity Theory they are debated for their merit. Sang (2011) offers Activity Theory as a basis for translating. She believes that it promotes mental constructions of decision-making and can be used as guidance for classroom practices. Hurtado Albir (2015) makes a case for competence-based translator education, which incorporates task- and project-based classroom practices. She highlights translator competence models, and in particular the PACTE model, as a useful basis from which to familiarise learners with professional practice. She considers task- and project-based approaches as suitable because of their ability to include generic and specific competences. Li, Zhang and He (2015) examine project-based learning in the context of a business translation course. They believe project-based learning is well-aligned with the goals of translator education and that learners received and perceived it in a positive light. They note that learners were able to identify the skills that they had developed, which as Hurtado Albir (2015) highlighted, included technical and generic skills. From their study that investigated a simulated translation project, Prieto-Velasco and Fuentes-Luque (2016) claim that strategic and interpersonal competences were developed by taking a project-
based approach. García González and Veiga Díaz (2015) agreed that project-based learning improves competences, however, they note that the design and implementation of learning experiences was highly time-consuming for learners and educators alike. Marco (2016) proposes an authentic literary translation project in the form of a work placement, claiming that work-integrated learning encourages legitimate peripheral participation, which he believes is more beneficial than task- or project-based approaches. Marco highlights work placements as a way that learning can be placed within practice, rather than practice within learning, which he claims broadens the scope of learning. Nam (2016) similarly notes the wide learning capabilities of work-integrated learning and claims that learners can make their own community of practice by participating in it.

As evidenced from the array of learning tools, technologies and learning approaches, there is no one single approach or tool that will fit all situations. Instead, many are offered and discussed in terms of their merits and drawbacks for enhancing a student-centred approach, with some being more appropriate, as depending on the particular learning context, or the purpose of the education program. The next body of literature complements this collection of tools and approaches, as it offers ways that learning can be assessed, and student-centred learning in particular.

Assessment in Translation Studies

Discussion of assessment within Translation Studies falls into two broad camps: those that deal with translation quality assessment, and those that consider assessment within an education context. Translation quality assessment is a large body of work that addresses how to evaluate a translation; that is, whether it is a good or bad translation (House 2014). Various evaluation approaches are offered, with an emphasis on the target text, or the translation product. Translation quality assessment is generally not concerned with assessing a translation in a way that facilitates feedback on the translation process, and as such, is limited in the learning support it can provide. Given that this thesis examines learning in translator education, and that assessment is a vital element of the learning process, I refer to translation quality assessment only when it is relevant to an education context, and leave the main debates in this area for those more directly concerned with the nuts and bolts of this form of evaluation. Following in this section, I detail debates of assessing learning, within which various methods of assessment are offered.

Discussion of assessment in an education context has become an acknowledged area of research in its own right. Before the past decade or two, assessment of translations was largely understood through experiential knowledge and was generally conducted by professional translators
and educators (Angelelli 2012, p. 172). Angelelli (2012) claims that interdisciplinary work has helped to broaden research in the area and move it towards a deeper understanding of what needs to be assessed, and how best to do it. There was a surge of research into translation assessment during the 2000s, however, the core areas of discussion remain unresolved, and although to a lesser extent these days, are still discussed with varying opinions on best practices of designing and conducting assessment.

Among discussions of assessment in translator education, and similar to that surrounding learning and teaching, there is an abundance of assessment methods that have been offered up as the basis for discussion. The bulk of assessment procedures offered fall into the general realm of education and training. A small number on the other hand, attempt to resolve the dilemma of which tool is appropriate for high-stakes testing situations, such as for translator certification systems like NAATI.

Many tools are offered for assessment within an education context, with some sharing similarities. Investigating whether there is a meaningful relationship between two methods of assessment, a multiple-choice test and an open-ended translation task, Ahmadi (2011) found that there was no correlation between an individual’s ability to translate a text and their ability to select the best option from a multiple-choice list, and concluded that multiple-choice translation tests are not as appropriate as open-ended tasks. Fernandez and Ribas (2014) investigate meta-cognitive questionnaires as a basis for encouraging self-assessment among translation learners. They claim that while using the tool for self-assessment, educators can adjust the pedagogical guidance they give so that it meets the evolving and developing needs of learners. Kim (2009) offers another assessment procedure that is based in systemic functional linguistics. She presents meaning-oriented assessment criteria and claims that it could complement NAATI’s existing testing procedure. Lee (2015) examines the use of a reflective journal as part of a suite of tools that would assess learners during their program of study. She claims that the journal’s inclusion in the variety of assessment procedures contributes towards having a collaborative and cooperative approach to assessment. Orlando (2012), although conceding that “there is probably no ideal evaluation system of translations” (p. 215), offers a similar approach with an Integrated Translator’s Diary. He proposes it as an accompaniment to a target test that will facilitate the assessment process for educators. Ahmadi (2011) echoes Orlando’s belief that there is no ideal assessment procedure and claims that “translation quality assessment has become one of the most difficult areas in assessment and testing” (p. 308). These beliefs reflect the reality that in spite of the various assessment models and tools offered in the literature, there is no one single tool that will suit all purposes of assessment.
Few certification tests have undergone validity and reliability scrutiny, although some studies have attempted to make ground in this area. Sonia Colina’s work in the area of translation quality assessment during 2008 and 2009 offers some insights into inter-rater reliability of translation assessment tools. In her 2008 study, an assessment tool was tested for inter-rater reliability between bilinguals, professional translators and language teachers. The context of the tool is not clear and it is not stated whether it was being used in its current format or whether it was undergoing development. Nonetheless, she concluded that provided the raters received basic training on how to use the tool, it had good inter-rater reliability (Colina 2008). The 2009 study tested for inter-rater reliability, but this time across multiple languages. Colina believes that the tool showed good inter-rater reliability in all languages tested except Russian, which she attributes to factors unrelated to the tool itself (Colina 2009). Investigating inter-rater reliability of three translation assessment approaches, Eyckmans, Anckaert and Segers (2009) test a holistic approach, an analytic approach and a Calibration of Dichotomous Items (CDI) method. The holistic and analytic approaches are both criterion-referenced, whereas the CDI method is norm-referenced. As a norm-referenced approach that is similar to other such approaches in language testing, CDI separates the text into segments and a general consensus is formed by graders as to what is acceptable and what is unacceptable for each segment. Eyckmans, Anckaert and Segers (2009) conclude that the holistic and analytic approaches are better suited for formative assessment in the classroom, as they lack reliability. The CDI method on the other hand, is believed to have a higher rate of inter-rater reliability and as such is deemed more suitable to summative assessment in high-stakes situations.

Sitting within these proposals of varying assessment procedures are two debates that remain unresolved in spite of having been discussed repeatedly over the past few decades: the product versus process debate. Tied up in whether to assess one or both of these elements of translation is how one goes about making objective decisions about transferring meaning between languages in a satisfactory way. Scholars who debate whether to assess the product or process tend to agree that assessment in an education context benefits from including both elements. However, the question of how to allocate a grade to what is still considered a subjective area, that is translation, remains unanswered.
Allocating points in a subjective arena

The process of how to allocate points for summative assessments, that is those that require a mark to be granted, is a hotly debated topic. The two main systems that are discussed are error-deduction and criteria-based ones. Error-deduction is where points are deducted for each ‘error’ that is identified in the target text, with the number varying depending on their gravity. Criteria-based systems on the other hand use descriptions of levels of competence. Such systems are discussed as being holistic, as using descriptors, and by other means; the shared characteristic between them is that the target text is assessed by reference to a description of the varying levels of competence displayed in the text. Points can be allocated to each level if needed. Bahameed (2016) investigated the suitability and effectiveness of holistic assessment as opposed to an error-deduction system. Her holistic method contains descriptors for the accuracy of transfer in the target text, and the quality of expression in the target language. She concluded that the holistic method allowed for minor lexical, grammatical or spelling errors, which would have been identified in an error-deduction approach, to be overlooked, which resulted in a high proportion of learners receiving the highest mark available. However, she claimed that substantial textual problems in the target text still constituted a failed result, and this was reflected in the proportionate number of results that were deemed a fail. Bahameed concluded that assessing translation competence via a holistic assessment method was too lenient to provide impartial quality assessment of learners’ texts. Finding quite the opposite, Turner, Lai and Huang (2010) conducted a study that examined two methods of translation assessment used by certification bodies in Australia and the UK, error-deduction and descriptors respectively. Contrary to Bahameed (2016), Turner, Lai and Huang (2010) found a high correlation between assessment outcomes in the two assessment systems, concluding that it would be possible for descriptors to be used instead of the error-deduction system favoured by NAATI. Washbourne (2014a) echoes this call to move away from error-deduction in her study that provides an overview of feedback given to learners on their target texts. She calls for translation feedback to evolve from error-deduction because there is more to translation than avoiding errors. The issue raised by Washbourne (2014a) of what constitutes translation and how it should be best assessed engages with the age old product versus process debate.

Product, process, or both?

Assessment with certification outcomes tends to focus on the translation product, with some certification authorities using error-deduction systems. I discuss NAATI’s testing instrument in more detail in Chapter 3: NAATI Certification, however, suffice to say at the moment that it uses an
error-deduction system to evaluate whether a candidate is eligible for certification. Following a similar system, and referring to the certification system in Finland, Salmi and Kinnunen (2015) detail how errors are graded and weighted. Errors are classified on two scales: content equivalence and acceptability. Similar to NAATI’s marking procedure, there is guidance as to how many points to deduct for particular errors that fall within the two scales. For both the Finnish and the Australian systems, the target text is used as the sole basis of assessment and there is no facility to include procedural aspects of translation within the tools. In the case of the NAATI test, Kim (2009) and Orlando (2012) attempt to include procedural aspects of translation in the assessment procedure they use in an educational context. Kim (2009) stresses that examiners need to “assess how appropriately linguistic resources have been used in the translation” (133), which she identifies as forming part of the translation process. Kim offers systemic-functional linguistics as a way of accommodating NAATI’s error-deduction system while also including the wider context of translation decision-making. Orlando’s (2012) proposal of separate evaluation grids for process- and product-oriented assessment, along with an Integrated Translator’s Diary that captures a learner’s translation process as it relates to a particular text, similarly satisfies NAATI’s requirements as well as including the translation process in the assessment tool.

Whether to assess the product or process alone or whether to integrate the two has been an ongoing debate. In addition to those studies that focus on certification testing, other scholars have contributed to it. Galán-Mañas and Hurtado Albir (2015), while focusing on particular assessment instruments and tasks, stress that any assessment within a translator education program should include both the translation process and the translation product. Echoing a similar call for inclusion of both elements, Kajzer-Wietrzny and Tymczyńska (2015) explored audio-visual translation assessment. They underline the importance of including both the process and the product for translation assessment in the audio-visual field. These authors call for a similar approach to assessment as some scholars examining assessment in the certification realm, where inclusion of both aspects of translation, the product and the process, are advocated for certification assessments that take place in an educational context.

At the core of debate over assessment in a translator education context is a lack of consensus on how best to assess in a learning environment. Debate over whether the product, the process, or both should be assessed leans towards including both. However, how to do this remains unclear. Multiple assessment procedures and tools abound. For those that will have certification outcomes, few have been tested for validity and reliability. Which assessment procedure will be adequate to perform the job? And how will points be allocated to fulfil summative assessment
requirements for translator education programs and for certification authorities? These questions, which have been at the core of debate over translation assessment, remain unresolved.

Moving away from classroom practices and towards translator education curricula, I detail below discussions surrounding the development of translator education programs, and how employability is accommodated in them. The chapter then concludes with debates of how assessment procedures can impact curriculum, as well as having wider socio-political impacts.

**Program Development**

Within discussions of translator education program development, four themes emerge. There is a strand of discussion that surrounds text types. It includes debate over which text types are appropriate for targeted learning and translation strategies, with academic and legal texts being those types that are commonly discussed. Another strand focuses on the role of technologies in curriculum, and includes debate over which to include and when to introduce them; machine translation, and specifically statistical machine translation, along with post-editing are discussed. Another area of discussion covers pedagogy and approaches to learning; these debates maintain a program-wide perspective and are not concerned with classroom events. The final strand concerns employability, and after detailing the three former areas, I place employability in translator education programs within the context of increasing debate of the matter within higher education literature.

Discussion of academic texts I deal with centres on the translation of texts into English. Pisanski Peterlin (2013) and Bennett (2013) comment on English as the Lingua Franca of the academic world. Pisanski Peterlin (2013) claims that learners have a fairly limited awareness of the role of English as a Lingua Franca in academic discourse. She found that learners believed that Standard English was the predominant academic discourse and that deviations were unacceptable. Academics on the other hand, recognised that the English used in academic settings is varied and can be substantially different from Standard English. Examining the role of translators of academic texts further, Bennett (2013) comments on skills that will enhance ethical practice in the domain. She believes that English can dominate opposing epistemologies and ideologies held within non-English speaking cultures, and stresses that a concerted effort within translator education needs to happen so that learners can approach academic texts critically and can receive guidance in their role as intercultural mediators. Each of the authors I encountered who discussed academic texts in the context of translator education highlight that learners would benefit from targeted learning and
teaching in this domain, particularly as they view English as the Lingua Franca of the academic world. They claim that including this text type in the curriculum would be one way of increasing learning in the area.

Discussion of legal texts surrounds the knowledge and tools to be included in curriculum. González-Jover (2011), Rodríguez-Castro and Sullivan (2015) and Ordóñez-López (2015) discuss legal texts and the level of skill and knowledge that learners require to translate this manner of texts. Interestingly, much research that discusses legal translation within an education context originates from Spain. González-Jover (2011) claims that it is impossible for learners of legal translation to attain the knowledge of legal professionals and instead proposes that learners develop tools and strategies that will enable them to identify and locate the knowledge they need. Ordóñez-López (2015) agrees that legal translation does not require the full expertise of a legal professional and calls for a joint effort between law and translation departments to improve understanding of the depth of legal knowledge that would benefit translation learners. González-Jover (2011) stresses that curriculum should be flexible enough to meet the needs of legal translators in a range of situations, highlighting the reality that legal translation is a broad and undefined field. Rodríguez-Castro and Sullivan (2015) use the professional legal translation field as a point of reference when discussing what to include in legal translation courses. Arguing for relevant industry resources and applied tools to be a feature of legal translation curriculum, they claim that by incorporating learning outcomes that are relevant to current industry needs, the course will facilitate a learner’s transition to the labour market. Debate of legal texts in the context of program development calls for curriculum to provide practical learning that will be relevant for professional translators working in this field. At this point, an intersection with employability emerges; however, before exploring this further I finish detailing the remaining strands of program development literature, which are technology and pedagogy.

Technology discussion in the realm of program development generally focuses on machine translation and tools associated with it. Gaspari, Almaghout and Doherty (2015) examine the current prominence of machine translation among practitioners and the way that it is used. They found that almost all of those who use machine translation, which was half of their respondents, use freely available software and customise it to their needs. They claim that their findings can be used to inform curriculum design, which is what they did in a subsequent study. Doherty and Kenny (2014) report on the design, delivery and evaluation of a course centred on statistical machine translation. They found that after completing the course, learners showed significant increases in knowledge of and confidence in using machine translation generally, and statistical machine
translation in particular. They highlighted that technology is constantly evolving and that it is important for learners and educators alike to engage in continual development in the area. Flanagan and Christensen (2014) investigate learner interpretations and perceptions of industry-focused post-editing guidelines and make recommendations for using post-editing in the classroom. They claim that translation technology should be introduced early so that learners have the opportunity to put what they have learnt into practice during learning activities of other courses, rather than isolating technology as a skill in and of itself. Flanagan and Christensen highlight the advantages of including theoretical knowledge of machine translation and of post-editing so that learners are familiar with common machine translation errors, methods of evaluation and quality metrics, proposing a combination of theory and practical applications. Marshman and Bowker (2012) look at technologies within program development in a broader sense. Rather than focusing on particular tools, such as machine translation, they offer a model that embeds technology learning into translator education programs and across all courses. Common among discussions of technology is the belief that flexible ongoing learning that is present across an entire education program is particularly beneficial.

Pedagogy is in the minority of research that I encountered within the realm of program development. It is discussed with a firm grounding in constructivism. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Donald Kiraly is a prominent scholar in the area. His *A social constructivist approach to translator education: empowerment from theory to practice* is well-regarded as among the beginnings of constructivist approaches in translator education. Kiraly has refined the pedagogy over the years and has made a connection between its epistemological and multi-disciplinary roots, and the level of success of the approach on a broad scale across various curricula (Kiraly 2012).

Constructivism, and in particular social-constructivism, has been widely accepted as a useful pedagogy for translator education. Moving beyond debate over its worth, scholars currently debate how it can be enhanced with the addition of other pedagogies, and how it can develop a range of skills in learners. Youlan (2012) uses a Masters program in China as an example of a constructivist model that aims to improve translator competence. She concludes that learners need to be flexible, adaptable and to constantly learn new skills, and that curriculum needs to provide opportunities for innovation. The constructivist model, which includes task-based reading and discussion, skills-based workshops and project-based practice, was considered by Youlan as an effective way of expanding learners’ skills. Connecting gender pedagogies with socio-constructivist translator education, Corrius, De Marco and Espasa (2016) examine learners’ levels of gender awareness in the context of translating audio-visual advertising materials. They conclude that a systematic and wide use of
tailored gender-related activities throughout the curriculum would contribute to enhancing learners’ awareness, reflection and initiative surrounding the social implications of translation, and suggest role plays, class debates and critical essays as possible learning activities.

Looking at program development in the context of various education providers and the impact they have on the professional status of translators, Wakabayashi (2014) considers the benefits and drawbacks of commercial translator training institutions in Japan. These institutions make up the majority of translator education in the country and Wakabayashi claims that such institutions contribute to legitimising translation as a profession, rather than as a vocation that has relied on limited educational qualifications. She believes that commercial institutions complement university programs and argues that there is a need for both, as one is grounded in practice and the other in theory. The professional status of translators has been a continual struggle in the public sphere. Stejskal (2005) reports on the challenges facing professional translators around the world with regard to being recognised as belonging to a profession. Pym et al. (2012) similarly report on this matter but with an EU focus, while Wakabayashi connects translator status with program development in Japan. Much discussion of status revolves around how professional translators can signal their skills within the labour market, which intersects discussion of employability in translator education programs. However, before detailing such discussion, I first outline the debates of employability in a higher education context.

**Employability in Higher Education**

Employability is increasingly becoming a significant element of higher education. Universities are under pressure from governments to contribute to the economy by producing graduates who are workplace-ready (Huang 2013; Tomlinson 2012). There is debate over how exactly to define employability, with definitions representing different stakeholder positions (Pool & Sewell 2007; Sumanasiri, Yajid & Khatibi 2015, p. 85); however, there remain common themes among them. Skills development, career progression and the labour market are three that are central to a variety of definitions. Hillage and Pollard’s (1998) simple description of employability highlights these themes well when they claim that for the individual:

> employability depends on the knowledge, skills and attributes they possess, the way they use those assets and present them to employers and the context (e.g. personal circumstances and labour market environment) within which they seek work.
Skills development is generally discussed in isolation and is not commonly intersected with the other two themes. In contrast, career progression and the labour market are often discussed in relation to each other. Below I discuss skills development before going into more detail of the intersection between career progression and the labour market.

**Skills Development**

Skills development is often discussed within employability debates. Incoherence abounds regarding which skills are considered employability skills (Tymon 2013), with various terms being used to refer to similar conceptualisations. ‘Generic’, ‘professional’ or ‘transferable skills’, ‘attributes’, ‘characteristics’, ‘values’ and ‘competences’ are all used to refer to those skills believed to be desirable by employers and to enhance graduate employability. Regardless of the variety of terms used and the apparent incoherence, there are some skills which are common to many models and frameworks: teamwork, communication and interpersonal skills (Boden & Nedeva 2010; Tymon 2013). These three can therefore be regarded as the core skills to be developed within employability frameworks.

A key debate surrounding skills development centres on whether higher education institutions or employers are the most appropriately placed to develop such skills. On the one hand, national and supra-national bodies such as Graduate Careers Australia, the Higher Education Academy in the UK, the European Higher Education Area, and the OECD maintain that higher education institutions are an appropriate place for learners to develop employability skills. The OECD (2015) recognise that “universities may be reluctant to teach skills aimed specifically at employability, as that may lower their academic standards and objectives” (p. 44), and as an alternative they propose work-based learning as a way of enhancing employability skills. They argue that a strong connection between education and the labour market will improve graduates’ chances of securing employment. Countering this view are scholars who are critical of an approach that advocates for higher education institutions to produce employment-ready graduates. They argue that these ‘soft’ skills are more appropriate for employers to develop, as they are not concerned with academic knowledge (Boden & Nedeva 2010; Starkey & Tempest 2009, pp. 578-81). Sitting somewhere in the middle, Jackson (2014) claims that the divide between academic and employability skills is imaginary, as she found that competence in certain employability skills aids academic development. Discussion surrounding which setting is the most appropriate to develop such skills has not yet reached a consensus; however, the extended dialogue and various positions highlight that employability skills are expected of graduates, be it upon graduation or after an initial
period of employment. Skills development is therefore an important factor for higher education learners and graduates.

**Career Progression and the Labour Market**

Studies concerned with career progression and the labour market often deal with learner perceptions and expectations surrounding how their career will progress over time. Tomlinson (2007) explores the way learners and graduates understand and manage their employability, identifying two dominant learner types, which he terms ‘careerists’ and ‘ritualists’. Careerists place higher value on their careers than other areas of life and it is a central part of their future aspirations. Ritualists on the other hand, take a passive approach to career progression and tend to scale down their work aspirations; work is a means to an end and is not central to organising their future goals (pp. 293-300). Tomlinson concludes that the transition from higher education to the labour market involves an active process for learners. Mann et al. (2013) link young people’s career aspirations with the labour market. Supporting Tomlinson’s call for active career management, they conclude that aspirations are disconnected from the market. Tomlinson’s (2007) study focuses on how learners perceive the graduate labour market, and the extent to which the issue of employability informs their understanding of how they will participate in the market in the future. Huang’s (2013) study delves into the motivations of learners to study abroad, while also exploring how these decisions interacted with future career aspirations. She examined future career planning and approaches to managing employability of Chinese learners at a university in the UK. A key finding was that learners recognise employability as a crucial individual responsibility, although their approaches to managing it differed. The abovementioned studies deal with learner perceptions and expectations surrounding employability. Although they highlight the valuable insights that can be gained from understanding learners’ perceptions of the labour market and their future career development, the studies are limited in their analysis of how employability interacts with learning.

Overall, in the abovementioned research that deals with themes of employability, that is, skills development, career progression and the labour market, a policy perspective is favoured and discussion surrounds how policies can be developed to support employability. Much debate approaches the matter from the point of view that curriculum, along with extra-curricular activities on the part of learners, are ways of increasing employability, with the above examples placing education policy development at the heart of maximising employability’s potential. The data I collected during fieldwork, however, shows benefit in looking at the issue the other way around; emphasising how learning may be impacted by focusing on employability, and maintaining a teaching and learning perspective while considering employability.
I turn now to employability within translator education. I first outline prevailing views of employability in relation to program development, namely that translator education leads to employment as a professional translator, before detailing how translator competence models and NAATI contribute to this view.

**Employability in Translator Education**

As mentioned earlier, employability is discussed in relation to translator education within the context of program development. Similar to work in the higher education arena, there is a focus on how translator education programs can be developed so that they are in line with market demands and can therefore increase graduates’ prospects of gaining employment in the translation industry. Jääskeläinen, Kujamäki and Mäkisalo (2011) reflect a common belief that Translation Studies learners are preparing themselves to become professional translators when they claim that “the aim of translator education is obviously a professional translator... Translator education should prepare graduates to cope with the changes on the translation market” (p. 152 emphasis added). In their analysis of challenges in the translation industry, which draws on Finnish experiences, Jääskeläinen, Kujamäki and Mäkisalo stress the need for translator education to address developments of the translation market so that learners are well equipped to practice in the field. Schäffner (2012) refers to translator education in the UK and the EMT Translator Competence model to discuss how to prepare graduates for the real world and proposes a course on the translation profession that is designed with input by, and close connections with, industry. She believes that graduates will be well prepared for professional translation work by aligning the course’s content with current market demands. Taking a similar view, and also drawing on EU experiences, Gaspari, Almaghout and Doherty (2015) examine current requirements, needs and expectations of the translation industry in relation to translator education. Focusing on machine translation, they found that almost half of their respondents used the technology during professional practice. They stress that “the impact that familiarity with translation technology has on the employability of translation students cannot be underestimated” (p. 351) and call for translator education programs to make a place for technology in the curriculum. Flanagan and Christensen (2014), using a Danish education program as an example, also advocate for technology to be a prominent feature of translator education programs so that learners develop a range of skills that will improve their employability. Torres-Hostench (2012) investigates how prepared Spanish graduates are for employment. She found that market knowledge is not the only factor to consider when looking for work as a translator and highlights that learners need to develop and to find the right balance between skills, attitudes and knowledge so that they can improve their chances of finding work. Youlan (2012) similarly calls
for curriculum to facilitate learners being flexible, adaptable and constantly learning new skills. Torres-Hostench (2012), and Youlan (2012), are among the few that I encountered that recognise the value in developing skills that can be used in various fields. The possibilities of where translation graduates could find employment outside the translation industry have not yet been considered in depth, and as such, literature that includes these possibilities in the context of translator education program development is limited. Engagement with broader debates around employability and the nature of graduate employment opportunities would benefit translator education research. Translator competence models have provided a firm basis for research that addresses employability within translator education, which may account for the focus on graduates entering the translation market. The models outline the various skills and attitudes required for work in the translation industry and are being increasingly used to guide curriculum design of translator education programs.

**Translator Competence Models**

Translator competence models are used as a way to accommodate employability in translator education programs. Curriculum is designed to target hard and soft skill development that is demanded by the translation labour market. Translation agencies, employers and other organisations that contract translation services are vocal about the skills they expect from graduates. Competence models have been developed as an attempt to map out these skills, with some intended for use in curriculum design (see Kelly (2005) and EMT Expert Group (2009) for such examples).

The PACTE Group from Spain has carried out empirical-experimental research that investigates professional translator competence, and the acquisition of such competence in trainee translators. Results to date have produced a holistic model of translator competence that has been validated from an empirical-experimental perspective (PACTE 2011, p. 32). The model consists of 5 sub-competences, as well as psycho-physiological components, which are defined as follows:

- **Bilingual sub-competence.** Predominantly procedural knowledge required to communicate in two languages. It comprises pragmatic, socio-linguistic, textual, grammatical and lexical knowledge.

- **Extra-linguistic sub-competence.** Predominantly declarative knowledge, both implicit and explicit. It comprises general world knowledge, domain-specific knowledge, bicultural and encyclopaedic knowledge.

- **Knowledge about translation.** Predominantly declarative knowledge, both implicit and explicit, about translation and aspects of the profession. It comprises knowledge about how translation functions and knowledge about professional translation practice.
• **Instrumental sub-competence.** Predominantly procedural knowledge related to the use of documentation resources and information and communication technologies applied to translation (dictionaries of all kinds, encyclopaedias, grammars, style books, parallel texts, electronic corpora, search engines, etc.).

• **Strategic sub-competence.** Procedural knowledge to guarantee the efficiency of the translation process and solve problems encountered. This sub-competence serves to control the translation process. Its function is to plan the process and carry out the translation project selecting the most appropriate method; evaluate the process and the partial results obtained in relation to the final purpose; activate the different sub-competences and compensate for any shortcomings; and identify translation problems and apply procedures to solve them.

• **Psycho-physiological components.** Different types of cognitive and attitudinal components and psychomotor mechanisms, including cognitive components such as memory, perception, attention and emotion; attitudinal aspects such as intellectual curiosity, perseverance, rigour, the ability to think critically, etc.; abilities such as creativity, logical reasoning, analysis and synthesis, etc. (PACTE 2011, p. 33).

Working from the first model presented by the PACTE Group, Kelly (2005), developed a competence model that can be used to assist with translation program design. The focus of Kelly’s model is to offer practical ways in which education programs can be structured so that they impart translation competence to learners. Kelly argues for the inclusion of the following competences in translation programs:

- Language competence
- Cultural competence
- Instrumental competence
- Professionalization
- Interpersonal competence
- Subject area competence
- Attitudinal competence
- Unitization/networking (Kelly 2005, pp. 73-7).

Although her model resembles the PACTE model in many ways, she has explicitly added interpersonal competence. She claims that interpersonal competence is important, as teamwork is a generic skill desired by employers and is increasingly required to carry-out translation work (Kelly 2005, p. 76). Kelly’s inclusion of interpersonal competence highlights market requirements for graduate translators, and stresses the vocational inclination of her model as opposed to that produced by the PACTE Group.

The EMT competence model is developed from the perspective of education provision; however, maintains market needs in the foreground. The group stresses that the model is a
reference framework that “is concerned with the ends (the competences) but in no way prejudges the means (resources, programs, teaching)” (EMT Expert Group 2009, p. 3). Nevertheless, the model presents a very detailed account, with translator competence broken down into six competences:

- Translation service provision
- Intercultural
- Language
- Thematic
- Technological
- Information mining.

In spite of each of the three models described above presenting translator competence in its own distinct manner, and there being no universal model nor agreement on specifics, common core elements are present among them. Each claims that translator competence incorporates both technical skills involved in translation and generic skills that can be transferred to and from other contexts. Falling under these two general categories, common elements of the frameworks developed by PACTE, EMT and Kelly are: linguistic competence, terminology management, research skills and collaboration.

European translator education programs are largely influenced by competence models, as competence-based curriculum is promoted by the European Higher Education Area. Przemysław and Magdalena (2009) summarise the purpose of competence-based curriculum well when they claim that it ‘is aimed at developing an employee according to the labour market’s demand’ (p. 333). Following this understanding of program development, competence models have become the basis for curriculum design in an unquestioning manner. Within translator education, translator competence models have been developed with the hope of informing competence-based curriculum. Although various models exist, the one developed by the EMT project is a good example of how curriculum design is aligned with market demands through the use of a competence model. The EMT Project developed a translator competence model that institutions can use when designing their curriculum. As such, the model is used as a tool for harmonising learning objectives across multiple Master programs. Each program that uses the EMT model is able to use the EMT trademark, which is one of the main advantages of belonging to the network. A large number of universities have signalled their desire to be part of the network, with, at the time of writing, 62 European programs having taken up membership and subsequently using the EMT competence model to inform their curricula. For undergraduate translation programs that fall outside the scope of the EMT Project, competence-based curriculum design continues to draw on competence models for its execution (Albir 2007).
Member institutions of the EMT network are obliged to design their programs in accordance with the EMT translator competence model. The contents of the model do not significantly differ to other models and include inter-, intra- and extra-textual elements. Where the EMT model diverges from others however relates to its purpose. It was developed with the aim of training future translators for EU institutions, whereas other models, such as those developed by PACTE (2008) and Kelly (2005), have a broader intention of understanding translator competence and informing translator education without a specific employer in mind. The wide popularity of the EMT project, along with the increasing use of competence-based learning under the Bologna Process however, highlight the growing influence of employability within translator education programs in Europe.

NAATI

Across the globe in Australia, employability remains evident in translator education programs, with many programs being endorsed by NAATI. The entry-level requirement for professional translators is NAATI ‘Professional’ certification. This is notoriously difficult to attain, but there will be few job prospects without it. NAATI does not release official figures pertaining to the pass rate of its certification tests; however it is unofficially said to be approximately 20 to 25 per cent across all languages for Professional Translator certification. A method of increasing one’s chances of passing the test is to undertake a program of study within which the test is integrated. Learners can learn translation strategies and other relevant skills, while also receiving guidance on the requirements of the NAATI test and which strategies are appropriate to the test’s context. For people who undertake the test as part of a NAATI-approved program, the pass rate is said to increase to approximately 40 per cent across all languages and forms of credentials. Having the option to undertake certification testing within an education program, along with the number of credentials that are awarded in this way – 64 per cent during the 2013/14 financial year (NAATI 2014) – indicates that undertaking the NAATI test within a NAATI-approved program is not only popular, but is likely to increase one’s chances of attaining certification. The integration of the test into a program of study, and that NAATI certification is the entry level requirement for professional work as a translator, means that employability is at the forefront of translator education programs in Australia.

Few studies examine learning impacts of employability in translator education programs; however, Chouc & Calvo’s (2010) research is one example where it is considered. They discuss the advantages and disadvantages of incorporating employability skills development into existing courses, and of offering an elective course that covers industry-specific and alternative industry
careers advice. They caution that a stand-alone course may have less learning impact than incorporating employability into existing courses. Similar to debates in higher education research, studies concerned with employability in translator education maintain the perspective that learners are preparing themselves for careers as professional translators. However, among career development literature, there is a body of work that considers careers as non-linear. Robert Pryor and Jim Bright’s collection of work from 2003 to the present outlines what they term a Chaos Theory of Careers. They argue that by working within a career development framework, their theory captures inter-connection, change and chance, which are at the heart of human existence and other chaos theory applications. Below I outline the fundamentals of their approach and how it applies to career development for learners of translator education programs.

**Chaotic Careers**

Understandings of career development have changed considerably over the decades. What was once understood to be a linear process is now discussed in terms of its chaotic characteristics. Previously, around the time of the world wars, career development was thought of in terms of matching one’s personal characteristics with an occupation. It was thought that an awareness of one’s personal characteristics, along with knowledge of various occupations, would inform decision making around which occupation would be most suitable. Progressing from this, and following the world wars, the idea of an occupation was replaced with an understanding of career. A career was said to have stages and one progressed through from one to the other in a sequential order. A prominent scholar in the area, Super (1953) defined these stages as: growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance and decline. Conquering the stages was equal to succeeding in one’s career. However, these understandings of careers were not adequate to deal with the impact of globalisation and the instability it brought with it. As the world has become progressively more globalised, career development has “shift[ed] away from stability, order, uniformity, and equilibrium towards a new order of instability, disorder, disequilibrium, and non-linear relationships” (Amundson 2003, p. 91). Career decision making has begun to be understood as less rational and uncontrolled, which allows for greater flexibility so that unplanned events can be accounted for. Previous ideas of career development have been questioned for their inability to accommodate instability and change. Careers are now recognised as containing an element of chaos and being far from linear (Bloch 2005; Peake & McDowall 2012; Pryor & Bright 2011).

The idea of chaotic careers provides a realistic picture of the decision-making involved in career development. Research that addresses employability in translator education tends to be based on traditional understandings of career development. That is, they discuss careers as a linear
process, which are constituted by stages that individuals will progress through. Fieldwork revealed that translator education research would benefit from engaging with literature that deals with chaotic careers, as career pathways of translation learners is likely to be chaotic.

Preparing learners for a career in the translation field in Australia cannot be discussed without consideration of NAATI. And given that NAATI involves a high-stakes test, which is integrated into translator education programs, any potential effects of the testing procedure may also merit attention. There exists a body of literature within language testing research that examines such issues. It is to this body of work that I now turn, as it investigates the ways in which tests can impact teaching and learning, and any wider socio-political impacts.

### Washback, Consequences and Impact of Testing

There is an expanding body of research that looks at the intersection of teaching, learning and testing. Three terms are commonly used to cover this intersection, which are consequences, washback and impact. Washback is a term generally used within applied linguistics. It refers to the flow-on, or flow-back effects that tests can have on the teaching and learning process. Washback focuses on experiences within the classroom. Consequences and impact on the other hand cover those experiences that are situated outside the classroom. They are used to discuss the wider context of testing, and although they appear to cover quite similar events, there is a clear distinction between the two. The distinction relates to the field and audience the literature is aiming to engage with. Discussion of consequences generally engages with language testers and a body of work that examines the soundness of a test, or test validity. Discussion of impact on the other hand is concerned with the socio-political impacts of tests and aims to engage with society. Debate surrounding washback, consequences and impact tends to focus on high-stakes tests, although some research has begun to look at minor tests in recent years.

Washback provides the immediate foreground within which testing happens. Cheng, Sun and Ma (2015) refer to this as the micro-level and they claim that research in the area focuses on how tests change or improve teaching and learning in the classroom, often asking the question “can we design new, alternative, or innovative testing to drive teaching and learning?” (p. 438). Generally, debate of washback covers how teaching and learning is affected in the classroom by the presence of tests, and in particular high-stakes tests. Testing consequences and impact on the other hand, provide a background upon which testing takes place. They refer to the wider context, or as Cheng, Sun and Ma (2015) call it, the macro-level. Cheng, Sun and Ma (2015) note that macro-level
research embraces studies that extend beyond the classroom, and that include stakeholders such as learners, educators, administrators, policy-makers, and others affected by or involved in test design, implementation and use. In this way, consequential and impact research explores the rippling effects that testing can have on policy and wider society.

Taking note of who the body of work is engaging with is pivotal to distinguishing the differences between consequences and impact research. While impact research engages with wider society, consequential research is usually situated within a wider debate of test validity. Cheng, Sun and Ma (2015) note that it is the educational measurement field that generally focuses on validity, with a special interest in consequential validity. James Brown (1999) notes that the key feature of validity is “the degree to which a test measures what it claims, or purports to be measuring” (p. 231). When broken down into various elements, those that are commonly referenced in Translation Studies literature are content validity, criterion validity and construct validity (Angelelli & Jacobson 2009; Vermeiren, Van Gucht & De Bontridder 2009). Content validity refers to the content of the assessment procedure being appropriate to its purpose. Criterion validity ensures that there is a clear point where a pass or fail is set (American Psychological Association 1985, p. 90), and construct validity measures that the assessment procedure is aligned with the relevant professional standards and/or relevant curriculum (Vermeiren, Van Gucht & De Bontridder 2009, p. 303). Consequential validity has not yet been studied in depth within Translation Studies; however, discussion within educational measurement highlights it as a key concept when dealing with high-stakes tests such as that used by NAATI. As mentioned in the Introduction, and will be elaborated on in Chapter 3: NAATI Certification, the NAATI test is high-stakes. Successful completion being a requirement and industry standard to enter the professional translation market in Australia contributes significantly to it being high-stakes. Adding to its high-stakes is that it is notoriously difficult to pass and requires a large financial investment to attempt the test. This is particularly the case for international students, who make up the vast majority of enrolments in NAATI-approved translator education programs in Australia. Educational measurement experts have developed a deep understanding of the complexities of consequential validity. Cheng, Sun and Ma (2015) stress that consequential validity deals with the after-effects that tests have on learners, educators, policy makers, administrators and other stakeholders affected by or involved in test design, implementation and use (p. 438). A key debate regarding test consequences is whether they should be investigated as a part of validity, and if so, what their role is within test validation. Research into consequences is therefore specifically engaging with test developers and not with wider society.
In contrast, research that discusses test impact addresses socio-political agendas that are concealed within testing. Elana Shohamy is a prominent scholar in the area of impact research. She claims that tests are used as tools of power and control, and gives the examples of language tests for citizenship in the EU, monolingual academic tests for immigrants in Israel and the US, and international comparative tests used around the world (see Shohamy 2001, 2006, 2013). Madaus (1988), also examining testing in the US, made similar observations when he claimed that high-stakes tests “transfer control over the curriculum to the agency which sets or controls the exam” (p. 98). Shohamy (2013) argues that tests are used as a vehicle for shaping and affecting language policies, and for perpetuating national, global and transnational identities. She highlights that multilingualism is overlooked and that high-stakes tests become major devices to “delegitimise multilingualism and to perpetuate monolingualism in national languages for the sake of national and collective identity” (p. 232). Given that NAATI exists so that speakers of languages other than English can communicate in a monolingual culture within Australia, Shohamy’s work is of interest when considering test impact of NAATI’s testing instrument. While Shohamy focuses on governments and central agencies using tests for political manoeuvrings, and calls for tests to be designed in ways that can combat this, Chalhoub-Deville (2009), who examined the No Child Left Behind policy in the US, advocates for a more complex understanding of impact so that government-initiated educational reform can be more reasoned. Research into test impact is therefore attempting to engage with wider society on a socio-political level.

Within translator education debates, washback and consequences are mentioned only fleetingly by some scholars. Angelelli (2009), in her discussion of rubrics as a way of assessing translation competence for certification purposes, notes that “All tests have consequences. In the case of certification tests or any other high stake test, the consequences for test takers are even more important” (p. 44). Elder, Knoch and Kim (2016) mention washback in their report that explores options and issues of incorporating an English proficiency screening test into the NAATI test. They highlight that negative test washback can manifest in the way of preparing fruitlessly for a test and that attempts should be made to limit it. Wang (2016) mentions washback effects of national certification examinations on university teaching programs in China. Interestingly, each one of these studies mentions washback or consequences in the context of certification testing, which highlights its relevance to translator education that is connected to certification. There is, however, inadequate discussion of specific washback experiences and test consequences, and how these may be present in translator education programs. What is more, the socio-political impacts of translation tests are notably absent from any debate in this realm. An engagement with an already large body of literature that examines washback, consequences and impact in the context of language testing,
which I drew on to introduce these concepts earlier in this section, provides a solid basis for exploring these phenomena within translator education.

Discussion of washback, consequences and impact is often in terms of them being positive or negative. In her study that discusses how consequences are included in validity research, Chalhoub-Deville (2015) highlights that testing consequences can be intended, unintended, positive or negative. Hawkey (2013) agrees with this and argues that impact is inclusive of both positive and negative effects. Many studies that explore washback, consequences and impact argue that these effects can be experienced by educators and learners, and can be beneficial (positive) or harmful (negative). However, defining effects and experiences in such a way is limiting. Polarising effects as being either positive or negative, and that these effects can be experienced by learners and educators simplifies discussion of what is a complex social phenomenon. What may be a positive learning experience for one may not be for another. Or the same experience may be positive for a learner and negative for an educator, or any other such combination. An open and inclusive approach to understanding how washback, consequences and impact occur in relation to testing can allow for a deeper understanding of the complex interactions between the various stakeholders involved in testing, and between the stakeholders and the test itself. I therefore discuss the intersection between teaching, learning and testing in this thesis in terms of ways that it can impact the way learners learn and the way educators educate.
Chapter 2: Translator Education in Spain and Australia: a brief history

Introduction

Translator education in Spain and Australia operate in their own unique societal and higher education contexts. Economic pressures and an increase in global mobility of people in the world, along with drastic changes to higher education in the past decade, paint a vivid background upon which translator education is placed in each location. Education provision in Spain has undergone massive development in recent years. And although for different reasons, the Australian higher education sector has equally undergone large-scale changes to the way education is provided. In this chapter, I begin with a brief history of higher education and translator education in Spain, and then outline the country’s economic situation at the time of fieldwork. I then cover a brief history of the internationalised characteristics of higher education in Australia, and how an internationalised education system affects translator education programs in the county.

Spain

Higher education over time

Modern higher education in Spain can be considered as having gone through three phases: the French-Napoleon model, democratisation, and the Bologna Process. The French-Napoleon model of higher education persisted in Spain for the most part of the 20th Century, until soon after Franco’s dictatorship came to an end. The democratisation phase followed and was an attempt to move away from a centralised, State-controlled system. The creation of the European Higher Education Area and the roll-out of the Bologna Process marked the beginnings of the phase the Spanish higher education system is currently in (Calvo Encinas 2009, pp. 127-44). I detail each of these three phases below to provide an understanding of the context of Spanish higher education.

The French-Napoleon model of university is extremely centralised and legislated, which set the tone for higher education delivery in Spain. It follows a strong transmissionist pedagogy where the teacher is the authority in the class and learners are expected to receive knowledge. Before the Spanish Civil War, there was an attempt to move from this pedagogy towards one that reflected
student-centred learning principles. The move was supported by an educational project that ran from 1876-1936 called the *Institución Libre de Enseñanza*; however, it was abandoned when Franco came into power. In 1970, a return to the French-Napoleon centralised model of education was formalised in law and remained in place until soon after Franco’s death in 1975. The pedagogy used was once again transmissionist (Calvo Encinas 2009; Cano 2014).

Beginning in 1983 with the *Ley de Reforma Universitaria*, the democratisation phase was characterised by a decentralisation of the education system and an attempt to connect it with society and the labour market. The universities became autonomous, although detailed laws regarding the curriculum were maintained. Responsibility was passed from the national government to regional governments and power was shared between the three entities. A private sector emerged and there was a shift from an elite system to one of massification (Calvo Encinas 2009). Although there was some attempt to modernise the teaching methods, for the most part the pedagogy remained the same and was grounded in lectures and end of term examinations (Cano 2014).

2001 marked the official involvement of Spain in the Bologna Process (General Directorate of Universitites 2003). The country joined the European Higher Education Area and a concerted effort was made to improve education and research quality and to promote mobility throughout Europe. Responsibility became shared between the university, the national and the regional governments, and curriculum was progressively moved to a competence-based approach. The uptake of recommendations made by the European Higher Education Area has been staggered over the years. In 2003, the European Credit Transfer System was introduced and the law relating to its introduction, a Royal Decree, stipulated that all higher education programs be adapted to the credit system before October 2010 (González Geraldo et al. 2010). At the time of writing, all degrees in Spain had been converted to the new credit system and follow the three-cycle education structure of the Bologna Process: *grado*, *posgrado* and *doctorado*, or degree, postgraduate, and doctorate. The Royal Decree related to the credit system additionally states that a degree should have between 180 and 240 credits, and that 70 per cent of these are to be established through general, government-approved guidelines (González Geraldo et al. 2010). The *plan de estudios*, which is a comprehensive curriculum document that has been government-approved, sets out which units of study fulfil the compulsory learning requirements, and which have been selected at the university’s discretion. Having to adhere to government-approved guidelines ensures a level of homogeny across all degrees of any one area of study. Student-centred learning was another requirement of degrees that adhered to the credit system, and theoretically higher education in Spain has adopted
the approach. Unfortunately the reality is often far from student-centred. And changes in the Spanish education system have to be implemented without any additional government funding, which had led to administrative and bureaucratic issues, as well as training deficits among educators and inappropriate university facilities (Rabadán Rubio et al. 2013).

**Translator education over time**

Translator education in Spain emerged from Language Institutes. The former Institutes were transformed into *Escuelas Universitarias de Traductores e Intérpretes* (Translation and Interpreting University Schools – EUTIs). The first three schools were formed in the late 1970s and were the Universidad de Granada, the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, and the Universidad de las Palmas de Gran Canaria. The Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona specialised in Catalan as a first language, whereas the other two specialised in Spanish. The T&I schools across the country were transformed into T&I faculties within universities in the early 1990s.

Along with the creation of T&I faculties, the former three-year diplomas became four-year degrees, or *licenciaturas*. These were the degrees that were offered prior to the Bologna Process and prior to a commitment being made to the European Higher Education Area. *Licenciaturas* were developed by the Ministry for Education and Science, as it was known at the time. In 2010, the *licenciaturas* were replaced by the new *grados*, which complied with the ECTS and other recommendations made under the Bologna Process. All universities offering the new degree were obliged to include core content, as set out in the relevant *plan de estudios*. The core content was required to correspond to 35 per cent of the total credits for the degree, although in many cases the entire curriculum was largely guided by these core areas (Mayoral Asensio 2007, p. 80). Learners graduating in 2013 were the first to complete the new *grado*.

In 2007, the national government, through a Royal Decree, gave more power to individual institutions to design their own curricula. This amount of autonomy was more than had ever been granted and curriculum design was guided by the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), which was legally binding. The National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA) was given the task of ensuring that there was consistency among the various institutions offering degrees. So although institutions could design their own curricula, it still had to be consistent with other institutions.

In the case of T&I programs, there was a collaboration between institutions and industry to decide what should be included in such degrees. All universities that offered T&I degrees, along with
a number of professional associations, joined a committee and created the *White Paper for Translation and Interpreting Programmes* (ANECA 2004). The paper made recommendations concerning the:

- professional profile of graduates,
- generic competences,
- specific competences, and
- recommended core curricular content.

The professional profile covered what the labour market required of graduates in terms of the various T&I-related professions. The generic and specific competences drew from the *Tuning Project*, which recommended transferable skills that should be included in programs in order to increase employability; whereas specific competences were those technical skills that were particularly relevant to T&I. Recommendations for core curricular content deal with the proportion of a program’s credit load that should be common across all programs in the country, and the proportion that should be left up to the individual institutions to offer. The *White Paper* was then used as the basis for curriculum design, in conjunction with the *Tuning Project* recommendations.

Two of the core features of the Bologna Process are that programs follow a student-centred approach to learning, and that employability is embedded into the curriculum. Although student-centred learning is a relatively new approach for many programs in Spain, T&I programs throughout the country have used it in some form for an extended period. Cano (2014) highlights that

> la formación por competencias y resultados de aprendizaje ha sido la metodología docente utilizada en muchos de los centros de formación de traductores, por lo que el cambio acarreado por la implantación de los nuevos grados y de los créditos ECTS no ha sido tan radical para la titulación de TI como ha podido resultar para otras titulaciones más centradas en el enfoque puramente teórico y en el que existía un enfoque transmisionista del profesor al estudiante y no un enfoque centrado en el estudiante, en el que este desarrolla un papel activo a lo largo de todo el proceso educativo$^2$ (p. 28).

And as Rico (2010) notes, the *Universidad Europea de Madrid* already followed this approach, “relying on student-centred methodologies, fostering students’ acquisition of industry relevant "

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$^2$ Competence-based training that includes learning outcomes has been the favoured teaching and learning methodology in many translator training centres. As such, changes associated with the new degrees and the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) have not been as dramatic for T&I degrees as they have been for others. Degrees with a theoretical focus and using transmissionist methods that were teacher- rather than student-centred, and that didn’t put the student in an active role throughout the whole educational process, have had more significant changes to address (*translation is my own*).
professional competences or incorporating placements and final dissertations as part of the syllabus” (p. 97).

In spite of the exposure T&I programs have had to student-centred learning, it remains problematic in practice. Learners are unaccustomed to the methodology, as they have completed their prior education in a transmissionist environment, without having an active role in their learning. Educators, on the other hand, are under-resourced and are working with facilities that may not support student-centred learning practices in the classroom. Additionally, in the case that a new educator is unaccustomed to the approach, they have little support and resources to engage in professional development training or mentoring so that they can develop their practices in line with student-centred principles (Calvo Encinas 2009; Cano 2014; Mayoral Asensio 2007; Rico 2010).

The Effect of Economic Crisis

The economic crisis that Spain was experiencing at the time of my fieldwork during 2013-14 significantly affected the education experience of learners and educators alike. The government was making aggressive funding cuts to education, while countrywide strikes and demonstrations were staged in protest. Universities had to deliver education programs with limited resources and diminishing funding, and learners were expected to pay increased fees and support themselves with reduced or cancelled scholarships. The effects of the crisis were visible in daily life and added another layer to the context of education provision in Spain at the time.

The region of Spain where fieldwork took place was particularly affected by the crisis. Education and employment prospects were extremely poor for young people. In February of 2014, 57.7 per cent of young people across Spain were without work (Ham 2014, p. 18), whereas the region of focus experienced 66.1 per cent youth unemployment (‘España a la cabeza de Europa... en desempleo’ 2014). Young people were left with limited options and cases of ninis were on the increase. A nini is the Spanish term used to refer to someone who neither works nor studies. Without employment prospects and with education costs increasing, the number of ninis increased within the region.

Public demonstrations protesting the cost of education and the high levels of unemployment were a common occurrence during 2013 and 2014. There were street protests against the aggressive funding cuts and legislative changes made by the government, and education strikes throughout the country were reported in the media on a daily basis. Semester 1 of 2014 was cited as the semester with the highest number of demonstrations in support of education (Díaz Guitérrez
A nationwide strike was held in 2014 and educators, learners, their families and the general public participated in high numbers (‘Hoy huelga general de la enseñanza contra la LOMCE’ 2013). Classes of all levels of education were cancelled as marches and demonstrations took place across the country.

Funding cuts affected universities and learners alike. Universities lost funding from direct cuts by the government, as well as by indirect cuts to scholarships. The number of scholarships offered to tertiary learners, along with the stipend granted, was reduced dramatically. The reduced scholarships meant that fewer learners were able to study. A flow-on effect of this was that universities raised less revenue through program fees. One particular scholarship that was abruptly cut, and then reinstated after widespread protest, was for enrolment costs. The delay between announcing the cuts and then reinstating the scholarships meant that universities asked learners to either pay the outstanding fees or withdraw from their studies. This all happened with a month remaining of the academic semester, which resulted in learners who were unable to access funds from elsewhere being forced to withdraw. Universities were left with a cash-flow problem, and learners were unable to receive credits for the work they completed before withdrawing. The debt incurred by affected learners had to be repaid before they could continue with their studies (Martín Duque 2014), and any courses they withdrew from had to be repeated.

Cancellation, reduction and other changes to scholarships had an indirect effect on the profile of learners who were studying. As fees increased and scholarships were more competitive, learners who did not have the financial support of scholarships or their families were unable to continue or begin studying. By way of example, in 2014, there was a cut to scholarships for learners participating in an Erasmus exchange program. The Minister for Education changed the eligibility criteria, making the scholarships more competitive. However, the changes were retrospective and applied to those learners already living and studying abroad. Although the Minister later revoked the changes due to international pressure, the impact would have been immense. Many learners had elected to participate in exchange programs primarily because the scholarship was available. Parents without work or with limited incomes were not able to support their children to live at home while studying as they had done in the past. While some learners withdrew from their studies for these reasons, the Erasmus program was an alternative option. Learners who received the government-funded scholarship could cover minimal living expenses while studying abroad, alleviating financial pressures on the family home. The government announced the cuts mid-way through the semester, meaning that large numbers of learners would have had to return to Spain without receiving credit for the studies they were undertaking. They would also have had to wait
until the next semester started in Spain to be able to resume their studies if financially possible (Wert ratifica el recorte de las becas Erasmus 2013). This example highlights the precarious nature of education and government-funded scholarships at a time of economic crisis in Spain. With instability at this level, learners without economic resources were unable to study successfully. Those that could study formed an elite section of society, as the number of families able to financially support learners diminished.

The value of education was decreasing during the time of fieldwork. There were not enough skilled jobs for those with qualifications, and many people with university degrees were either left without work or were looking to the service sector instead; work in bakeries or supermarkets appeared to be the only constant. News reports covered young people saying that it makes no sense to study now because having qualifications will not dramatically improve their chances of finding employment.

High unemployment and lack of opportunity in Spain caused young people to leave the country in large numbers. Language skills were key to whether individuals were able to take advantage of this option. The lecturer at UniEspaña made reference in class that there was a lot of work for translators from Spanish into other languages to cater for the emigration that is taking place from Spain. Many of the learners I spoke with commented that they wanted to leave Spain when they finished their degrees; lack of employment opportunities in Spain was the main motivator. Young people living in Spain without foreign languages had a distinct disadvantage when looking for work, as tourism was commonly where work was found.

Australia

Higher Education in Australia at the time of conducting this research in 2014 was characterised in quite different terms. The economic crisis experienced by Spain was referred to as a Global Economic Crisis; however, Australia was in many respects protected from it. The effects on the Australian economy were significantly less and economic growth was greater than in other countries (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2010, p. 687). The unemployment rate rose, although not surpassing 10 per cent for the general population and approximately 20 per cent for young people (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2015; Trading Economics 2016). Higher education provision had undergone dramatic changes to how it was delivered in the few decades beforehand, but for the most part, curriculum and learning methodologies were in a significantly more stable state than those in Spain.
International Higher Education

International education is a key characteristic of Australian higher education. It is an aspect that makes education offered in Australia quite different to that in Spain and continental Europe. Overseas enrolments have been a feature of the system for an extended time, although the number of enrolments and the way in which they have contributed to characterising the sector has undergone changes over the decades. During conversations with educators during fieldwork in Spain, several people expressed surprise at the high proportion of international students that were enrolled in translator education programs, which amounts to approximately ninety-five per cent of all enrolments, as they were unaware of the international flavour that higher education in Australia has. To explain why this is, and to provide an understanding of the role international students play in such programs, I give an overview of how overseas enrolments have affected higher education in Australia since the 1950s, and then discuss translator education programs specifically. The steady increase of international students participating in higher education in Australia is intertwined with a shift from an elite education system that used a teacher-centred approach to learning, to one that implemented student-centred learning in a mass education model. As I covered the changes in approaches to learning in Chapter 1, in this section, I focus on the broader changes made the education system.

International higher education in Australia can be thought of as going through three stages: aid, trade and internationalisation (Adams, Banks & Olsen 2011, p. 12; De Wit & Adams 2010, p. 219; Gallagher 2011). The aid phase began with the Colombo Plan in the early 1950s and carried on until potential for international education was recognised as an exportable trade and capitalised on. The trade phase carried on through the 1980s and 1990s until government policies regulated the industry more stringently and education institutions engaged in high-scale marketing of their services. Internationalisation is commonly used to describe the stage of higher education we are currently in. I detail each of these stages below, before describing how translator education in Australia acts as a connector between internationalised education and migration.

International Education as Aid

The Colombo Plan began in the early 1950s and allowed international students from South East Asia to complete a degree program in Australia. The international student program was just one element of a wider aid objective, and was considered a vital element in establishing and strengthening inter-dependence between Australia and the wider region. International student places in Australian universities were subsidised by the Australian government and attracted an elite
group of learners from Malaysia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Singapore. The international
elite completing their higher education in Australia reflected an Australian elite that were
participating in higher education overseas. Australian universities were not yet offering doctoral
programs and until they began in 1948, it was common for Australians to complete such programs in
the UK or USA. Sending Australian learners overseas and receiving overseas learners was seen as an
opportunity to combat racist sentiment following World War II, although its success in this regard
remains a contested issue (Group of Eight 2013, p. 9; Marginson 2002; Meadows 2011).

**International Education as Trade**

The trade phase saw a large expansion of education programs available for international
students. The period was characterised by Australian education being recognised as having large
export potential. The expansion of higher education to international students followed
developments towards a mass higher education system for Australians. The Government invested
heavily in public education and new universities were established. Beginning in the 1970s, higher
education was fully subsidised by the Government and was free for Australian citizens. Australian
government-subsidised places for international students were continued; however, a quota was put
in place. In addition to this quota, an increased amount of places were made available to
international students who could afford to pay for their education by their own means. These
learners could enrol in Australian universities regardless of their country of origin. The change in
policy marked a shift away from viewing education as an aid resource and to seeing it as a tradable
service (Gallagher 2011, p. 119; Marginson 2002).

**Internationalised Education**

After a large influx of learners during the 1990s, education has been increasingly discussed
about under the umbrella term ‘internationalisation’. It evokes a particular image of international
education, which aims to prepare learners, be they local or from overseas, to live and work in an
international society as international citizens. Cross-cultural exchange, transnational research
collaborations, internationalised curricula and a link between education and migration characterise
the way in which education has become internationalised in Australia.

Funding cuts in the mid-1990s to all universities contributed to an increased reliance on
international student enrolments. Given that government policy allowed for full-fee places to be
offered to international students, increasing the number of enrolments was an easy solution to raise
revenue lost from funding cuts. Education agents were established overseas to represent individual
universitites and groups of institutions. The Australian Government invested heavily in establishing
a brand for Australian education with the aim of increasing trade in the area. This brand, along with other innovative marketing strategies used by individual institutions, led to Australia’s international education thriving from the turn of the new millennium (Forbes et al. 2011).

During the internationalisation phase, universities have had to adjust to an increase in overseas enrolments in a number of ways. Integration between local and international students has been an ongoing challenge that remains unsolved in a satisfactory way. Curricula have been adjusted so that international students, who may have less profound understandings of Australian governments, institutions, policy and society, are not disadvantaged. While at the same time, Australian learners have been exposed to systems, processes and practices in other parts of the globe through sharing learning spaces with international students. Difficulties have emerged surrounding international students who have come from education systems that do not use student-centred learning. It is an ongoing challenge for universities to engage all learners in the methodology, in spite of its prevalence over a number of decades (Collier 1985; Forbes et al. 2011).

**International Education and Migration**

International students have increasingly played an important part in shaping migration patterns to Australia. The Australian Government’s trade and humanitarian policies, which have emphasised skilled migration in recent decades, have influenced the number and country of origin of international students studying in the country (Hawthorne 2014). Asia has provided the biggest market for Australian education exports over an extended time. Learners from this region began to dominate inflow from the 1980s (Shu & Hawthorne 1996, p. 65), and in 2013 accounted for over 75 per cent of international students. While international student numbers have steadily increased from around 2005, the period between 2011 and 2014 saw the trend at first slow down, then reverse (Australian Trade and Investment Commission 2016). Looking at migration policy changes that occurred at this time offers an insight into why enrolments slowed and reversed before beginning to rise once again.

Gaining permanent residency and subsequent citizenship status is a hope of many international students studying in Australia. Prior to 2010, migration was directly linked to study in Australia through what is known as two-step migration; a situation where a migration application is made while an individual is in the country on some other visa, such as a student visa. Large numbers of learners from across Asia chose Australia for study in the hope of increased migration possibilities (Mares 2012, p. 30). Hawthorne (2010), writing about the 2000s, highlights that “the great majority of onshore migrants are former international students — exemplifying Australia’s transition to what
is termed ‘two-step migration’” (p. 6). Upon completion of an Australian degree, international students are entitled to remain in the country for a period of between 12 months and 4 years, depending on the level of education completed. During this time, they can gain work experience, which can then be used to their advantage for any future residency applications.

Permanent residency applications are complicated, bureaucratic and it is an expensive process to go through. Without describing the application process in great detail, it is worth mentioning that a key feature of the procedure is the points system. Points are gained through various avenues and a certain number of points are required for an application to be considered for processing, and then to determine whether an application is successful. Prior to 2010, extra points could be gained by completing an education program in Australia as opposed to in another country, which created an incentive for prospective students to complete their studies in Australia.

Major changes to the points system followed a review in 2010. The review came about because bonus points were being accumulated systematically and strategically, which created problems with the quality of education being provided by a large number of private colleges. Individuals were able to target education programs that would lead to employment in occupations listed on the Migration Occupations in Demand List, which earned extra points. In 2010, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, as it was known at the time, ceased awarding bonus points for education programs completed in Australia and instead began to award points according to the academic level attained. Education remained a pathway to permanent residency; however, skilled migration became more emphasised. These changes in migration policy, along with external factors, contributed to the fluctuations of overseas enrolments at Australian universities.

**Overseas Enrolments in Translator Education Programs**

Enrolments in translator education programs were similarly affected. The Department of Immigration and Border Protection includes NAATI-accredited translators in the Migration Occupations in Demand List (Australian Government 2011, p. 12). And although the number of bonus points has been reduced since 2010, there still remains a small incentive to study these programs and attempt to gain NAATI certification; five points could be gained in this way at the time of writing. The reduction in migration points that NAATI-endorsed programs attracted, combined with other changes to education and migration policies, contributed to translator education programs from 2009 onwards experiencing a significant decline in enrolments; this was the first decline in over a decade.
The vast majority – somewhere between 90 and 95 per cent – of current enrolments in translator education programs in Australia are of international students from Chinese-speaking countries. Such programs have been attracting an increasing number of such learners since 2002, with Australia being an attractive destination because of its transparent and stable visa conditions (Watt 2011, p. 182). Changes to immigration and visa policies in 2009, however, diminished transparency and brought about instability. Extended time was required to make decisions on visa applications, leaving learners in limbo for longer periods than previously experienced. Watt (2011) notes that “these [changes] have removed the advantages of predictability and relative certainty that were the hallmarks of Australian student visa policies for Chinese students” (p. 183) and that this has contributed to a decline in Chinese-speaking international student enrolments.

Notwithstanding a period of decline, translator education programs in Australia continue to be characterised by the high number of Chinese-speaking learners. In comparison, language groups such as Spanish have extremely small enrolments, and a class of more than five learners in any one semester would be considered high. Although the focus of this research was on Spanish streams of translator education programs rather than Chinese, I included the abovementioned characteristics of Australian translator education, as it sits in stark contrast to other countries’ contexts, and in particular to Spain’s. To conclude this chapter, I now turn to how Australian translator education has evolved over time.

**Translator Education: from Vocational Training to Higher Education**

Translator education in Australia has evolved from vocational training. There was a need for training so that translation services assisting the post-war influx of non-English speaking migrants could be organised and regulated. The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates that some 7 million of the 11,501,442 population growth from 1947 to 1999 were immigrants, their children and their grandchildren (Hugo 2001, p. 180). Of these people, it is estimated that 70 per cent speak a language other than English at home (Weston, Qu & Soriano 2001). Translation and interpreting services needed to provide these people with translations of official documents such as birth and marriage certificates, and education records, as well as to provide access to information and services in their own language. Translator and interpreter training began to emerge at the same time that NAATI was being established. In the late 1970s, RMIT and the Canberra College of Advanced Education were the first to offer courses in translating and interpreting; by the time NAATI was established and approving courses for certification in 1980, four courses were being offered (Ozolins 1998, pp. 44-5). I go into more detail about NAATI’s role and function in the following chapter, so for now I focus on the development of translator education in Australia.
The design and development of translation and interpreting courses had to be customised to the Australian context. At that time, existing higher education models overseas had been designed to educate translators in academic contexts and often in multiple languages. Australia on the other hand, needed translators for a community context and only required them to translate between English and one other language. Curriculum design was therefore customised to the Australian context and focused on training translators to deal with short information pamphlets and flyers or personal documents required for migration or educational purposes. (Ozolins 1998, pp. 44-5).

As a result, curriculum was developed from a profession-oriented position rather than an academic one. This suited the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) system. At the time that translator education programs were being developed, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the TAFE sector was undergoing rapid growth; enrolments more than doubled between 1975 and 1982 and TAFE began to specifically cater to disadvantaged groups in society. Courses were created to respond to the needs of multicultural local communities, and a Multi-cultural Education Unit was established at the state level within the Department of Education (Goozee 2001). The TAFE system developed over the years and is now known as Vocational Education. It has retained its focus on providing practical and professionally focused education. Translation and interpreting courses were initially created to align with certification levels offered by NAATI and were linked closely with the professional outcome of attaining NAATI certification. The practical and professional focus of the vocational education system was well suited for this. However, they also began to be offered within higher education.

Around the mid-1980s, translation and interpreting programs began to be offered as higher education degrees. I gained an understanding of the motivating factors for this from discussions with senior colleagues at RMIT University. Some of the first programs were offered at the undergraduate level, but with the exception of a couple that have remained as undergraduate degrees, the vast majority of higher education translation degrees are now offered as Masters degrees. Undergraduate degrees were considered unviable because they did not attract the number of enrolments needed to make them sustainable. There are many hurdles to establish new undergraduate degrees in Australia. A university has to justify the need for it by conducting market research, ensuring there is no competition, and ensuring a minimum number of enrolments; usually around 70. The unreliability of government funding presents further challenges for establishing undergraduate degrees. Masters on the other hand, are shorter and so involve less costs, as well as being able to attract higher fees from learners and so sustain lower enrolments.
Many of the challenges that faced translator education over the years remain today. Finding solutions to class sizes, curriculum development and matching educators’ experience and expertise with the level of education being provided is an ongoing problem. These challenges, along with international student enrolments fluctuating and legislative changes to international education taking place at different times, have contributed to making translator education in Australia vulnerable to dramatic enrolment rises and falls.
Chapter 3: NAATI Certification

Introduction

As previously mentioned, NAATI certification is the entry-level requirement to practice as a translator in Australia. The certification acts as a signal that an individual is competent in providing professional translation services. Being successful in attaining this certification, however, can be a lengthy and costly process. In this chapter I detail the role of NAATI and how its certification system functions. I first provide a brief history, before detailing the processes involved in attaining and retaining certification. I finish the chapter with a description of how NAATI is integrated into translator education programs in Australia.

A Brief History of NAATI

NAATI was established in response to a need for translation and interpreting services in Australia. It began in the 1960s as a function of the federal Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, as it was known at the time; however, as it grew it became an independent company that was jointly owned by each Government of Australia. By the late 1960s, there was a strong need for such services to facilitate governing society and to enable communication between immigrants, and community services and government agencies. During the post-war period, migration policies were implemented that supported immigrant workers to become permanent residents, and later citizens, which resulted in a large number of migrants coming to Australia to work. Since 1945, over 6.5 million people have migrated to Australia, with around 200 languages other than Australian Indigenous languages and English being spoken in homes throughout the country (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2010, pp. 221, 7). The post-war migration wave was characterised by foreign workers and their families who predominantly came from war-torn Europe. Those who had not come from English-speaking countries generally had little or no English language skills (Bell 1997, p. 93). These migrants were expected to learn English and assimilate into Australian culture shortly after arriving. The language policies of the time reflected the view that assimilation would be a quick process, and services were directed towards teaching English rather than providing translation and interpreting services. By the mid-1960s, amid wider social concerns surrounding education and social disadvantage, structural disadvantage was highlighted as affecting immigrants, with language being a predominant issue. The Department of Immigration conducted a survey of translation and
interpreting needs in the early 1970s, titled *The Language Barrier*; it uncovered a large need for such services among various departments and other institutions. Mental health, immigration, social services, and other welfare sectors were highlighted as particular areas where migrants suffered from disadvantage and where translation and interpreting services would be beneficial. In addition to responding to this highlighted disadvantage, the government also needed to communicate with all members of the community so that society could be managed and governed in the desired way. It was in response to this widespread need for a formalised system of providing professional translators and interpreters that NAATI was established (Ozolins 1998, pp. 18-21). NAATI originally fell under the former Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, however, later became an independent not-for-profit company in 1983.

The NAATI certification system was an attempt to establish and maintain standards of practice across the country. Its testing program, which is used to grant certification to individual practitioners, has been and remains NAATI’s primary function. An original certification structure was proposed by a committee that dealt with recognising overseas qualifications in Australia, the Committee on Overseas Professional Qualifications (COPQ). In the proposal, the first two levels covered workers that would use a language other than English in their daily work but were not specifically engaging in translation or interpreting activities, such as reception and other front of house staff in hotels. The remaining three levels were tiered to cover simple to complex translation and interpreting work in Australia or internationally, be it in the areas of business, medical, legal or in other community settings (Ozolins 1998, p. 39). Once NAATI was created, the levels were revised in an attempt to cover only translation and interpreting work, although some definitions “confuse[d] the issue by still seeming to stress bilingual work” (Ozolins 1998, p. 40). After having been revised twice since it was created, the current certification system has three levels for translators and three for interpreters: Paraprofessional, Professional and Advanced.

The three levels provide a guide for the level of expertise an individual holds, although they are not necessarily progressive. Advanced certification is the only level that requires an individual to have held another level of certification before it can be attained. However, not all levels of certification are available for all languages. Advanced certification is the highest level for some languages, whereas for others it is Professional or Paraprofessional. Whether a particular level is available for a particular language is dependent on whether a NAATI certification test has been developed. In fact, for some languages, a NAATI test has not been developed for any level and so Recognition is available instead of Certification. For these languages, Recognition is a way of signalling expertise in translation in cases where NAATI certification is unavailable.
From its inception, NAATI was only intended to be a temporary measure. It was created with the aim of establishing a set of standards of practice, to implement a certification system, and to approve translation and interpreting courses to provide NAATI-endorsed education. The hope was that NAATI would set the foundation for a professional body, which would then take over these responsibilities. AUSIT – the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators – was established around 1987 (Martin 1994, p. 29) and is the professional association for interpreters and translators in Australia. It is concerned with maintaining professional standards and advocating for the profession, similar to some functions of NAATI, although its primary function is developing and maintaining a Code of Ethics. During its beginnings, AUSIT received a large portion of their funding from NAATI (Martin 1994, p. 29), however, a handover from NAATI to AUSIT has never occurred. And notwithstanding the existence of AUSIT and its prominent role in the translation and interpreting profession in Australia, NAATI retains much the same aims and functions as when it was created and has remained in much the same capacity.

NAATI is a unique certification system in the world, which carries unique challenges. It is the only one to test and certify practitioners in such a large range of languages – testing is available in 55 languages for either Paraprofessional or Professional certification, according to NAATI’s 2015 Accreditation by Testing Information Booklet. By way of comparison, the certification system used in the US has the capacity to test approximately 13 languages, the Chinese system tests 7, and the Norwegian system tests 5 languages. The wide breadth of languages covered by NAATI presents particular challenges surrounding uniformity across various languages at a given level (Bell 1997, p. 100). One attempt to achieve uniformity in its testing procedure is to use the same English language source text across multiple languages; however, problems remain with each language pair requiring a source text in a language other than English for translation into English.

Testing was developed by NAATI as a way of determining who would be granted certification. Having a testing system rather than mandating individuals to complete an education program has been an ongoing strategy to overcome challenges surrounding the number of languages requiring certification processes. Individuals wanting to attain certification come from varied education backgrounds. In many cases, education systems around the world are considerably different from one another, as is the general level of education completed. With these differences, requiring successful completion of a university-level education program is unrealistic. It would also hinder NAATI being able to certify translators within a short timeframe. An expeditious process was needed to accommodate the large number of languages and the consistently changing demand for particular languages. Languages spoken by newly arrived groups of refugees or other migrants need
certified translators within a short timeframe so that the government can communicate with such groups, and so that services, such as education, can be accessed. NAATI’s close ties to government allow it to anticipate and respond quickly to new waves of migration, which helps overall social cohesion.

The Governments of Australia, which are the Federal, State and Territory Governments, jointly own NAATI. However, it operates as a not-for-profit company. The political variation among the governments in power at any particular time presents challenges regarding the development of NAATI’s testing procedure and of the organisation. Bell (1997) summarises the situation well when she comments that joint ownership by the Governments of Australia “has frequently retarded the development and growth of NAATI” (p. 101). NAATI has been dependent on government funding since its inception, although over the years this dependence has been reduced and income has been supplemented by testing and application fees, publications and training workshops (Bell 1997, p. 101). A review of NAATI conducted in 2005 recognised that the organisation was grossly underfunded for the work that it was expected to do (Cook & Dixon 2006); this situation has remained unchanged over the decades. In NAATI’s Annual Reports of the past two years, securing sustainable funding from the Governments of Australia has been highlighted as crucial to the Authority achieving its strategic goals (NAATI 2014).

Notwithstanding the abovementioned challenges, NAATI is held in high regard by foreign stakeholders in the translation industry. NAATI was the first system of its kind in the world and continues to be valued by foreign academics, practitioners and policy-makers alike. With other countries and regions considering or creating certification systems of their own, many are looking at NAATI’s function and testing procedure for guidance. Although the vast majority of tests continue to be sat within Australia (97.6 per cent), a small number of tests were sat from an overseas location during the 2013-14 financial year, highlighting its profile in other locations (NAATI 2014).

**Attaining and Retaining NAATI certification**

Attaining NAATI certification is possible through the following five means:

1. Passing a NAATI certification test
2. Successful completion of a course of studies in translation and/or interpreting at an Australian institution as approved by NAATI
3. Providing evidence of a specialised tertiary qualification in translation and/or interpreting obtained from an educational institution overseas
4. Providing evidence of a membership of a recognised international translating and/or interpreting professional association
5. Providing evidence of advanced standing in translating or interpreting (NAATI 2015c).

The majority of successful candidates attain certification by completing an approved course of study. Over the past three financial years, the proportion of credentials awarded by this means has fluctuated between 57 and 70 per cent. The level of certification available for particular languages is somewhat determined by the education level. Generally, diplomas offer certification at the Paraprofessional level, and advanced diplomas and all levels of postgraduate study offer Professional certification (NAATI 2017). The second most popular means is by sitting the NAATI test independently of an approved course, with a fluctuation of between 28 and 41 per cent over the same time period. To be eligible to sit the Professional Translator test, which is the industry standard, the candidate must have:

- General education to degree or diploma level in any field; OR
- NAATI Accreditation as a Paraprofessional Translator in any language in which they are seeking accreditation; OR
- Work experience in translation to which an employer has attested; OR
- Evidence of relevant (language, translating or interpreting related) post-secondary studies (NAATI 2015a, p. 9 emphasis in original).

Once NAATI certification is awarded, it is valid for three years before the individual will have to go through a revalidation process. Revalidation is a relatively new concept to NAATI and was fully implemented in 2012. Any credential that was awarded after January 2007 is required to be revalidated, whereas those with credentials awarded prior to this time are strongly encouraged to opt-in to the process without it being mandatory. Since the 2012-13 financial year, revalidation has been taken up by approximately 30 per cent of individuals who were required to go through the process (NAATI 2015e, p. 14). Before three years have passed and the credential expires, the individual must provide evidence of work practice and professional development in the form of completed logbooks. A NAATI Professional Translator has to have undertaken, as a minimum, translation, editing or proofreading/checking activities that amount to an average of 10,000 words spread over 40 assignments or 40 hours each year. Professional development has to be completed across three categories – ethics, language maintenance, and skills development. Points are allocated for certain activities and there are minimum points that have to be accrued. An additional two categories – complementary skills and contribution to the profession – are provided to account for
other activities and do not hold a minimum point requirement but can be used to demonstrate continuing professional development. In order to accommodate low-demand languages, and for practitioners who hold credentials and work in more than one language pair, some flexibility is provided during the revalidation process.

**NAATI within an Education Program**

As mentioned earlier, NAATI certification is possible through the successful completion of an education program. NAATI endorses particular education institutions to recommend graduates for certification. The assessment format and marking guidelines are provided so that programs can use them when assessing for NAATI certification; however, the institution is free to use its own assessment procedure, provided it has been pre-approved by NAATI. Currently, NAATI certification is available through the higher- and vocational education sectors in Australia, and is offered within the following qualifications: diplomas, advanced diplomas, bachelor degrees, graduate diplomas and masters degrees. Institutions need to be approved by NAATI to offer a program that can lead to certification, with each language stream requiring individual approval. Any approved program must include four areas of study: advanced language studies, translating and ethical skills, contextual studies (social/cultural), and practical work experience. A practical course is usually included to cover translation skills, and it is usually within this that the NAATI assessment is administered. Once a program is endorsed by NAATI, there are strict guidelines to which the program has to adhere. Educators that will deliver practical translation skills and/or design assessment tasks that will be assessed for NAATI certification must hold a minimum of NAATI Professional certification in the relevant language and direction. It is the responsibility of the institution to provide training to educators who will be marking the tests.

Certification is not automatically linked to successful completion of an approved program. For an individual to gain certification through an education program, they must successfully complete the NAATI-approved program, as well as receive a minimum grade on the designated NAATI assessment. Generally, a distinction (70/100) minimum is required on the NAATI assessment. At the end of each academic year, the institution reports back to NAATI regarding the results of all enrolled learners. Successful learners are then eligible to apply for certification and pay the relevant fees, which amount to approximately $500. There is the distinct possibility that learners may graduate without attaining NAATI certification (NAATI 2015e).
It is worth noting that the NAATI assessment does not have to follow the format of the NAATI test. NAATI’s testing procedure has been used since the 1980s, and while the majority of education institutions use it, they are not obliged to do so. Educators can design their own assessment task to be used as the NAATI assessment, and provided that NAATI approves its use in determining who is eligible for certification, the institution is free to use it in place of the NAATI test.

The NAATI Test

The NAATI test is designed to test for translation quality. It consists of an examiner assessing the adequacy of the target text by referring to, and comparing it with, the source text. A communicative approach to translation is used and a translation brief accompanies the source text. Elements involved in the process of producing a translation, such as decisions regarding translation strategies and reasoning for selecting them; the use of research materials to better inform translation decisions; and any editing, revising and proofreading that has occurred before producing the final translation, are not included in NAATI’s testing instrument. Turner, Lai and Huang (2010, p. 14) provide a detailed description of the NAATI exam format and marking guidelines; however, I will outline the main aspects. I go into more detail in the section below titled ‘NAATI Test Marking Procedures’. Individuals must achieve above a minimum score to be eligible for NAATI recommendation, and testing is conducted according to a single direction. So if a person wants to gain certification in each direction they will have to successfully complete two NAATI tests. Two passages are translated in two and a half hours, with each passage being approximately 250 English words in length, or the equivalent in a language other than English. When the test is completed independent of an education program, an additional 30 minutes and short answer questions on the ethics of the profession are included. The final score is determined by a series of deductions and additions according to errors, as detailed in the NAATI Examiners’ Manual. Deductions are made first. However, if the examiner believes the overall quality of the target text is more than the score arrived at after deductions, they have the option of awarding up to five additional points. Similarly, if the overall quality is less than the score arrived at after deductions, up to five points can be further deducted.

The NAATI test assesses the linguistic quality of a target text (Kiraly 2000, pp. 140-1, 58). There is a plethora of research into the area of translation quality assessment, with some dealing with measurement instruments’ validity and reliability. The general consensus is that translation quality assessment, as it is currently practiced, remains a subjective process and there is no clear agreement on an acceptable approach (Angelelli 2009; Colina 2008; Eyckmans, Anchaert & Segers
2009; Kim 2009; Orlando 2012). Turner, Lai and Huong conducted a study that looked at the possibility of NAATI moving away from an error deduction system and towards a descriptor based evaluation. They concluded that the use of descriptors could enhance the functionality of the NAATI exam and allow it to assess more than the target text as a product (Turner, Lai & Huang 2010).

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, it is possible for education institutions to design their own NAATI assessment. NAATI provides guidance on how to design an assessment task and which elements to include. Familiarity with the translation process, as well as with the use of advanced terminology and technologies, should be demonstrated (NAATI 2015b, p. 89). NAATI provides two options of how the assessment task can be designed: as a single summative assessment, or as a portfolio of assessments. Each of these is described below.

Institutions may apply to have one of the following forms of assessment approved for the course:

1. Single Summative Assessment: A single summative assessment equivalent to the NAATI Accreditation test in relation to format, level of difficulty and marking.

2. Portfolio of Assessments: Assessments are spread throughout the course of study. The portfolio of assessments must encompass all skills assessed in the corresponding NAATI test at the relevant accreditation level and the individual components cannot be broken down further than the equivalent components in the corresponding NAATI test (e.g. a component to assess dialogue interpreting must be at least the equivalent of the dialogue interpreting component of the NAATI Accreditation test). NAATI only requires information about those assessment(s) which correspond to the skills required for NAATI Accreditation (NAATI 2015b, p. 21).

It is up to the institution’s discretion as to which format it will use.

Marking processes can either follow the NAATI Examiners’ Guide, or can be designed by the institution and submitted for approval by NAATI. In the case that an institution opts to design its own marking procedure, the submission to NAATI must detail the criteria used to mark the assessment, any quality assurance processes, and security arrangements. In either case, if an individual is unsuccessful in passing the NAATI assessment, but has shown that they have the potential to pass, they may be allowed to complete a supplementary assessment, as determined by the institution’s policies and procedures; any supplementary tasks undergoes the same marking procedure as the original task.

Selecting Source Texts

With all this in mind, the test is designed so that complex background knowledge or specific terminology is not required to understand the meaning contained in the source text. Instead,
individuals are presented with a text that is intended to represent the typical work that a translator would be expected to complete while working in Australia; a ‘real life’ task. The test is to reflect a general, non-specialised translation assignment that a beginner professional translator can be expected to be competent in completing successfully.

Source text selection takes into account that successful candidates will be working in an Australian context. The texts selected should therefore reflect the type of text that one would come across professionally. Any unnecessary Australianisms should be excluded, given that candidates are not able to consult the Internet or any other electronic resources. In a similar way, terms that are specific to one particular State or Territory should be avoided so that no candidate hold an advantage or disadvantage over another. Terms referring to administrative, legal or political systems that would present translation challenges requiring extended time or resources to solve should be avoided where at all possible. Cultural concepts should be considered carefully before being included in a NAATI test, as some concepts that are accepted in Australian culture but that differ significantly from the target culture (or vice versa when English is the target language) will be difficult to translate under test conditions.

NAATI provides advice on text selection for NAATI tests. They are not intended to be limited to the one source, and possible sources could include the Internet, brochures and information sheets that would commonly be used in a community setting to convey information to people about a service or product. Such sources are intended to reflect the typical translation assignments that a professional translator would encounter when working in the Australian context, as the vast majority of work falls in the realm of community translation. Other possible sources that NAATI would accept are business correspondence or reports, policy documents and actual translation jobs. NAATI advises against using newspaper and magazine articles for the NAATI test, as they have a different function to informative texts. Journalistic writing tends to impress readers with flamboyant language that one would not expect to see in a brochure about asthma, for example. In much the same fashion, creative writing would not be an appropriate text for a NAATI test. A previously translated text, whose target text has been widely published or would reasonably be accessible to learners online, is not deemed appropriate either, as learners may have an unfair advantage if they have encountered the target text in the past. NAATI specifies subject areas that would provide suitable materials, such as: science and technology; health and medicine; education; tourism; legal, banking and commerce; politics, economics and public administration; and social and community affairs. Again, the intention of using such areas is to reflect assignments that a professional translator would reasonably encounter while working in Australia.
There is a general format and style that a source text should follow when being used for a NAATI test. With the exception of Greek and Mandarin, three source texts are to be selected that differ in content, register and style; candidates will translate only two passages\(^3\). The source texts should include a title and translation brief that describes the text type, the purpose of translation, and the target text audience. Any source text should be clear and easily understood, according to NAATI’s guidelines, and NAATI identify particular elements that would aid a source text’s clarity. Included among these are:

- not containing misprints, spelling or other grammatical errors;
- having no factual errors; and
- being coherent.

Guidelines are provided regarding the level of difficulty of any source text to be used in a NAATI test. Analytical, conceptual, grammatical and lexical complexities are identified as affecting the overall difficulty of the text. Translation challenges should not be of such difficulty that the candidate is required to use a translator’s note.

A key point of difference between the NAATI test and assessment tasks that are commonly used in education programs is that the NAATI test aims to predict the future performance of a candidate rather than measuring the extent to which they have achieved a learning outcome. While authentic assessment of the kind described above is common in education programs, and particularly the case for translator education programs, it is what the assessment task is measuring that differs. To receive a pass mark on the NAATI test, one needs to demonstrate, through producing a target text, that they would be competent in producing a target text in a professional setting. Education programs on the other hand, usually assess whether a learner possesses particular skills and competences.

NAATI have established Quality Assurance processes for test design. While NAATI staff members are not proficient in all languages that are available for testing, examiner panels exist for more than 60 languages, and some NAATI-approved programs are required to have their materials approved by NAATI before they can be used. However, in practice, educators involved in test design at long standing institutions, which account for the majority of NAATI-approved programs, are

\(^3\) Greek tests include two source texts in standard Modern Greek and two in Katharevousa; candidates select one of each. Mandarin tests include two passages in traditional full-form characters and two in simplified form characters; again, candidates select one of each.
ultimately responsible for design and clarity; it is only those tests chosen for auditing purposes that will be closely examined by NAATI.

**NAATI Test Marking Procedures**

When marking NAATI tests, markers are expected to follow the general principles of test marking as set out in *NAATI’s Examiners Manual 2008*. The guidelines aim for tests to be marked impartially and objectively, and outline procedures to be followed to ensure this. The most important feature is that the test is marked by at least two independent markers. A third can be called in when the marks given by the first two markers differ greatly from each other. NAATI prefers that both examiners hold certification of the level and direction being attempted by the candidate, and that one marker is an L1 speaker of English and the other an L1 speaker of the language other than English. However, having two NAATI certified markers from the language pair being tested, regardless of which language is their L1, is sufficient. In the case that the test is into English, and there are only two markers available who have English as their L2, a specialist English marker is additionally used. They assess the target text based on its grammatical and expressive cohesion according to English language norms and their input is limited to English quality rather than meaning transfer.

As mentioned earlier, NAATI guidelines use an error-deduction system. When it comes to deducting errors, the markers are given strict instructions to not penalise candidates for not rendering a term or phrase in a way that the marker would not have rendered it. A solid reason, based on NAATI’s guidelines, should be given for all point deductions made. A score of 63/90 for both target texts combined, after points are deducted for errors, is what is required for a candidate to pass the test. Additionally, a score of at least 29/45 for each individual target text is required. While still having to follow the guidelines, the marker is given a small degree of discretion. In the case that the individual receives a score lower than 63, but where the marker considers that they show particular merit and that they have demonstrated that they are competent at completing a typical translation assignment, the marker is able to give an additional minimal number of points as they deem appropriate. Conversely, if the candidate receives a score of 63 or above, but has not demonstrated that they are competent, the marker can subtract a minimal number of points.

The allocation of points to errors is outlined in NAATI’s Examiner’s Manual. While I have read the Manual, and it has informed the writing in this chapter, the in-confidence commercial nature of it protects its contents as the intellectual property of NAATI. As such, I am unable to provide any detail on how points are allocated to particular errors. However, to provide some idea
of the logic behind NAATI’s point deduction system, I make some general comments based on the information provided to learners during classes that I observed during fieldwork. Points can be deducted for a number of reasons, all of which fall into the general categories of minor and major errors. As one would imagine, major errors attract higher point deductions than minor ones. To distinguish between the two categories, an examiner would consider the overall impact the error has on the meaning, cohesion and coherence of the target text in relation to the source text. Major errors will generally relate to an unjustified shift or change in meaning between the source and the target texts, whereas a minor error will be isolated to language or grammar use and not significantly affect the meaning of that segment of text.

NAATI’s marking procedure sits in stark contrast with assessment tasks used in a student-centred education context. The procedure itself is not transparent and learners cannot be sure how they will be assessed, and by which specific criteria. A concerted effort on the part of NAATI to make the test as authentic as possible is a good step in the direction of making it more education-friendly. NAATI is also considering moving from paper-based hand written tests, to allowing candidates to use computers when producing their target texts. If this goes ahead, it will significantly improve the authenticity of the task. However, for the time being, NAATI is still considering how to manage the use of computers so that the tests cannot be copied and taken out of the testing situation, and so that candidates do not receive input from others while completing the test (Doherty & Garcia 2015; NAATI 2015d). Notwithstanding the efforts of NAATI to make their testing procedure more authentic, the lack of transparency around how the test is marked makes it a difficult assessment to integrate into a student-centred curriculum.

**High-Stakes Test**

As mentioned in the introduction, the NAATI test is high-stakes. Madaus (1988) defines high-stakes tests as “those whose results are seen – rightly or wrongly – by students, teachers, administrators, parents, or the general public, as being used to make important decisions that immediately and directly affect them” (p. 87). NAATI certification is required to work professionally in Australia. Government departments, social services, and other not-for-profit or non-governmental organisations, use translation agencies to provide translation services. The vast majority of agencies require translators to hold NAATI certification, which makes passing the test a necessary hurdle to enter the translation labour market in Australia. Certification acts as a signal to employers, educators and the general public that an individual is a qualified professional translator. That NAATI certification is needed to enter the labour market, along with it being notoriously
difficult to pass and that it requires a large financial investment, all contribute to the high-stakes of the test.

The NAATI test is notoriously difficult to pass. It is common for people to attempt the test on more than one occasion before becoming successful. NAATI does not currently publish public data on the proportion of candidates who successfully pass the NAATI test; however, the pass rate across all modes of testing was previously published in NAATI’s Annual Reports and during the 2001-02 and 2002-03 financial years was reported to be below 20 per cent (Ko 2005). NAATI’s Development Manager reported that the pass rate has not changed significantly since then, and the typical pass rate across all languages for Professional Translator certification was 20 to 25 per cent, with this increasing to 40 to 50 per cent when attempted within an approved education program (R Foote 2014, personal communication, 25 June). Granted there has been a slight improvement since 2002 and completing an education program improves one’s chances of passing, the test nevertheless remains difficult to pass.

The stakes are raised higher for international students. Approximately 95 per cent of all enrolments in translation and interpreting programs in Australia are international students, who invest a lot of time and money to study in the country. As mentioned in the Introduction to this thesis, the average cost to study a master degree in translation and interpreting in Australia is AU$97,000 (HSBC 2014). In addition to the high financial investment made by international students, time is also needed to complete the qualification. A master program is generally two years in length, and bearing in mind that the chances of passing the NAATI test at the end of this are small, this extra investment contributes to raising the stakes of the test.

This chapter has provided as comprehensive an account of NAATI’s testing procedure and certification system as was possible. The confidential nature of the test has limited my ability to provide specific details or quote from the NAATI Examiners Manual; however, by providing a general account, I have described NAATI’s certification and testing system so that it can be understood in the context of translator education. The following chapter, which deals with the project’s methodology, concludes the first section of the thesis that has covered background information and a literature review. Following this, I will discuss the findings at each of the three sites investigated.
Chapter 4: Ethnographic Case Study

Introduction

This research draws on several methods common in Case Study research from Translation Studies and in Ethnographies from Sociology of Education research. Case Study is a common methodology to Translation Studies, whereas ethnography is only beginning to emerge in the discipline. I integrated the two methodologies into one design so that I could look at teaching, learning and assessment in translator education programs in depth and in context. The research aims to explore the teaching, learning and assessment process in translator education programs, with a particular focus on how assessment impacts teaching and learning. By selecting particular education programs as cases, I captured the intricacies of classroom interactions and was able to examine the teaching, learning and assessment process as it happened in an education setting. However, events external to the classroom and program proved to be equally, if not more relevant to understanding classroom events. By integrating an ethnographic approach, I was able to include this wider context, as I was no longer limited by the boundaries of the cases I had selected.

Many articles reporting case studies of translator education reported in the Interpreter Translator Trainer, a journal that specialises in such research, define cases with strict boundaries. Cases are often defined as being a teaching or assessment method, a course, or a program of study. I found that such definitions of cases limited the methodology’s capacity to include relevant elements of the wider contexts of the cases. My supervisor encouraged me to include the context as well. In order to find examples of such research I turned to a journal that reports ethnographies, called Ethnography and Education. I drew on features of the research reported in both of these two well-regarded journals so that the cases I included in this research project were broader in scope than is common for case studies of translator education. Integrating the two approaches therefore allowed me to include foreground events that were directly related to classroom practices and interactions, while also including wider societal pressures that indirectly impacted learning and assessment.

One form of assessment that was included in the project was obviously the NAATI test. The test is a type of language test and is included in the teaching, learning and assessment process of translator education in Australia. Studies that deal with testing often use precise language that reflects a positivist framework. In contrast, descriptive research that aims to capture education in
context is more inclined to use an interpretive and/or constructivist approach. Favouring one approach above the other would have limited my ability to capture the context in a descriptive manner, while still including language testing consequences, washback and impact. Therefore, rather than deciding between the two paradigms, I have integrated positivist precision into an ethnographic approach that is grounded in a constructivist paradigm. That my supervisors have expertise in varied and multiple fields – one being a historical-sociologist and the other an applied linguist – has supported me being able to take such an integrated approach.

Below, I detail aspects of the overall design before describing how data was collected and analysed. I then comment on the benefits and drawbacks of the project’s design, based on the experiences I had while in the field.

Positionality

My position in this research was subjective and reflexive, and flowed between being an insider and an outsider. My academic background is Spanish and Japanese languages (undergraduate), and translating and interpreting (postgraduate). However, I have more professional experience as an educator of translation than as a practitioner, and neither of my two degrees included advanced social science. I was therefore already familiar with how learners and educators generally act in a translator education program, which meant that I had preconceived ideas of what may happen at the sites I was going to observe. By recognising this subjective position, I was able to use my pre-existing ideas and values to help me question and reflect on what I saw during fieldwork at all three sites. Madden (2010) stresses that “the point of getting to know ‘you, the ethnographer’ better, getting to know the way you influence your research, is to create a more reliable portrait, argument or theory about ‘them, the participants’ (p. 23).” However, at times the boundary between ‘me’ and ‘them’ blurred, as my position as an insider or outsider shifted depending on how ‘they’ understood my role in the research. There were times during classes when I was placed as a learner by educators, with direct questions being asked of me that contributed to class discussions. During informal chats and interviews with learners, I could build rapport quickly by emphasising the common ground between us, as we were both learners. On the other hand, when speaking with educators about classroom events, I was able to emphasise my previous role as a tutor in a translator education program. Both of these examples placed me as an insider; however, in Spain, I remained an outsider at the same time. While I was recognised as an insider in an educational context, my foreigner status clearly marked me as an outsider, which meant that I was both and insider and an outsider in the same moment.
Capturing Multiple Perspectives

Various stakeholders are involved in the teaching, learning and assessment process. I included the perspectives of learners and educators, as well as university, and national and supra-national frameworks that influence the way that universities operate and design curriculum. National and supra-national frameworks included in this research were the European Higher Education Area and NAATI. Each perspective or framework contributed to providing a holistic account of teaching, learning and assessment within a translator education context. I used a variety of methods so that each perspective and framework was represented in the data. Using varied methods is common to both case study and ethnographic research, with capturing multiple perspectives a primary advantage (Hale & Napier 2013, pp. 87-8; Merriam 1992; Yin 2009). Learners and educators were represented by observations, and informal and semi-structured interviews. However, such methods were impractical to shed light on influences that frameworks have on teaching, learning and assessment. To do this, I examined documents, such as resources and policies, which informed curriculum design, as well as curriculum and assessment tasks undertaken by learners completing the programs. At times I needed to clarify my understanding of the information in these documents, and to do this I had informal chats with educators at the relevant universities, and this later informed semi-structured interviews.

Contrasting Programs to Highlight Uniqueness

It is easy to take something for granted when you are accustomed to it. However, considering it from another context, which deals with it differently, helps to highlight interesting and curious aspects. I used this form of contrast as a methodological tool to highlight similarities and differences between translator education programs in the two settings, Spain and Australia. Contrastive ethnography is widely used in educational research that focuses on events that take place in the classroom and scholars claim that it is a useful tool when used in this way; particularly for education research. Huf (2013) contrasted kindergarten classes in London with classes in Dusseldorf. By using two different settings, Huf was able to reflect on her own constructions of differences, which facilitated searching for differences and similarities between the two settings. White, CM (2013) used contrast to shed light on social class, culture and sex structures in Fiji at two secondary schools. By contrasting one school against another, she was able to highlight differences in academic recognition between girls at a rural co-educational school with a high indigenous population in a working-class area, and girls at an elite same-sex school that encouraged high
academic performance for the honour of the school. Zaborowski and Breidenstein (2011) contrasted two types of secondary school in Germany, one that leads to apprenticeships or traineeships and the other that leads to university, to offer insights into a preoccupation with school equipment and homework diaries in the first type of school. Significant and special qualities of the school emerged when considered in light of practices at the other. In each of these three examples, two different settings were examined in contrast to one another so that practices, behaviours and interactions were recognised as interesting and significant. The differences and similarities between the settings was what highlighted them as intriguing and significant. I used contrast in much the same way. I was able to view classroom practices that I was accustomed to and had taken for granted as curious and interesting simply because I could see aspects that were unique to that setting.

**Case Study Design Informing Site Selection**

To select appropriate sites for this research I used elements of Yin’s (2014) case study design as guidance. Yin claims that case study designs follow a 2 X 2 matrix where “the first pair consists of single-case and multiple-case designs. The second pair, which can occur in combination with either of the first pair, distinguishes between holistic and embedded designs” (p. 27). Where the single case focuses on just one site, a multiple-case design can have any number of sites above two. Yin believes that a multiple-case design, of even just two cases, provides a stronger design that will be better placed to make analytic generalisations. A holistic design is one that considers the entire nature of the case, whereas an embedded design considers small subunits of a larger case. Yin warns that a holistic approach risks examining an overly abstract account of the case, and that an embedded approach risks focusing too closely on the subunits and neglects to place them in the context of the larger case. Yin offers sound logic for his 2 X 2 matrix. However, I found it constricting when designing this project because of it being rigid and prescriptive. The matrix does not allow for the combination of holistic and embedded designs in the one project. For this research, I wanted to keep the unit of analysis as the translator education programs while also examining smaller aspects of them, such as practical translation courses. Therefore, rather than follow Yin’s matrix, I adapted it so that an ethnographic approach could be incorporated, which still retained Yin’s logic.

To decide on which sites I would investigate, I was guided by Yin’s logic behind his rationales for single-case design. He claims that cases should be selected on the basis that they are critical, unusual, common, revelatory, or longitudinal cases. A critical case is one that is critical to any theoretical claims of the research. An unusual case is one that deviates from theoretical norms, or
one that is an extreme example of any such phenomenon. A common case is the exact opposite, and is where a case represents everyday experiences. The revelatory case is one that was previously inaccessible, but that would provide insights into some prevalent phenomenon. And a longitudinal case is one that covers the same case at two more points in time. While this research is effectively a multi-case design, and Yin provides his rationales as a basis for selecting a single case, I still found them useful when deciding on which cases to include. I applied his logic of selecting a case because it is a common example of a phenomenon. Each of the translator education programs were common for their context, that is, UniEspaña was typical for Spain, and UniOz 1 and UniOz 2 were typical of Australia.

**Ethics Approval: Dilemmas in Cross-cultural Research**

Ethics approval in cross-cultural research involves satisfying and complying with processes and procedures from different cultural settings. For this research, each of the three universities had its own procedures to follow for ethics approval. I had to gain ethics approval from RMIT University’s College Human Ethics Advisory Network, as well as verbal or written approval from the three sites. RMIT granted ethics approval on the condition that every participant signed a Participant Information and Consent form, which is standard practice for research in Australia. The two sites in Australia were familiar with this process and understood that I was obliged to collect signatures before engaging in any research activities. After a small amount of negotiating with each university, the ethics clearance I had been granted from RMIT University was honoured and I was not required to undergo the same process at their institution. Although the site in Spain had honoured my ethics clearance, the process for gaining participant consent was vastly different. Notably, it was less formalised, based on verbal agreement and did not require forms to be signed.

Acting in a culturally appropriate way while satisfying differing ethical requirements presented challenges. The lecturer at the university in Spain had explained that there was no formal ethics process I had to go through, as I already had ethics approval from RMIT, and that a verbal agreement from learners at the beginning of the first class was sufficient to go ahead. However, as I was obliged to follow RMIT’s ethics procedure, which required written consent to participate, I was unable to follow this advice. At the time, I had not anticipated that using a Participant Information and Consent form, which was commonly used for research in Australia, would have an impact on carrying out research in a different cultural setting. When I explained the research and began handing out the consent form to the group of approximately thirty, I was met with looks and comments that implied the learners did not understand the point of the form. Everyone agreed to
take part in the research, with some declining to be included in interviews and observations that would take place outside the classroom. In the classes following, I found it more difficult to build rapport than I had anticipated. And the delay in building rapport subsequently delayed beginning interviews. By not anticipating any potential impacts of using the form and considering how these could be managed, I had underestimated the differences between Spanish and Australian academic cultures. I had not allowed myself to adapt to a culturally different environment.

In order to carry out research in one cultural time and place, while ethical procedures are developed in another, I had needed to be flexible and adaptable. If I had considered cultural differences between the two settings and had allowed myself a degree of flexibility in the way I gained written consent, I would have had a more culturally appropriate response and very possibly a more successful outcome. For example, I could have followed the lecturer’s advice and been content with a verbal agreement until the second or third class. This would have given the learners time to become accustomed to me before being presented with a written form to complete and sign. Although I was relieved that the lecturer had cleared the ethics procedures of her university without my involvement, upon reflection, I would have gained valuable cultural information for conducting research in an education setting in Spain. Without this cultural information, and with Australian procedures being the central focus of gaining consent from participants, I had limited my capacity to be adaptable in a new situation.

Navigating Unexpected Site Changes

Unexpected events that led to site changes occurred at two points during the project. On each occasion, a new site had to be negotiated and secured within a short space of time. Knowledge of which NAATI-approved translation programs operate with a Spanish stream was vital to negotiating new sites in Australia. Speaking with colleagues who had experience with various universities, and who understood the way that their programs were structured, assisted me to make initial contact with potential sites more useful and to expedite the process. I was able to begin negotiations with a prospective university with contacts who were both sympathetic to research in the area, and who were able to make decisions around using the university as a site.

The first site change in Australia was prompted by the Spanish stream not going ahead during the semester that data collection was planned for. Spanish consistently attracts low enrolments and it is not uncommon for there to be only three learners in any one semester. As the university selected delivered the practical translation courses in language groups, one or two
Spanish-speaking learners could not financially justify running the course for that language. As a consequence, it had been postponed until the following semester. It was not cancelled until the week before classes were to begin, as the university was holding hope that new enrolments would enable the course to go ahead. Time constraints meant that I had to conduct fieldwork in Australia during the second semester of 2015 and so I had to secure another site within a very short timeframe. Colleagues with a thorough knowledge of the universities in Australia that offered a Spanish stream in their translator education programs helped by suggesting likely universities, and the relevant people to get in contact with.

Another site change was necessary because some aspects of data collection were denied at the first secured Australian site. I wanted to capture data on the interactions between learners, and between learner and educators. The online platform, Moodle, was used as a communication point between learners and educators and contained questions and answers to translation challenges. It would have provided insights into online interactions; however, I was denied access to it. To collect this data another way, I wanted to observe a multi-lingual theory class, as the small class size of the Spanish stream restricted the type of interactions, and a class of twenty or more learners would have provided more insightful data. A multi-lingual theory class was the only option where the sufficient number of learners would be present, and because the language of instruction was English, I would be able to understand and follow all discussions. My request to observe such classes at the first Australian site was denied, and it was at this point that the university withdrew their consent to allow me to carry out the remainder of the project. Again, my trusty colleague with insider knowledge of translator education programs suggested which university and particular people to approach for the next site.

Interpreting classes were used at this site because consent to participate was not gained from the educators involved in the delivery of the translation courses. While it was not an ideal situation to be collecting data from one site’s translation stream and another’s interpreting stream, based on the data that needed to be collected, I decided that it would still yield useful and relevant data. At the point of selecting a third site, I was focusing on classroom interactions between learners and educators, and between learners, and as such, I did not believe that the content being relevant to interpreting rather than to translation was as significant.
Collecting data

Data was collected by drawing on several methods. Observations, accompanied by field-notes, were carried out at each site, providing the bulk of the data. Informal chats with learners enrolled in the programs, and with educators involved in delivering the programs were used to inform subsequent semi-structured interviews. Below I detail how I collected data using the varied methods mentioned, commenting on benefits and drawback of each.

Planning without forming expectations

I arrived to the field with the idea of asking a series of research questions with pre-mapped-out methods. However, I had underestimated the value of arriving at a site without expectations. Prior to fieldwork, I had matched particular methods to each research question so that they collected data that would represent the perspectives of learners and educators, and would uncover institutional influences on translator education programs. By speaking with learners, I hoped to gain an understanding of their view of assessment and how it interacted with their learning. Similarly, by speaking with educators, I hoped to understand their perspective on teaching and learning, and how they used assessment to enhance learning. To gain insight into institutional pressures and influences on teaching, learning and assessment, I planned to conduct a document analysis. I had anticipated that researching learning and assessment from these three positions – learner, educator and institution – would provide a well-rounded picture of the teaching, learning and assessment process. Once in the field however, it became clear that by using such precise planning, I had segmented the research and had formed rigid expectations of where I would find the data to answer each segment. I was left with little room for unexpected events and had limited the data I could collect, along with any potential to discover interesting and significant findings.

It was during the initial data collection that I realised that mapping methods to specific research questions was restricting my ability to capture contextual information. It was also at this point that I revised the research questions down to one, which was supported using a variety of methods in combination with each other. As shown in Figure 1: Wider Context of Teaching, Learning and Assessment below, assessment does not take place in a vacuum. Instead, it occurs within a dynamic environment. The figure illustrates a number of factors that are involved in teaching and learning, and that impact assessment. I found that as I revised my research that each has its own distinct influence without being placed within a hierarchy, which is why I have depicted them as surrounding the core. Classroom observations brought to light the need to include more detailed
data on learning methodologies used in the classroom, learning spaces available for collaboration, learner motivations and aspirations, and university and industry norms that influenced learning and assessment. These were subsequently added to the model, which was further adapted to better depict the equal influence that each element has on teaching, learning and assessment. Considering all elements through varied data collection methods enabled me to capture a wider understanding of translator education and its surrounding context.

**Figure 1: Wider Context of Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

**Analysing Documents to Complete the Picture**

Documents were analysed concurrently with conducting observations and interviews. I examined curriculum documents, as well as institutional, national and supra-national frameworks that informed their development. Examples of the types of documents included were those that detailed the program and course structures, instructions for learning activities and assessment tasks, and supplementary reading materials and documents produced by learners when completing collaborative learning tasks for the courses examined at each site. I examined these within the context of the existing data I had already collected through observation, informal chats and interviews, and in an iterative manner. Using such an iterative approach I created a continual loop between the data and theory (Bryman 2001, p. 10)

Examining the abovementioned documents allowed me to gain an understanding of the institutional influences on translator education at all three sites. The program in Spain operated in a
context quite different to Australia, and I was unfamiliar with it. Understanding the external influences on program delivery in Spain was more involved and required more time than was the case for the Australian context. For this reason, I spent more time examining documents and checking that I understood their role in learning and assessment with educators in Spain. While these documents were integral to me capturing the context of teaching, learning and assessment, and any institutional influence on it, they did not shed light on the perceptions and experiences of learners and educators. To capture these positions and perspectives, I conducted observations and interviews.

(Un)obtrusive Observations

Observations were challenging to conduct in an unobtrusive way. Minimising my presence on the teaching and learning experiences of those present was maintained as a priority while observing classes. Taking a seat in a back corner of the classroom was a crucial strategy I used to minimise any impact I may have. However, the configuration of each room inevitably hindered my vision of some areas of the room. Below I describe the challenges and advantages I faced when trying to remain unobtrusive during observations at each of the three sites: UniEspaña, UniOz 1, and UniOz 2.

Observations at UniEspaña were impacted by the layout of the classrooms, and during the first semester, my ability to gather data and speak with the learners was affected. My position at the back of the room gave me a good vantage point to observe how learners used devices in class and how they engaged with the learning activities. With all the chairs facing forward, I was looking at the backs of each learner, which meant that I did not have casual opportunities to speak with them as others were arriving at the beginning of a lesson, or during breaks. To compensate, I ‘hung around’ out the front of the class as learners were arriving, and greeted them as they stood in their social groups. During breaks, I greeted those that sat close to me and attempted to engage them in light conversation to break the ice. When learners were already gathered in their social groups and chatting before entering the class, I was usually excluded from entering into dialogue longer than a couple of sentences. While observing the classes, I was frustrated by my inability to see the faces of many learners. There was no practical solution however, as I remained at the back of the room so that the class was not disrupted or disturbed by my presence. To try to compensate as best I could, I sat in opposite back corners of the room so that I could get a different perspective and partially see the faces and expressions of learners that I couldn’t usually see.
The semester 2 classroom was easier to move around and by changing my position in the room I could get different perspectives of the class. The tables were long and in rows across the room, with a row on the left and right. I sat in the back row on either side, depending on where students were sitting when I arrived, although, at times there weren’t seats available in the back rows so I sat in a chair in the centre of the two rows. I found this spot difficult to observe learners in the back row because if I turned to look at them it was quite noticeable, and I did not want them to have the feeling of being watched. An advantage of the larger space was that it was easier to get a glimpse of learners’ faces and expressions, particularly when they turned to speak to the person next to them.

Classroom layout at UniOz 1 differed depending on the class that was taking place. The layouts both aided and obstructed observations at different times. One lecture room was a mini lecture theatre. It was wide and accommodated approximately 60 learners, each with a swing-up desk attachment. I sat at the back of the room in the corner and so could only see the faces of some learners who were sitting on the opposite side of the room. The learners seemed to be undisturbed by me being in this position and there was often enough space in the room that I could take my spot easily for each class.

The other lecture room was a much larger lecture theatre and observations were obstructed in much the same way as at UniEspaña. It accommodated approximately 100 learners in fixed rows of individual seats with a swing-up desk attachment. The seating was tiered and all faced in the one direction towards the lecturer’s podium at the front of the room. The design of the room meant that I was unable to see the faces of any learners without making it quite obvious that I was looking at them.

The room used for all tutorials at UniOz 1 was a computer lab. The small class size meant that it was easy to take in all behaviours, facial expressions and discussions that happened during the class. The room was designed as such that the computers lined the walls in a horse-shoe shape, with the screens facing inwards to the room. With so few learners, three being the most in any one class, it was easy to observe the way they used the computers to adjust their target texts or to contribute to discussion. Some learners used handheld devices, which were more difficult to see, and for the most part, I was not able to collect detailed data on the way these devices were used. However, I could at least observe and document the extent to which they were used.

The rooms used at UniOz 2 had flexible furniture and layout options. At the beginning of each class, the lecturer and learners configured the furniture so that it facilitated discussion and
collaborative learning. In classes where presentations took place, the desks were put in an arc design so that no one had their backs to the presenting group or to other learners. I was situated to one side of the room, behind a row of learners. Although I had a clear view of the presenting group and learners on the opposite side of the room, I was unable to observe in detail those learners sitting in front of me.

For classes that did not involve learners’ presentations, the room was configured in rows that faced towards the projector screen and podium, but were retained in pairs or sets of up to four desks side-by-side. Classes for this course often included small role plays where learners would either perform in front of the class or form pairs or triads within their language groups. When these small group activities took place, it was almost impossible for me to follow conversations. Noise from outside the room also affected my ability to hear discussions, as I was situated at the back of the room close to the door.

In spite of the challenges presented above that concerned conducting unobtrusive observations from the back of the room, I was able to collect valuable data that supported further data collections. I used information collected during observations to inform informal chats that I had with learners and educators. These informal chats then informed further semi-structured interviews with some people. I used observation data to verify what was said during informal and semi-structured interviews, and to check my interpretations of events with those who were involved.

**Bilingual Interactions and Note-Taking**

I am fluent in both English and Spanish. One of my supervisors is also fluent in Spanish and the other has a basic understanding of the language. Interactions in Spain were primarily in English, although at times there was a mixture of Spanish and English. A mixture of languages happened when a topic that was being discussed in one language relied on cultural understandings of the other. Hand-written and digital field notes were also written in a mixture of Spanish and English. The language being spoken at the time, along with the language I was thinking in, determined whether I wrote in Spanish or English. While I did not translate my field notes so that they were written in only one language, I did translate any Spanish-written sections that I have included in this thesis into English.

**Turning Informal Chats into In-depth Conversations**

Interviews with learners at UniEspaña began later than I had anticipated. It was not until week 11 of semester 1, and after several informal chats, that sufficient good rapport had been
established to begin interviewing. Connecting with one learner helped to open up chats and connections with other learners. Over the remaining weeks, I was able to speak with an increasing number of learners, which led to conducting semi-structured interviews.

Informal chats with learners were integral to conducting meaningful semi-structured interviews. After they were familiar with me and I could connect with them on a learner-to-learner level, they were generally more open to making time to speak with me in-depth. This was not always the case, and one learner, with whom I thought I had established good rapport, was unwilling to give up much of his time and the data I collected in an interview was somewhat superficial. One strategy I used to collect in-depth data through chats and interviews was to be included in communications between learners who completed collaborative learning activities together as a group. While I was passively included, they became more accustomed to me and inquisitive about my project. I used initial conversations about the aims of the project as a way to open-up conversation on events in class, and on their experiences with learning and assessment. Another strategy I used was to have learners I had already spoken with to introduce me to others in the class. This personal interaction helped to build trust between me and learners and put to them at ease when speaking with me in-depth. Exchanging phone numbers or email addresses was crucial in organising times to meet for an interview. It was not always possible to speak with the learners I wanted to before, during or after a class, as I was at times occupied observing interactions or having informal chats with others.

Informal chats with the lecturer at UniEspaña were more successful than conducting interviews. She had a very busy schedule and was time poor, which made arranging times to sit and conduct an interview difficult. It also would have detracted from the close connection we had built over the time that I was there. Speaking in the office before and after classes provided valuable data, as well as the opportunity for me to ask specific questions about the program and my observations.

UniOz 1 classes were much smaller, with only three learners in any one tutorial, and did not require the same degree of strategy when turning informal chats into interviews with learners. All learners were open to speaking with me from the beginning and I was able to approach each learner individually and request an interview. Although all learners agreed to an interview, I was only able to secure three out of the four. One failed to show up at the agreed time and did not respond to my request for another time. We had had informal chats though so I was able to collect some data on their experiences. Another learner agreed to an interview but had a very busy schedule. It was difficult to agree on a time that was suitable to both of us and in the end a more spontaneous
approach was successful; I happened to catch her at a time when she was free and we conducted the interview shortly after. Informal chats helped to open up the possibility of semi-structured interviews, although it was not as crucial as it was at UniEspaña. That learners were studying a postgraduate program and were all mature-aged may have impacted their openness and willingness to speak with me.

Informal chats with educators at UniOz 1 were difficult to come by. There was no spare desk space available that I could use in the building where T&I educators were located. Without a workspace in the same location, casual interactions were limited. The large lecture theatre used for one course had separate entries for the front and the back of the room. As I sat myself at the back of the room in an effort to minimise my presence, it was not feasible to reach the entry that the lecturer used after the class had finished. On one occasion, I had the opportunity of an informal chat with one of the lecturers at the end of a class. However, extended dialogue was prevented, as learners were waiting to speak to the lecturer individually. The lack of informal chats contributed to a feeling of disconnectedness from the program and from the educators responsible for its design and delivery. Without causal opportunities to share ideas that were emerging from the research, I felt insecure about approaching educators to discuss them further.

Due to time limitations for data collection at UniOz 2, frequent informal chats were not practical. To expedite data collection and to increase its quality, I opted for conducting semi-structured interviews with the lecturer on two occasions rather than striking up casual conversations. Opportunistic informal chats were had with learners while they were waiting for class to begin. Time constraints meant that data collection at UniOz 2 was focused on classroom interactions rather than on collecting learners’ individual experiences and perceptions of the program, which was another reason why minimal informal chats took place.

Semi-structured interviews

I conducted semi-structured interviews with educators when I did not have the time or opportunity to have frequent informal chats. At UniEspaña, I had ample opportunities for informal chats with the lecturer of the courses I was observing and had no need to interview her. I also did not have to make a concerted effort to build rapport with the lecturer, as she took the initiative in this regard and was open to me being there. I took her lead, which was a very open communicable approach, and so opportunities to gather data did not have to be constructed with much planning. She was interested in receiving constructive feedback on the program and her approach to teaching and learning, and sought out conversations in this area on multiple occasions. It was easy to direct
such chats towards areas where I had gaps in my data, and as such, semi-structured interviews were unnecessary.

I did interview another educator who was involved in the delivery of a different course in the same program. I did this so that I could contrast the course that he lectured with the one that I had been observing, and to deepen my understanding of the program overall. Questions centred on his teaching and learning methodology and how he used assessment tasks to enhance learning. Virtual learning arose as a key method used in his classes, which led to questions surrounding the use of virtual space for the completion of learning activities and assessment tasks.

At UniOz 1, I was unable to secure interviews with the lecturers of the two courses I observed. I believe this was primarily because we had a poor working relationship. I had underestimated the importance of initially building rapport and then maintaining a supportive working relationship; the interactions I had with educators at UniOz 1 suffered because of this underestimation. In hindsight, a concerted effort to seek out educators when they were available and to discuss my research with them while I was carrying out observations would have vastly improved the situation. I had approached observations with the expectation that they would be more or less similar to those I conducted at UniEspaña, and that I could follow the lead of the lecturers. However, by taking a passive role in building working relations, I only contributed to creating a divide between myself and the lecturers. The result was that I was unable to secure semi-structured interviews with key educators and my data collection was limited in this way.

To capture the perspective of educators, I relied on data collected from the tutor of both courses. Two tutors shared the tutoring of courses in the Spanish stream, with one focusing on English into Spanish translation, and the other on Spanish into English. One declined to participate in the research. I interviewed the tutor who took the English into Spanish direction on one occasion. Questions revolved around the following themes: NAATI and its testing procedure, the program’s structure, learning and assessment tasks in the two courses, educational motivations and background of learners, and the use of virtual tools. I additionally conducted semi-structured interviews with three out of the four learners enrolled in the Spanish stream, as one declined to participate in this way. Questions for these interviews were centred on the learners’ motivations for studying the program, their post-graduation aspirations, and their opinions and experiences of the teaching, learning and assessment, program structure, and NAATI.

At UniOz 2, two semi-structured interviews were conducted with the educator responsible for the two courses I observed. Questions were based on program structure, teaching, learning and
assessment, NAATI and the assessment procedure used at UniOz 2, and virtual learning tools. As mentioned in the section above, time constraints and the focus of data collection at UniOz 2 meant that I did not approach learners for interviews.

**Recording data**

**Writing Field-notes**

I chose to write field-notes rather than audio- or video-record classes. They were less intrusive on learners and educators, and as such, did not require me to go through a rigorous ethics clearance process. Knowing that you are being live recorded can affect how you behave, which may result in educators altering their delivery of a class, or learners altering their participation in a class. I wanted to avoid both of these situations. For these reasons, I chose not to apply for ethics clearance and subsequent participant agreement to record classroom events. There was a risk that one person present in the room would disagree to recording, which would have prevented any data being collected from observations. And while this risk was still present when using field-notes, it was much less. A disadvantage of field-notes is that they cannot capture all visual and auditory material. However, I considered this to be a minor disadvantage when compared with the benefits of using them. The main advantage of using field-notes to record observations is that they are the least intrusive on those being observed.

Writing field-notes is a skill that I developed throughout conducting this research. Before beginning observation, I had to familiarise myself with how to record observations and interviews (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw 2011). My observations were primarily focused on the teaching, learning and assessment process; however, I was still interested in contextual information, as it would provide a broader picture that would help to understand the smaller details. Reaching a balance of gathering sufficient wider contextual information that helped to explain events in class, and answering my research questions in a direct manner, was an ambition that I am not sure I ever met. Continuous learning and development was integral to improving my field-note-taking skills; it was an incremental process of applying advice gained from literature and trying it out in practice.

While in the field in Spain, timesaving strategies became increasingly important. I was juggling being in a new environment; speaking my B language (Spanish) and understanding a new culture; observing classes; building rapport with the course lecturer and learners; reading relevant literature, and writing to consolidate my understanding of it; and learning to write field-notes, all at
the same time. At the beginning of observations at UniEspaña, I was taking notes on events in class that displayed learning or were relevant to assessment. I handwrote notes in class and later wrote this up on my laptop in a more cohesive manner. Although this resulted in well written and comprehensive field-notes I found that it was taking a long time and took me away from having informal chats with the lecturer. After classes in semester 1, the lecturer would return to the office to continue working. These times were an opportunity to learn more about the way the program was structured and to check-in on my observations of that or previous classes. Writing up my field-notes in digital form from my handwritten notes was more difficult as more time passed between the class I had observed and typing them on my computer. The task was complicated more after speaking with the lecturer about events that passed in class (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw 2011). To overcome this challenge I began to take my laptop to classes and took field-notes directly in digital form. This strategy, along with being able to touch-type at a high speed, saved time and allowed for more opportunities to speak with the lecturer after classes without the risk of distorting my field-notes. As the class was large and the lecturer and learners had accepted me as an observer and at times a participant, I was able to take detailed notes freely and without making anyone visibly uncomfortable.

Lessons learnt in Spain about taking appropriate and efficient field-notes helped when collecting data in Australia. Again, at the beginning, field-notes focused on descriptions of wider contextual elements such as how the buildings looked and the general content of the program. However, when I noted a significant learning event happening or when assessment was discussed, I switched to making direct quote notations.

Beginning observations at UniOz 1, I did not take a large amount of notes. I did not want to distract the educators or learners by making them feel uncomfortable or self-conscious from my tapping away on the keyboard. I sat, observed, and noted down minimal points so that I could expand my notes once the class was over. After doing this for a couple of classes I developed more confidence to take more extensive notes while I was in the class. I reverted to taking comprehensive notes on my laptop and for the most part I took detailed notes without hesitation. There were times when I was conscious of my note taking, as I received glances or looks from learners and from the lecturer when I was typing in a focused manner and at high speed. When this happened, I adjusted my body language and attempted to minimise the attention I drew to myself by reducing the noise I made on the keyboard. I did not attempt to speak with the lecturer about whether there was a problem with my note-taking, which upon reflection, may have improved the rapport between us and contributed to building a strong working relationship. In hindsight, I believe that open
communication would have been a more productive strategy than trying to minimise my impact and adjusting my behaviour. Talking through my behaviour and how this may affect the delivery of the class would have assisted in building rapport and strengthening the relationship I had with educators at UniOz 1. It would have provided an opportunity to discuss any reservations or concerns they had with me conducting my research.

Establishing open communication was a lesson that I took with me to UniOz 2. Although I again began observations with limited handwritten note-taking, I took the first class as an opportunity to show that I wanted to work in collaboration with the lecturer. Reflecting on what went well at UniEspaña, and what had not gone so well at UniOz 1, I identified the open collaborative dialogue that I had with the lecturer as being key to collecting valuable data. At UniOz 2, I did not want to create an uncomfortable environment, and instead wanted to create an open dialogue where appropriate. During lectures, I avoided looking directly at the lecturer so that I was not detracting attention away from the learners and possibly making the lecturer self-conscious. At the end of the lecture, I hung back to speak with her as she walked from the class. It was a good opportunity to speak briefly about the data I had already gathered or hoped to in subsequent classes, and to recap on the purpose of my research. Although I had previously already explained my research via email, I found that explaining it again in person was beneficial to developing a strong working relationship.

Over time, my field-notes turned from descriptions of events in classes into direct quotes of learners and educators who were in the class. For the first few months at UniEspaña, and the first few classes at UniOz 1 and UniOz 2, my field-notes included descriptions of the physical surroundings and of the events that I was observing. Focusing on providing descriptions that could aid me with wider contextual information of the programs, I was recording few direct quotes of those in class. When I began analysing the data I had collected from the semester 1 observations at UniEspaña, I realised that I lacked specific data of conversations and interactions that took place during classes. I adjusted my note-taking so that it included direct quotes from learners and from the lecturers. Later analysis was facilitated by this change in tactic and the inclusion of direct quotes provided another perspective on events. With both approaches to recording field-notes, I was able to complete a microanalysis of classroom events, which were then complemented by a macro-analysis of wider contextual data.

Sharp concentration was required when writing field-notes in a classroom setting. Multiple people were speaking and there was often more than one person speaking at once. As conversations and discussions moved around the room my attention was dragged in a criss-cross
manner from one side of the room to another. Keeping track of who was speaking and being able to hear them effectively was difficult at times. To combat this, I reverted to keeping my attention focused on my computer and using my hearing to determine who was speaking. After some time, I was able to recognise individuals by their voice, which assisted in keeping track of the discussion. Similar to when note-taking for an interpreting assignment, there were times when I missed a section or entire conversation. At these times, it was more productive to continue on with the blank rather than pause to remember or think of what had happened. I had to accept that I would not be able to capture everything and not worry about whether what I had just missed was vital or not.

**Taking notes of rapid thoughts**

Taking notes on informal chats with the lecturer at UniEspaña before and after classes was a challenge. Mostly these took place in her shared office, where I had been given a desk to use. Four lecturers of differing languages shared the office and I used a desk that was available to visitors. After these informal chats I wrote up field-notes, which I found difficult because of the speed at which the lecturer spoke. She often jumped from one topic to another and to get an entire event recorded I would return to my notes and add parts that came to mind at a later stage. On occasion, this was a week or more later, and to ensure that I was not remembering in a distorted manner, I checked my remembered accounts with the lecturer. I returned to some conversations multiple times to check that I had understood what was said. For example, I spoke to the lecturer about the marking system used for translation exams on at least six occasions. I also followed this up with another educator to ensure that I had understood the process. Each time I discussed it, I recorded it in my field-notes and finally developed a formula to represent the process; this was also checked with the lecturer. The assessment process followed was a little involved and appeared complicated at first. Once I had it formulated though, I realised that the process itself was not complicated. The difficulty was in listening to the assessment process in amongst other events and trying to put it in context.

After a few months, I was better able to take field-notes without having to revisit them so often. I was more accustomed to the flow of conversation and was more familiar with the program’s structure; new information was not as common and I did not have to record all that was said. I felt more comfortable to take quick notes while speaking and was able to check some information in the same conversation. At the beginning I was conscious of presenting myself as an intent listener and not removing myself from the conversation to take notes frequently. Over time, my confidence grew and I could take notes and interrupt the conversation to ask questions with ease. Touch-typing, as well as having the translation and interpreting skill of taking-in information in one form,
processing it, and then expressing or delivering it in another, helped me to stay engaged with what was being discussed. I could speak, listen and comprehend what was being said at the same time as typing and not taking my gaze and attention away from the lecture.

**Recording interviews: deciding when to turn the recorder off**

By far the most interesting data came from speaking with educators and learners individually or in a pair without any recording device. When the recorder was turned on while sitting with someone and having a coffee, it gave the encounter a formal vibe. Once the recorder was turned off, we often continued chatting. This is where some of the most interesting data emerged. It was more relaxed and people seemed to open up more. It was a little frustrating though, as I had to hurry off and pull out my computer so that I could take notes on what they had said. In one interview, an opportunity to hear about a learner’s experience of receiving his grade of an exam in Spain was lost when I began recording. As we were walking to a café and settling at a table, he commented that he was surprised at the grade he received for his exam – it was higher than expected. He had begun to tell me this and so I pulled out my phone to begin recording. As soon as I did this, his manner changed and he took on the role of being interviewed, rather than simply telling me something I would be interested to hear. It seems that when the recorder is on, respondents feel as though they should take on a particular role, whereas when we are speaking without the recorder they interacted with me on a more social and friendly level.

As fieldwork progressed, I became more conscious of whether recording would be a distraction and hinder the quality of data collected. When speaking with someone for the first time, I paid particular attention to how comfortable and at ease they appeared. During the time it took to settle into a seat, I would assess whether I would record the session. When asking if they agreed to use an audio-recording device, I took into account their body language rather than simply listening to whether they replied yes or no. Body language inevitably told me more in these situations.

**Puzzles and Surprises uncovered by Dialogue**

Rather than performing analysis under a single framework, I approached it with a broad understanding of a range of theoretical debates. By engaging in a dialogical analysis, I was able to go back and forth between the data and literature in a consistent and cyclical manner. This dialogue complemented developing and refining analytical categories, as well as writing-up initial findings, which later informed subsequent literature reviews.
Timmermans & Tavory highlight the usefulness of looking for surprises, puzzles and anomalies in data for the production of new theory. They draw on Pierce’s understanding of abduction, where findings are recognised as surprising from having a broad and in-depth knowledge of existing theories (Timmermans & Tavory 2012). While I do not have a thorough enough theoretical understanding to claim to have a broad in-depth knowledge of existing theories, I drew on the idea that having broad knowledge can inform analytical thinking. The multidisciplinary nature of this project has required theoretical understanding and knowledge of a variety of academic areas. And although I have not developed in-depth knowledge of each academic area included in the thesis, as may have been the case had I narrowed the focus to one discipline, it has been sufficient to provide me a basis from which I can recognise puzzles and surprises in the data. When analysing data, I looked for patterns and behaviours that were surprising or unexpected, and that were not already well explained by existing theoretical understandings.

Consistent and repeated analysis of data can shed new light on a phenomenon being studied. Hale and Napier (2013) claim that ethnographic data analysis is recursive (p. 89), with categories being set in the beginning, but allowing flexibility so that they can be changed as required for further analysis at later stages. In this research, data analysis was continual and new puzzles were solved during and after fieldwork. Themes and patterns emerged from observations and interviews, which were further explored and fleshed out in subsequent chats and interviews. The new data was then analysed and considered in light of developing or existing theories to see whether it was consistent with current understandings, or whether it deviated from them and was as yet unexplained (Timmermans & Tavory 2012). By using this approach of continual and repeated searches for surprises in the data, and looking for instances where it contradicted or matched existing theories, I could identify where current theoretical debates did not sufficiently explain the new understandings of teaching, learning and assessment in translator education that had emerged from the data.

Themes were identified while collecting data and during an initial analysis. Recurring topics were identified as themes, which were: student-centred learning, connecting education to industry, learning spaces, and washback. Once I had four broad themes to work with, I went back through the data and coded segments from my field-notes and interviews that belonged into each of the four themes. Coded segments of the interviews were transcribed. An initial write-up was produced for each theme based on the categorised data. I produced the write-up by reading and making reference to the various theories that explained what the data was saying. I analysed each theme in relation to relevant current debates. By consulting existing theories and debates I was able to better
understand how each theme was occurring at the relevant site. Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach and Zilber
(1998) explain this process well when they note that one should

read the subtext as openly as possible and to define the major content categories that emerge from
the reading. This process is closely linked to the next stage, of sorting the material into categories.
In practice, it is a circular procedure that involves careful reading, suggesting categories, sorting the
subtext into categories, generating ideas for additional categories or for refinement of the existing
ones and so on (p. 113).

Initial write-ups were used to identify categories within the themes. The themes that emerged from
the UniEspaña data helped me to refine and refocus data collection at UniOz 1 and UniOz 2, which
allowed me to expedite data collection and to collect more meaningful data.

This chapter concludes the first half of the thesis, which deals primarily with placing the
research in a theoretical context. Although I have mentioned the three sites that provided the data,
I am yet to discuss them in any detail or to present any insights I gained from the extended fieldwork
that was undertaken. The remainder of the thesis is dedicated to just that. In the following chapter,
I describe the translator education programs at each of the three sites. Following that chapter are
three discussion chapters, which is where I present three key findings that relate to the literature
that was discussed in Chapter 1, before ending with a conclusion.
Chapter 5: Site Descriptions

Introduction

This chapter deals with detailed descriptions of the three sites examined in the research: UniEspaña, UniOz 1 and UniOz 2. Each site is described with the same format so that similarities and differences between them are easily recognisable. I begin each site with a description of the translator education program offered by the university, and then describe the profile of learners that were completing the program. I finish with a detailed description of the spaces available to learners and educators, focusing on physical, virtual and social spaces. These thick descriptions contribute to providing the reader with a detailed context of the translator education programs at each site. The information contained in them is intended to aid understanding of issues raised and arguments made in the discussion chapters in Chapters 6, 7 and 8, which cover the theoretical areas discussed in Chapter 1: student-centred translator education, employability, and consequences, washback and social consequences of testing respectively.

UniEspaña

Undergraduate Translation Studies

As mentioned in the Introduction to the thesis, the undergraduate degree offered at UniEspaña is extremely competitive. Learners are admitted into the program based on the results of their entrance exams, the Selectividad. An exam must be taken for each language stream that prospective learners wish to pursue. The score required for the English stream has consistently been among the top scores of any undergraduate degree in Spain, including law and medicine. It is the most popular language to choose, which adds to its competitiveness. It was common for learners to take multiple entrance exams for different language streams to increase their chances of entry to the program. If unsuccessful in English but successful in Russian for example, they would be able to enrol with Russian as their L2 and could select any other language, such as English, as their L3 or L4. Previous study of the chosen L2 was a prerequisite and with the exception of Arabic, a minimum of B1 according to the Common European Framework was required. It was assumed that learners who had undertaken languages in their higher school certificate studies (Bachillerato) would have achieved a B1 level, as this was the level established by the Ministry of Education.
The Translation & Interpreting Faculty’s highly competitive environment hindered learners’ ability to establish friendships with their peers. The competitive, merit-based admission procedure of the program suited learners with a competitive nature. The average learner enrolled in the English stream had completed secondary education being a consistently high performer and had usually developed strategies to maximise their results. A key strategy that was used by many was to actively hide information from peers and to avoid collaboration. The belief was that sharing ideas and information would increase the chances of the ‘competition’ achieving a better result. All learners I spoke with mentioned the competitive behaviour of fellow learners and commented that it made it difficult to make friends within the faculty. They often arrived at UniEspaña from various locations around Spain. It is not uncommon for learners to move long distances to begin tertiary study, as not all universities offer the same variety of programs. The choice of university are narrowed according to what they want to study, and narrowed again if they wish to study at the university with the best reputation in a particular discipline. As a consequence, few learners had existing friendships with others beginning the same degree. Many hoped to build a network within the faculty; however, fellow learners were often viewed as competition rather than as a potential community of practice. Friendships were sought elsewhere or at least with those they did not share classes with.

The undergraduate degree spans four years. It encompasses modules (a series of semester long courses) in second and third language acquisition before courses specific to translation and interpreting are undertaken. The first year consists of courses in Spanish language and culture, language courses for L2 and L3, and a course in using documentation for translation purposes. The second year expands on the language and culture courses for all languages (L1, L2 and L3), includes a course on technologies used in translation and interpreting, and introduces the first course in translation practice. The third year concludes language courses for L3, continues translation practice for L2 and L3, introduces terminology management and translation and interpreting theory, and begins interpreting practice. Learners are able to select two electives in their third year. The final year concludes translation and interpreting practice, introduces professional practice, and learners complete a mini-thesis. In the final year, there is room for three more electives to be selected. Translation is given more attention than interpreting, with practical translation courses amounting to eight courses and interpreting having only two.
The two courses selected for observations were specialised translation courses undertaken by final year learners. Each semester consisted of two classes a week for 15 weeks, with each class lasting two hours. The translation direction was from Spanish into English (L2/L3 \rightarrow L1) and scientific, legal and financial texts were covered. Each unit was accompanied by a collection of photocopied materials, which consisted of introductory readings, and the source texts accompanied with a translation brief and questions to be addressed during classes. The first semester was a compulsory course for all learners completing the degree, whereas the second semester was an elective that could be undertaken in learners’ final or penultimate year. Although the first semester course was described as a prerequisite for the second semester in the program guide, in reality this was not strongly enforced. Consequently, there were a small number of third-year learners in the second semester who did not have any prior experience with specialised translation.

The courses were designed with a project-based learning methodology in mind. Learners formed groups at the beginning of the semester and worked in these groups to complete translation tasks. They rotated roles within a project management model to complete their groups’ tasks, with the aim that each learner had a turn in each role at least once. The course was divided into units that covered various text types under different topics. For example, a unit on adoption included texts used in an adoption process as source texts for the groups to translate. When a new topic begun, the lecturer provided a lecture-style introduction that contained background information and pointed learners to where they would find additional resources to complete the related learning activities. In each class, a group presented their work, which was used as a basis for discussion. At times the presentations covered background knowledge of a topic, but for the majority of classes, a group simply presented the target text they had prepared and the translation process they had gone through.

There was a period at the beginning of the second semester where some learners had to adjust to the teaching and learning methodology used by the lecturer. Not all learners had previously taken classes with the lecturer I was observing. The specialised translation course for English offered in the first semester of the final year had sufficient numbers to form two classes. One was taught by the lecturer that I observed and followed the project-based methodology described above, whereas another lecturer, who used his own methodology, taught the other. Those classes were taught primarily online, with class time scheduled each week in a computer lab so that learners could complete learning tasks and ask questions in person if desired. For sharing documents and work submission, he used a version of Moodle that was designed for the maths faculty, as he found it to be more flexible than other versions. Facebook was the general
communication method used between learners, and between the lecturer and learners. The project management model was still followed, however, the majority of interaction and discussion happened in an online environment rather than face-to-face. As such, those learners who had completed their first semester of specialised translation with this lecturer, along with those who had not taken the specialised translation before, had to adjust to the face-to-face project-based learning methodology within a relatively short timeframe.

**Bright Learners with Worldly Experiences**

Learners at UniEpsaña’s translation faculty were a particularly studious and bright group. As already mentioned, the undergraduate degree has one of the highest entrance scores of all degrees in Spain and attracts high achievers. To capture a snapshot of the learner profile in the faculty, I included demographic questions in a short questionnaire given during semester two, which thirty-two learners completed. All learners were aged between eighteen and twenty-four, with twenty-four of the thirty-two being females and eight males. There were five exchange students completing the *Erasmus Mundus* program, and twenty-seven local students. With the exception of those *Erasmus* learners, the vast majority of learners spoke Spanish at home and spoke English as a second or third language. Nineteen had both or at least one parent who had completed a university degree, and eleven had parents without degrees. Twenty-five had participated in an exchange program and so had lived and studied abroad for at least one semester. Every learner had been abroad at least once or twice outside of the *Erasmus* program, with twenty-four having travelled abroad often. Ten learners worked in paid employment whilst studying, with six of those being local students and the other four *Erasmus* students.

From these responses a generalised picture of learners can be painted. They are homogeneous in age range and commonly come from families with tertiary educated parents. Bi- or multilingualism has been sought after and is the result of formal study rather than having been raised in a multilingual home environment, although there was one exception. Learners had a broad awareness of other cultures, which was gained not only from studying foreign languages and translation, but also from travel. Travel abroad was a common feature in their personal lives, with most taking regular trips for non-study purposes. Study was the primary activity, with only a small number undertaking paid employment while completing university. It can be assumed by this that the majority had economic stability during a time of high unemployment and economic instability across the country.
Three Learner Types

Although the group of learners at UniEspaña was largely homogenous, within this group I identified three learner types. I categorised them into three broad groups – keen folk, part-timers and worldly resisters. The keen folk sat quietly and hung onto every word said by the presenting group and the lecturer. They took notes at points throughout the whole class, not just when the target text was being analysed, and commented here and there to questions asked by the lecturer. They dressed very well and in a stylish manner, giving the impression that they were from a comfortable economic position. They didn’t offer much in the way of body language in the class and looked very controlled in their behaviour. Books and handouts were kept neat and any notes taken were done with care, and were written with various coloured pens or in a word doc on a computer. When the coloured pens weren’t being used, they were returned to their place on the desk in an organised fashion. When I interviewed a learner from this category, her main complaint about the course related to other learners and their competitive behaviour.

The part-timers appeared to be quite relaxed about their class participation and attention. They were generally chatting with each other, using their computer to look at Facebook, newspaper articles and other non-class related sites, or using their mobile phones. They appeared to lose track of what was going on in the class and faded in and out of following the presentations. At times I lost track of them because they were not present in every class. One class I thought we had a new enrolment until I realised it was just that she hadn’t been there for so long. An example of one learner’s behaviour from this category is that when present, he spent the majority of the time using his laptop to access Facebook, read online news articles and look at other sites via Facebook. When I asked him about his seemingly laid-back attitude to classes, he said that he often does not come to classes because he finds them boring. He was not interested in translation and only studied translation at UniEspaña because he was interested in languages, because the program had a good reputation, and because he received marks high enough to be offered a place.

The worldly resisters were quite incredible to watch. Two in particular were doing so much on their computers, flicking between tasks and computer screens so rapidly, that I often thought they were not following the class whatsoever. And then to my surprise they responded to a question asked by the lecturer, asked a question, or started discussing something said by the lecturer or a fellow classmate. A typical class with them was that they brought their computers, or at times they have shared one between them, they chatted to each other on Google chat, read news articles related to the current unit, looked up terms in dictionaries, used Facebook, checked emails, and commented and tracked changes on the target text of the current class, while also sending
emails and editing documents related to their group’s next presentation. The content of these emails were usually inspired by events that were happening in the current class. They consistently flicked from one page to another and did not seem to lose track of what was happening in the class. A leaner that I put in this category frequently came to class and read a novel for a large part of it. When speaking to him about a particular class at a later time, it was obvious that he had followed the majority of what happened. He commented that he takes a novel with him so that he is not bored during times he is confident he has understood the material covered. This group in general dressed very casually for Spanish fashion and had an alternative edge to them. A common complaint from learners I put in this category related to the structure and running of the program, and related to assessment procedures. They were critical of the form of assessment used and believed that it lacked authenticity, and that the weighting of grades did not reflect the workload involved in each task. They wanted more weighting allocated to continuous assessment.

**Spaces**

**Physical**

Physical space in the Translation and Interpreting Faculty of UniEspaña included indoor and outdoor areas. The faculty consisted of two buildings: the main building was used for classes, and another accommodated staff offices and postgraduate learners. The main building had three floors – the basement, the ground floor and the second floor. The basement housed the library and some classrooms, the ground floor had classrooms and computer labs, and the second floor had conference rooms, executive offices and further classrooms. Classrooms were locked when not being used for scheduled classes so were not available as a study or social space. The foyer area inside the entrance, along with the area outside the building, was a common meeting place. No seating was provided in these areas so after meeting one another, learners moved to other spaces. The two wings of the building flanked a centre stairway, creating a horseshoe shape of the building and leaving an open-air courtyard in the centre. The courtyard was a pleasant space (weather permitting) and had garden sections, gravel paths and stone benches for seating. Each wall that faced the courtyard on the ground and second floors was windowed and had tables, which were placed in a single row with individual seats facing the window and overlooking the courtyard. Stone benches were dotted around the building on each floor, usually in between classrooms, and were set into the wall as an alcove; they had sufficient space for up to three people to sit side-by-side. The basement foyer had six round tables with chairs; three of these used a long stone bench topped
with wood for seating on one side, and mismatched individual chairs provided the remaining seats. The furniture in this area was far from ergonomic and did not support long periods of sitting.

With the exception of a group study room, all areas in the library were to be kept in silence so that learners were not distracted; large signs with the single word ‘silencio’ [silence] were placed throughout. The library was separated into three sections, the general collection area, the reference collection area, and the walkway between these two, with each having its own seating arrangements. In the general collection area, the books ran down the right hand side of the room and seating was provided on the left hand side along the windows. There were eight fixed rows of desks with five individual seats on either side of a middle partition that ran the length of the row. The partition prevented one from seeing the person in the opposite seat; however, the desks were not partitioned along the rows and one could easily see and converse with the person seated next to them. The furniture was old and dated, most likely from the 60s, and the seats were unable to be adjusted in any way. The reference collection area had books on the far side and down the middle, with one wall left for seating and computers. Each desk space along this wall had a computer and two chairs. One desk faced into another without a partition. The walkway between the general and reference collection areas had the same seating arrangements with computers along one side. On the other side of the walkway was the office of the library coordinator and a group study room. Inside the group study room were two tables with 6 chairs on each. The room was small so there was limited space between the tables. Noise was permitted in this space, although those using it were asked to keep their voices down so that learners in other areas of the library were not disturbed. The group study room opened during my time at UniEspaña and its use was being trialled before enforcing a booking system; if the room was free it was available to use, otherwise you were to negotiate with those already using it.

Classroom layout differed within the faculty’s buildings. The first semester room was crowded with individual chairs that had a small desk attachment on them. They were set out in rows facing towards the front of the room with little space left between them for people to move about. An aisle ran up the centre of the room so that the seats towards the back of the room could be accessed. Getting into a seat was a challenge and usually involved at least one other person having to move themselves and their chair. A desk at the front of the room faced towards the room and had a computer connected to a projector screen, which was pulled down over a whiteboard. There were two full-length windows on the right of the room that faced onto the street. Noise from outside often entered the room whether the windows and shutters were open or not. The second semester classroom was larger and more spread out. The tables were set in long fixed rows with
seating for five along each. There was an aisle in the middle that separated the two columns of rows. The desk space was large enough to comfortably have a computer and books spread out, which meant that learners were further apart from one another than in the other room. Street noise continued to be a problem, which came through the three vertical windows that lined one side of the room. A whiteboard, a computer with a projector connected to it, and an overhead projector were placed at the front of the room in a similar setup to the first semester.

**Virtual Space**

The most prominent virtual space that learners used during and outside of classes was Facebook. It was used by almost every learner on at least one occasion during class and was a means of communication between learners when they were completing collaborative learning tasks. Email was also used for communication, with group leaders using group emails to reach all members at once. Other communication platforms that learners used for educational and social purposes were WhatsApp, SMS and phone calls. Learners tended to share documents via email or through Dropbox, whereas the lecturer distributed documents through the Yahoo Group only. She created folders in the Group, which were related to each unit covered throughout the semester. The relevant group uploaded the documents they had created in the process of completing the translation assignment so that the rest of the class could access them before they presented the material. The formal online platform used by the university on a whole was Moodle; however, the lecturer I observed chose not to use it, as she found the Yahoo Group more capable of connecting current learners with an alumni network. All course materials in addition to the prescribed reader were distributed online via the Yahoo Group.

Virtual space was accommodated for in physical spaces, although only to a limited extent. Power sources within the faculty varied from many to few, depending on the location within the building. The basement seating area had approximately 8 outlets, which was the most to be found in any one area. The majority, approximately 6, ran along the wall that backed a long wood-covered stone bench. In the library’s group study room, 3 outlets were available, and in the areas where seating was available at computers, and for seating along the wall in the main collection area, there were a few sockets for use. There were computer labs located in the main building, which were available for learners to use autonomously outside of scheduled class times. The university’s Wi-Fi network was available in all locations throughout the building and learners could connect with their individual login details.
Social Space

Social spaces were present around the faculty building as well as virtually. The entrance to the main building was a meeting spot for learners before and after classes and there was a consistent group converging in the area throughout the day. The foyer area just inside the entrance was another space that was used in this way, particularly on the odd days that it rained. In the basement level, at the bottom of the stairwell, was another foyer like area. The space was a walkway to the library and to other classrooms on this level; however, it was large enough to accommodate a small number of tables and chairs. Vending machines and microwaves were located in an alcove to the side of this foyer/seating area, although they were rarely used. On the ground and second floors, stone benches set into alcoves in between classrooms had space enough for two learners to sit comfortably, or three with less room.

Beyond the faculty buildings, many bars/cafés were located within a few minutes’ walk. There was ample seating for groups to gather while having a coffee and something to eat. I did not see these spaces being used for learning purposes on many occasions and they were primarily social spaces for those learners I saw using them. It was only on the odd occasion that I noticed a learner from the classes I was observing in a nearby bar/cafè. The cost of buying an item from the café/bar may have influenced learners’ use of the space. Due to the poor economic conditions being experienced by such a large portion of the population in Spain, drinking or eating out was very much a luxury. Presumably spaces within the home were used for learning purposes; however the scope of my observations prevented me from seeing this.

UniOz 1

Postgraduate Translation Studies

UniOz 1 offers a postgraduate program that can lead to NAATI Professional certification. Learners who complete the program and receive a distinction grade or above for the NAATI exam, which is undertaken as an assessment task in the latter part of the degree, are eligible for recommendation to NAATI for Professional certification. The program is comprehensive, covering general and specialised translation, as well as interpreting. Theory, practice, ethics and professional links are included in the curricula. The program was undergoing changes at the time of my observations in 2014, with more flexible options being developed so that learners have more options surrounding program structure and electives to choose from.
The program was structured so that learners could choose whether to focus on translation, interpreting, or both. Streams were offered in translation and interpreting combined, as well as individually, with the program duration slightly longer for those completing a combined stream. NAATI certification was possible for interpreting and for translation in both directions. Learners generally completed the program with English as their L2 and a language other than English as their L1, and NAATI certification for translation was generally attempted from the L2 into the L1. Regardless of whether learners wanted to try for NAATI certification, they were able to select if they wanted to pursue an academic- or professional-focussed degree. The research stream would enable them to continue on with a PhD upon graduation and provided more room for electives, whereas the professional stream included more practical courses and was designed to lead to NAATI certification.

Courses taken throughout the degree were ample in content. Translation and interpreting theory was offered as an introductory course, with advanced courses focusing on translation and interpreting individually. Practical courses were offered in varied areas that would prepare learners for professional practice in an Australian community-based professional translating environment. Courses in the use of technology were compulsory, whereas specialised areas of translation and interpreting were offered as core and elective courses. There was the option for those with an L3 to pursue translation, however not interpreting, in that language. Electives focused on areas complimentary to translation and interpreting, as well as areas that targeted professional and research skills development.

Two courses were used for observation during one semester. Learners took both courses in their penultimate or final semesters. One course focused on specialised translation in the areas of legal, IT, science and medical, and the other prepared learners to undertake the NAATI test. Translation was covered in both directions, which were English into a language other than English, and vice versa. Over the twelve-week semester, a two-hour lecture was scheduled each week, followed by a one-hour tutorial. The lectures for both courses more or less followed a traditional lecture format, with a Power Point presentation supporting the information that was given orally. An online platform was used for communication between the course lecturer and learners, and for the submission of learning activities and assessment tasks. Activities completed online were shown at the beginning of each of the specialised translation lectures and general feedback was given to the group. For the NAATI preparation course, the online platform was used as a discussion forum for learners to raise questions, which were then used as the basis for deeper discussions during the lecture. Source texts that mirrored the text type for the NAATI test were set each week and
common pitfalls or problematic areas were analysed in the lecture and discussed with examples from various languages. While lectures were comprised of learners from all language streams, and had approximately 20 learners for the NAATI preparation course and around 50 for the specialised translation course, tutorials were language-specific.

Spanish does not attract high enrolments, which meant that tutorials had only three learners for the specialised translation course, and two for the NAATI preparation course. The classes followed the traditional practical translation format. The source text was shown on a projector while each learner took turns reading their target text aloud section-by-section. The tutor gave feedback to individuals throughout the class so that other learners could benefit from it also. As one course specifically prepared learners to undertake the NAATI test, which required the target text to be hand written, learners, in these classes practiced hand writing their texts for learning activities completed throughout the semester. They recorded the time it took them to translate and then to revise the text. Again, the class format was of the traditional type and each learner read aloud their target texts by section, offering comments on sections that were difficult. The tutor offered verbal feedback in class; however, written feedback was reserved for formal assessment tasks.

**Learner Profile**

Learners enrolled in the Spanish translation stream at UniOz 1 were a heterogeneous group. There were three learners enrolled in the specialised translation course and two enrolled in the NAATI preparation course. Some were enrolled in both courses and the total number of Spanish stream learners in the semester I observed was four. Of these four, three were stronger translators into Spanish and one was stronger into English. While I was not able to distinguish groups of learners from such a small group, their individual stories of why they were studying translation gives some insight into the profile of learner in the Spanish stream at UniOz 1.

Each learner had a unique story regarding why they enrolled in the program at UniOz 1; however, they all shared an interest in language and many had previously or currently worked in a profession that required language skills. One learner, a 35-45 year old local student, had previously sat for and passed the NAATI Professional exam however had never pursued a career in the area. Instead, he had followed a career as a language teacher. Ten years later, he was looking for a career change and wanted to heighten his chances of passing the exam, which led him to enrol in the program. Another learner of approximately the same age was similarly looking for a career change, along with a chance to travel outside of her home country. She was an international student and saw her time in Australia as being temporary. Intending to return to her home county eventually,
she wanted to ‘give it a go’ looking for work in Australia as a translator or interpreter, however did not envisage working in the area once back home. She had wanted a change from her life and job in medical research, which had become monotonous, and had chosen Australia for study because it was quite a different culture to her home country in Latin America. Another international student between the ages of 25 and 35 was similarly looking for an experience in another country. She had a deep interest in languages and literature, which was what led her to choose translation. She was not sure of what she wanted to do or whether she would return to her home county after graduating. The last of the four, a local student with a long work history in a language-related job simply wanted to add another skill to his repertoire. He did not envisage a change of career to be a translator or interpreter; however, saw it as a part-time employment option.

Physical Space

The UniOz 1 campus, located in a capital city, had all the amenities learners needed. It was located on a large plot of land that included departments and schools ranging from the social and health sciences, to law and business. The grounds included housing in the way of apartments, with a supermarket conveniently located and an array of cafes and food outlets on-campus. There were dedicated sports fields for various field-games, along with a gym and a swimming pool. There was car and bike parking, and the campus was well serviced by public transport. Once on-campus, there was little need to leave and it has a small village feel to it.

The outdoor areas were diverse and life on campus was vibrant. Tables with seating were available where there were food outlets, indoors and outdoors. Learners were often sitting in groups in these areas for a combination of study, eating and leisure purposes. In one outdoor area, it was common to see learners playing chess. Lawns, balconies and walkways along buildings were commonly used as eddy spaces (Souter et al. 2011), with small groups sitting and socialising or with work- and textbooks out. The outdoor areas contributed to a pleasant environment and offset the large concrete buildings.

The Translating and Interpreting school was located in a building that contained classrooms and offices. Educators of the translator education program had offices in this building, which also had administration offices for other areas of the university and that were not directly relevant to the translation program. There was a reception area where information could be sought about timetabling, availability of educators, and other administrative services. While the lecturers had an individual office, sessional staff members shared one. There were classrooms and computer labs; however, I only observed classes taking place in the computer labs in this building, as tutorials were
scheduled in these classes, and lectures were located in other buildings on the campus. Along the corridors there are cushioned benches with power outlets close-by, creating more eddy spaces, which I saw at one time being used for an educational Skype session.

The computer lab that was used for tutorials was a large room with approximately 20-30 computers. The computers faced towards three of the room’s four walls so that learners’ backs were facing the teacher. There was a projector screen that was connected to a desktop computer on a desk facing the middle of the room; this was intended for the tutor to use. A few tables and chairs were organised in the centre of the room so that a group of up to six could sit comfortably. It was at these tables that the NAATI preparation course took place, as the learners were required to hand write their target texts and had no need to use the computers.

The lecture theatre used for the NAATI preparation course was small and intimate. There was seating for sixty learners seated in rows of individual seats with an extendable desk attachment. A podium was located at the front of the room for the lecturer to use; it was not raised but had a microphone. The lecturer chose not to use the microphone, as it was not necessary for such a small room and the lectures were not routinely recorded. White- and blackboards covered the entire wall at the front of the room and a projector screen could be pulled down over the whiteboard when it was being used. The lecturer used PowerPoint presentations and so the projector was used in conjunction with a laser pointer to highlight areas being covered in the lecture.

**Virtual Space**

The university used an online platform as a resource available to educators and learners. It was an important information point for learners to access resources and information on upcoming assessment tasks. PowerPoint presentations were uploaded and there was a section where discussion took place regarding learning activities set for particular weeks. It served as a vital communication point between educators and learners. Weekly translation tasks for the NAATI preparation course were put onto Moodle and the lecturer asked learners to post questions or comments they had specific to their language group. As there were many more learners from the Chinese stream, there was a larger proportion of input concerning Chinese language and the lecturer regularly prompted for other language groups to contribute during the classes. The lectures were shaped around the questions and comments posted on the online platform. The specialised course used the online platform in much the same way, however there were structured questions that learners had to respond to rather than it being an open forum.
There were two libraries on-campus for learners to use: the main library and the law library. The main library was located close to the translation and interpreting school and incorporated study spaces, general and reserve collections along with periodicals and other reference materials. Computers were available for use throughout the library, along with workspaces for laptop use. Individual computers could be booked through the online system. There were a large number of desktop computers available in one space, as well as a minimal number being scattered throughout the building. Laptop workspaces were ample and came in varying forms. Almost all seating in the library had access to a power supply. Individual study desks were equipped with power and Ethernet sockets so that learners could connect and power their devices. Those learners using larger tables were able to access power points nearby. Individual desks were generally grouped together with either a small, or no divider, and were scattered throughout the building. Additional seating in the form of modern chair and table combinations were along the walls among the book collection. Again, these had easy access to power. Small rooms were available to use via an online booking system, or on a first-come first-served basis. Bookings, group or research work took priority if there were more than one group of people wanting to access the one room. Only some of these small rooms were equipped with a desktop computer and projector screen, while all rooms had seating for between two and eight, a small or large table, and floor to wall whiteboards. Wifi was available throughout all areas of the campus via individuals’ login details.

**Social Space**

Social spaces were dotted around the campus in indoor and outdoor areas. Learners were often seen gathered in groups and chatting on lawns and balconies, and in walkways between buildings. Lawns and the foyer near the library were common meeting points, as were the many coffee and food outlets throughout the campus. However, due to the sheer size of the campus and multitude of places that accommodated learners meeting and socialising, it was unclear whether any social spaces were preferred over others, and indeed whether some spaces were used exclusively for social purposes or whether social space was integrated into learning space. However, suffice to say the campus grounds provided a plentiful amount of social space.

The study lounge was a space that learners could freely access and use as they liked. It was adjacent to the library, was regularly used, and had a relaxed atmosphere. There was ample seating in a variety of options, although comfort levels were not particularly high for most. Tables were surrounded on two or three sides by couch-like seating, meaning that if someone had sat on an edge, which often happened, one had to disturb them to access the space next to them. Long couch-like benches ran along some walls, with power outlets generously distributed along lower
parts of it. These benches were quite narrow with the back of them padded with a rigid material and at an awkward angle for sitting. There were no tables or side tables to rest laptops on and so one was required to use such devices resting on the lap. Other seating options were a raised bar-style long table with high chairs and regular sized tables with individual stools. Neither of these was comfortable enough for extended periods of study and was not ergonomically designed; however, they sufficed for a quick bite, checking emails or other quick tasks.

Learners used this lounge space in a productive manner and seemed to get as much out of it as possible. In the times that I was in the room, noise was at a reasonable level and for the most part, people were using the space as it was intended. I often saw learners working independently until someone recognised them and sat down to join them for a conversation or to work as a group. Or vice versa, a group may disperse, leaving one or two to continue with their own individual endeavours. The space functioned as an extension of a library study area, with the only difference being that you could happily eat while working there, whereas food was prohibited in the library.

**UniOz 2**

**A Masters Program with Varied Options**

UniOz 2 was selected as a third setting because, as discussed in the previous chapter, access to some data was denied at UniOz 1. The program was NAATI-endorsed and could lead to Professional certification. UniOz 2 offered postgraduate translation and interpreting programs. A postgraduate certificate, a postgraduate diploma and a master degree were offered. Each qualification was built upon the foundation of the postgraduate certificate so that there was a clear pathway for learners to follow, which had multiple exit options. The graduate certificate could be paired with an English language program for those learners who needed dedicated language support before completing a higher education degree in English. There were options to complete combined master degrees that paired translation and interpreting with international relations or linguistics. When taken as a single master degree in translation and interpreting, the program spaned over two years and included courses directly related to practicing as a translator or interpreter.

The program led to NAATI Professional certification for those learners who received the minimum required mark on a NAATI-approved assessment task. Educators at UniOz 2 had opted to design their own assessment tasks to determine NAATI eligibility rather than follow NAATI’s testing
procedure. I go into more detail of how learners were assessed in the following chapter, but suffice to mention for now that learners had two chances of attempting a NAATI assessment. During the second semester, which would be the exit point for the graduate diploma, learners completed a NAATI assessment. The assessment was a folio and learners had to receive a distinction grade or higher for them to be eligible for NAATI certification. In the case that they did not receive the required grade, they were able to try for certification in the subsequent semester.

The classes I observed were taught primarily in English and were from the interpreting stream. Two courses were observed; one was an introduction to translation and interpreting theory and the other a dialogue interpreting course. They were both taken in the first semester of the first year. These specific courses were selected because they included learners from all language groups. Classes were conducted in English, which meant that I could follow events easily.

The content of each class was available online for learners to access in their own time. The lecturer recorded each class through multiple microphones. One stayed with her, while another was passed around the room to each learner that was participating in discussion at the time. In addition to audio-recording the events in class, the microphones projected each person’s voice so that all in the room could clearly hear. Learners could later access the audio-recordings via the university’s official online platform, along with any PowerPoint or other audio-visual materials used during the class. Further materials were provided on the online platform, which were designed to guide individual learning. The depth of these materials depended on the course to which they belonged, with some including detailed instructions and learning activities and others focusing on resources that learners could consult as they saw fit for assisting their learning.

The same program was taught at a partner university overseas. The first two semesters of the program were taught at the partner university by educators from UniOz 2. The courses were taught in an intensive manner over a short period of time; however, the content was the same as that used in Australia. Learners had the option of exiting the program after two semesters and gaining a graduate diploma in translation and interpreting, or they could come to Australia to complete the final semester of the master degree. If they chose to complete the master in Australia, they would have the opportunity to complete the NAATI-approved assessment and be considered for NAATI certification.

Classes were run in an interactive manner. The lecturer facilitated discussion by introducing concepts and asking for input from the class. Input was sought in the way of practical examples of what was being discussed, for example note-taking in consecutive interpreting, as well as opinions
being sought on particular issues. Various learners were asked for their contribution and on many occasions others contributed without prompting. Although some did not participate in group discussions, they were still engaging with the material and activities in class. On at least one occasion in each class, the lecturer divided the class into small groups of two or three where they discussed ideas or engaged in role-plays of an interpreting situation. All learners participated in these small group activities, including those that contributed very little or nothing at all to the class discussions.

Interaction was promoted by a lectorial format. The classes I observed were scheduled as lectures; however, the high level of participation by learners, along with interaction between learners and between the lecture and learners, meant that the classes took the format of a lectorial rather than a lecture. That is, they were a combination of a lecture and a tutorial, as they combined active learning with passive delivery of core concepts. The lecturer went to great efforts to create such an interactive environment. Learners displayed nametags on their desks from the first class to assist the lecturer to learn their names. Given that almost all learners had foreign names that were not commonly known by the lecturer, this extra effort was warranted. By using individuals’ names with ease, a group conversation was easier to facilitate. The learners appeared to have adapted quickly to the lectorial format and engaged with it well.

The dialogue-interpreting course was co-facilitated by two educators. The classes were again run in a lectorial format and had even higher rates of learner participation than the theory classes did. During each class, a group of learners presented a practical application of the content that was covered throughout the semester. In the class that I observed, the group was presenting on the topic of interpreter ethics and did so with the assistance of role-plays that demonstrated scenarios. Both facilitators were taking notes while learners presented their materials; these notes were later used to assign a grade. The presentation was one of multiple assessment tasks that contributed to the learners’ overall grade for the course.

Practical examples were given in class to support the theories being discussed. Transcripts of interpreting situations, short videos and role-plays were all used to show learners how the theories introduced in readings would happen in real interpreting situations. When learners were performing role-plays in small groups, they were instructed to record their conversations on their smart phones or tablets so that they could review them at a later stage. Conversely, theory was used to explain practical examples. Theoretical frameworks were given to learners and then they were asked to apply them to particular situations. One example of this was in relation to interpreter ethics. Learners were asked to discuss example dialogues and categorise them according to a
continuum of the interpreters’ role. Learners broke off into small groups to discuss and then the educators facilitated a class discussion for each example dialogue.

**Learner Profile**

The learner profile at UniOz 2 was similar to that at UniOz 1. The vast majority were international students, with more than half being Chinese speakers. After Chinese, the highest enrolments were in Korean and Japanese. European languages, including Spanish, were the minority. Given that the program was a postgraduate degree, learners were generally aged over 25 and came from various academic and professional backgrounds. After observing only three classes, it was difficult to group learners into firm categories or to gain a detailed account of their stories, as I did with learners at UniEspaña and UniOz 1. However, some general comments on the overall characteristics of the group can be made. There were some learners who had previously worked as translators and interpreters, some who had completed degrees in translation and interpreting, some who had worked or studied in other language-related fields and others who came from non-T&I backgrounds. In summary, it was an eclectic mix of learners that came from a range of professional and academic backgrounds.

**Physical Space**

The university campus was located in a capital city. Similar to UniOz 1, it accommodated the majority of all faculties and departments and there was little need to leave the campus once there. Sporting grounds, food outlets, offices, classrooms and other indoor and outdoor meeting spaces were scattered throughout the campus.

The classrooms for each course were of medium size. Although the class was scheduled as a lecture, it did not take place in a lecture theatre. There was seating for between 30 and 40 learners at individual desks and the furniture was light enough to be moved around the room easily. The beginning of the dialogue interpreting classes was dedicated to rearranging the furniture in a horseshoe shape to accommodate learner presentations and subsequent discussion. For the theory classes, the tables and chairs were left in small rows of two, three or four desks scattered throughout the room. At the front of each room was a whiteboard, projector screen that was connected to a computer and a document camera. There was a desk at the front to one side, which was where the computer and a podium that was connected to a microphone was located.

The space at the front of the room was used for role-plays. Learners came up in groups of three and sat in a triangular configuration that reflected the positioning of interpreter, professional
and the non-English speaker that is common to a community interpreting setting. The role-plays were used to demonstrate the interactions and the nature of turn taking in community interpreting and were referred to in subsequent discussion. During other role-plays, when the class was split into small groups and they performed them concurrently, chairs were moved about the room so that they had sufficient space to carry out the task without disruption from a neighbouring group. The lecturer was able to walk around the room with ease to listen to each group individually.

The library was located in a large building with multiple floors. Ample seating was provided throughout the building, with many individual desks in silent study areas. Areas of ‘dead’ space in walkways or between shelving were transformed into eddy spaces by the placement of cushioned seating with desk attachments. Group study spaces had tables with seating for four to six people and high bench-style desks. Individual booths were available to book and were equipped with a large screen that could connect to a computer, whiteboards and seating for up to eight people. There was a constant hum of conversation in the group study area of the library.

**Virtual Space**

Moodle was the official online platform used by learners and educators. Materials were posted for each course, which were designed to guide and scaffold learning. They outlined what would be covered each class and included learning activities that learners had to complete. Recordings of lectures, when available, were uploaded and could be downloaded as needed. The depth of materials covered on the online platform varied between courses, with some providing detailed guided learning and others emphasising learning resources that learners could consult as needed and directed by themselves.

Nearly all learners used their portable devices in class. Laptops and tablets were the preferred devices, with smart phones being used secondary to these. Mobile phones were used for browsing social media, text messaging and browsing various websites.

Wi-Fi was available throughout the campus for learners and educators to connect to with their individual login details. Power outlets were provided at all individual and group seating configurations in the library; however, some eddy spaces did not have a power supply close-by.

**Social Space**

There were ample meeting spaces for learners to socialise throughout the campus. Indoor options included the library and eddy spaces in foyers, corridors and passageways in various
buildings. There was a large building that was home to many services and amenities and was commonly used by learners to meet and socialise. There were pool tables, various food outlets and spaces that could be used temporarily for expos.

The above descriptions of the translator education programs, the learners, and the educational and social spaces available for use at site were intended to provide you with a rounded picture of each site. Understanding the structure of programs, the profile of learners enrolled in them, and the spaces available for learners and educators to use was essential before proceeding to the following three chapters, which discuss how teaching, learning and assessment took place at each of the three sites.
Chapter 6: Student-Centred Translator Education in Context

Introduction

The three sites examined in this research used student-centred learning to varying degrees. The context of education in each setting, Spain and Australia, influenced the way educators used the approach, and how learners received it. Spain’s higher education system has only recently begun using student-centred learning on a large scale. The European Higher Education Area and the Bologna Process were significant motivators for the implementation of the approach across the country. Australia on the other hand, has used student-centred learning for several decades. Interestingly, fieldwork revealed that the use and reception of the approach was influenced and impacted by more than the education system’s familiarity with it. Educators’ and learners’ previous experiences with, and knowledge of, student-centred methods were significant, as was curriculum design. This chapter details the way that student-centred learning was observed as being experienced at UniEspaña, UniOz 1 and UniOz 2 by drawing on data collected during fieldwork. Discussion is framed within the theoretical areas which were raised in Chapter 1, with the relevant sections being titled ‘Translator Education’, ‘Student-Centred Learning: a journey to higher education’, ‘Collaboration within student-centred learning’, ‘Teaching and Learning’, and ‘Assessment in Translation Studies’

UniEspaña: student-centred learning in a hostile environment

Education in Spain has recently embraced student-centred teaching and learning practices and learners are being introduced to them by varying degrees. While in Spain I attended a congress on best teaching practices for social science and law undergraduate and postgraduate programs4, and listened to presentations that covered a range of student-centred methods. The topics included the advantages of using electronic platforms, docudramas, authentic assignments, and using practical classes to complement theory. Each theme was presented in a way that suggested it was a new and exciting development for the presenter; however, aside from the presentation that covered

4 Congreso internacional: buenas prácticas docentes en estudios de grado y posgrado de ciencias sociales y jurídicas. 15-16 May 2014.
docudramas, there did not appear to be much innovation offered that would be relevant to an audience with previous experience using the approach. Speaking to the lecturer of the courses I observed about the prevalence of student-centred learning in Spain, she commented that although some education systems are culturally more adapted to the methodology and have embraced it for a longer period of time, such as the UK, Spain’s education system had not. The lecturer further commented that within UniEspaña’s translation faculty, only a minority of educators use student-centred learning. Those educators that did use the approach generally belonged to the English stream or were past learners of this lecturer, meaning that the implementation of student-centred learning in Spain via the Bologna Process was not their first experience with the approach.

An increase in autonomous learning appeared to be a recent development within the higher education system in Spain, and it was not without its challenges. Resulting from the Bologna process, the Translation and Interpreting Degree at UniEspaña allocates ECTS credits for a course, splitting them between contact and non-contact hours. Class hours remain high when compared with other student-centred education systems. Four hours are allocated to each course, and a typical learner takes five courses per semester; totalling 20 contact hours per week. For the learners in this study, the average amount of time spent outside of class was between four and six, as per a self-recorded project management sheet that formed part of their continuous assessment. Presuming that roughly the same number of hours is spent outside of class hours for their other courses, learners would have a workload of approximately 40 hours per week. The lecturer commented that in Spain, cultural and administrative practices limited using contact hours flexibly. In an attempt to solve difficulties surrounding contact hours, educators were allocated a room for a set number of hours per credit point. The result was high contact hours which then restricted the time available for learners to engage in independent learning outside the classroom.

During observation of the specialised translation practice courses at UniEspaña, I watched as the lecturer used a student-centred teaching methodology to a group unaccustomed to learning in this way. The course was divided into units, which covered different topics and text types. Semester 1 covered scientific, technical, economic, commercial and legal texts, whereas semester 2 covered texts relating to legal processes, government registries, succession, adoption, and economic and commercial matters. Over the two semesters, multiple readers (photocopied materials) were provided, which included a bibliography and instructions for each unit, relevant background readings, and source texts accompanied by a translation brief. Learners were divided into groups of between 5 and 7 and a calendar was provided that gave each group a date by which they had to complete a translation task within a project management model. The completed project was then
presented to the rest of the class orally with the support of audio-visual materials. Included in the semester 1 reader, and provided via the electronic platform in semester 2, were articles on how to work well as part of a team. Also included was a table that showed the different roles that each group member had to undertake to complete the translation assignments, which were project manager, researcher, terminologist, translator/s, editor, and reviser. In the third class of semester 1, the lecturer asked what the learners’ experience of group work was and whether they had ever been told how to work in groups. One learner responded:

There is always someone who does nothing.

The lecturer then asked:

Were you told how to work in a group? Do you learn from your fellow group workers?

She went on to explain that working in a group means

trusting your fellow group members

and emphasised this theme throughout the two semesters. The lecturer encouraged learners to rely on their fellow group members and to think of what each role would need to complete the translation assignment successfully. Although the learners were given various resources and tools to direct their own learning, they remained resistant to embracing and making use of them.

A lot of time and energy was spent by the lecturer to motivate and encourage learners to share information and participate in class discussions. Open questions were asked to the whole class on a number of occasions during each class. When responses were not forthcoming, the lecturer directed questions to the groups that had been formed for completing translation exercises. They were asked to share how they had found certain aspects of the tasks, for instance, how the researcher evaluated information sources or how the group communicated with each other. These prompts were examples of how the lecturer made determined efforts to engage learners in group discussions. However, instead of moving in this direction, many learners resisted collaboration and focused on their own interests.

A high level of competitiveness was present among learners, which was mentioned in the previous chapter’s section titled ‘Bright Learners with Worldly Experiences’, led to them being protective of their knowledge and not wanting to share ideas. One learner commented to me that it contributes to why she doesn’t speak in class. She was embarrassed to speak English in front of classmates that have big egos about their level of English. She understood everything that was said
in class and had no problem speaking in front of native speakers; it was a unique feeling to this class. An educator suggested that learners from UniEspaña’s translation faculty are generally very high achievers. As mentioned in Chapter 5’s section titled ‘Undergraduate Translation Studies’ for UniEspaña, the program’s English stream attracted one of the highest entry scores of all undergraduate programs in the country. Entry grades were determined by exams, which required learners to fiercely compete with anyone else applying for entry into the program. One learner spoke of the lack of camaraderie throughout the faculty, which he attributed to the high level of competitiveness. It gave him a negative feeling towards the faculty and clouded his university experience. Another spoke to me about the reluctance of a fellow group member to share resources with her while they were completing a translation assignment; both were assigned translator roles in their group and it was only during the presentation that she realised he had found information that would have helped her complete her sections but had not shared it. I expand further on competitiveness, and how this interacted with learning, in Chapter 8’s section titled ‘Competitiveness’; however, suffice to say at this stage that these experiences of competitiveness within the faculty contributed to learners resisting student-centred practices.

Theoretically, each class should have included the active involvement of learners, whether through their participation in their groups’ presentations, or by participating in discussions spurred by other presentations. The lecturer put a significant amount effort into shaping her role in the class as one of a facilitator or coach. She continually posed open-ended questions so that learners could construct their own knowledge. Her physical positing in the classroom, that she sat to the side of the room in one of the front rows, also attempted to blur the traditional boundary between educator and learner. However, in spite of these efforts to create an environment in which learners could construct their own knowledge by discussing and debating ideas, learner participation remained low, and in the case of semester 2 it was close to non-existent. Participation from the wider class occurred during presentations where translation challenges had not been solved successfully, or not at all, whereas the groups that had completed the translation assignment to a high standard provoked less interaction between the lecturer and the class, and between the presenting group and the class. To promote more discussion, the lecturer often had to revert to a transmissionist approach (Kiraly 2000) and provide information and knowledge to learners in the form of mini-lectures throughout the class.

The format of the classes remained roughly the same throughout each semester. When a new topic was introduced, the lecturer covered basic background knowledge that learners would need to complete the translations. She gave bibliographic details of useful books for research of a
source text as well as mono- and bilingual dictionaries and glossaries. The other classes consisted of a group presenting a text and the steps they had gone through to produce it. First, the project manager presented any issues they had encountered while carrying out their role and commented on the time taken to complete it. Next, the researcher walked through the documentation found that would assist the translator: where it was found, what it included and how it would be useful. The terminologist presented their spread sheet, which included the source language term and definition, the target language definition and the term selected, as well as the sources used to decide on that particular term. The translator ran through the target text, speaking about the parts that were challenging, before passing on to the editor and then to the reviser. The editor’s presentations were usually brief and it was when the reviser was speaking and the target text was on the projector screen that things got juicy. Throughout each individual’s presentation, the lecturer asked questions to fill in gaps or to highlight an area that could be improved. On each occasion, she did this not just for the benefit of the presenting group, but so that the whole class could listen and contribute to any discussions that took place. Below are typical examples of the type of questions or feedback that would be given for each role:

**Project Manager:**

PM: it was my first time as project manager. All my group members met their deadlines. I didn’t have a problem.

Lecturer: no technical problems?

PM: there was one tech problem, that they couldn’t upload the file. And we kept in contact by Facebook.

In this example, the lecturer was urging the learner to share with the class a problem that she was aware of. The group had informed her of the failed uploading of a file and she wanted the whole class to hear about this, as technical problems are commonly faced and it would be valuable to hear how one group had handled it. In the following excerpt, which is of interactions between a learner in the researcher role and the lecturer, the lecturer pushes for a greater explanation of the process they went through to find the documents that were being shown. Group members who had completed later parts of the project had complained that the research was insufficient for them to complete their tasks easily. The lecturer prompted them to expand on why this was the case so that the whole class could benefit from their experience.

**Researcher:**

Lecturer: where did you look for information? Where did you have problems?... But where did you look? How did you search for it?... Why is he writing it?
**Researcher:** In order to find appropriate text... I found some [texts] for family but I wasn’t sure of the relationship between them... When I had to look for a parallel text I wasn’t sure if it was an affidavit, a declaration or something else.

**Lecturer:** What was missing, those of you that complained there wasn’t enough?

Feedback given to learners who had completed the terminologist role often encouraged them to be more critical of the sources that informed their decisions around terminology. In the following example, the lecturer encourages learners to consider the country of origin of the website consulted, and offers this as one strategy when assessing the reliability of a source selected.

**Terminologist:**

The lecturer gives feedback on terminology table as the presenter goes through it. Says that some look like direct Google Translate translations and that using quotation marks to Google an expression can show whether it is a common English expression. Look at where the page is from – if it is a Mexican or Spanish page written in English it may already be a poor translation from Spanish. The presenter makes changes on doc with track changes on while suggestions are given to improve expressions. The lecturer suggests some and asks the class for the suggestions for the more obvious ones.

The lecturer instructs terminologist to search for ‘autonomous communities’ used in English-written sources that are not translations. She searches on Google on the computer that is connected to the projector. A class member offers her findings of when she searched for it. The lecturer offers advice regarding trusted sources on Internet – European/multilingual sites tend to translate poorly by using calques and not searching for the proper English term.

The most extended dialogue often took place when the translator/s role was being presented. The translation process, or understanding the meaning contained in the source text and then selecting appropriate renditions in the target language, is complex. It requires various strategies to help one produce a target text that is meaningful and cohesive. In the below example, the lecturer was coaching learners through strategies to help navigate their translation decision-making. She challenged them to assess various options and to be analytical when deciding which to use.

**Translator:**

The lecturer reads the first few sentences aloud. She picks up some minor errors and proposes questions to the group/class. After the first section she reads the ST to herself and seems satisfied that there were no more issues. She moves onto the next section and picks up the word ‘drafted’ as problematic. There are other problems with the sentence and she directs the group to make changes to the document. The next sentence she reads from the ST and then asks questions related to [its] comprehension... ‘Explain it to your grandmother’ she offers as a way of thinking about what the meaning is. Collocations are highlighted as problematic and the lecturer asks questions to prompt the group to come up with other options. “Not so much following the words but what are
they trying to say?”... The lecturer points out a well-translated phrase and says that this can be used in revision to maintain consistency in expression throughout the document.

Lecturer: Where did you look?
Translator: Dictionary.
Lecturer: Not a good idea. Well depending on which type of dictionary, if it’s a legal dictionary then maybe. Look in a monolingual dictionary first if you don’t understand the term.
The translator Googles afección.
Translator: Which one do you like?
Lecturer: No, which one do you like?
The translator changes the search to “afección fiscal translate”. Proz is the first page and the lecturer says to go to that.
Lecturer: See how we found it? Monolingual to understand what it is first. So remember the text that produces it and then the context and then bilingual.

Feedback provided for the role of editor focused on specific strategies to ensure that minor editorial errors were picked up. In the example below, the editor explains how a decimal point was removed in the English versions, as it conveyed an incorrect meaning. Spanish from Spain uses a decimal point where English uses a comma, which the translator in this instance had not picked up. The lecturer then emphasised the importance of checking figures.

Editor: 
Editor: Aquí quite el punto para decir que es mil.
Lecturer: Yep, figures. You’ve got to be careful with figures... The lecturer says that you have to check the numbers as to whether they were in positive or negative.

In the following example, the lecturer questions whether the reviser was aware of what was entailed in the role. This particular learner had missed a quite obvious error concerning how to express which day of the month it was. Although the learner was not ready to admit to being unaware of the reviser’s role, the lecturer pressed the point that a simple error such as this easily brings a translator’s competence into question.

Reviser: 
Lecturer: Did you look at how to revise?
Reviser: I looked at the role of reviser
Lecturer: It’s a minor mistake but you’re client will say ‘oh god, they don’t know it’s the 23-rd not 23-th’.

The presentations by the project manager, researcher and terminologist usually went slowly and involved very little interaction with the rest of the class. When chatting with learners outside of class, they often said that they tuned-out during these times. They commented that the format of
the class was repetitive and didn’t offer much interesting information, however they paid more attention once it was the translator that was presenting. While watching what was happening in classes, I noticed that during the first section of presentations, those that weren’t presenting were reading news articles (some related to the topic being covered), checking emails and Facebook, playing online games or using electronic devices for other activities unrelated to what was happening in class. Those without a device would sit quietly appearing as though they were listening intently, or others would work on assignments from other courses. When I asked one learner how she found the classes and commented to her that she looked as though she concentrated hard to understand what was happening, she said that she often tuned-out. Her face held an expression that although appearing to be concentration was actually masking her boredom.

The fact that learners were translating from their L1 into their L2 or L3 could be a reason that lexico-semiotic decisions were discussed more often than deeper analysis of decision-making throughout the entire translation process. However, I believe that the primary factor influencing the limited level of analysis reached in class was the minimal participation of learners in class discussion. The lecturer prompted for discussion frequently, often directing the conversation so that the learners could offer deeper analysis verbally. In the face of these attempts however, the analysis for the most part stayed on the linguistic level and required several prompts by the lecturer. Below is a typical example of prompts:

**Educator**: How will you paraphrase it to end the sentence? Silence. Try using bajo...

The lecturer: What does that paragraph mean? Paraphrase that paragraph in Spanish... What does it mean? Forget the words

**Learner**: Do you even need a verb there?

**Educator**: Do I need it? No. Empty verb

In this example, the lecturer is attempting to get learners to think outside of the words and focus more on the concepts and meaning held within the text. When no response if given to open-ended questions, she reverts to yes/no questions, which do not leave much room for extended responses. Other attempts to broaden learners’ conceptual thinking of approaching the translation process returned to linguistic discussion throughout the two semesters.

An exception to the limited participation and linguistic-level analysis was a class that involved discussion of the extent to which a translator can change the structure of a text. The source text was an adoption application letter written by a Spanish couple to adopt a child from India. It expressed the couple’s wishes for adopting, and specifically for wanting to adopt from India. Its content was emotional and repeated several motifs. Discussion of the source text surrounded
the boundaries and liberties a translator had when producing a communicative translation that suits its end purpose, as can be seen from the excerpt below.

**Lecturer:** Is it well written in the Spanish text?

**Translator:** No, it is very repetitive and I tried to make this simpler in English.

**Lecturer:** you need to ask yourself if it is repetitive for a reason…. So you tried to improve it based on the same structure. Can I change the structure? There is a lot of reorganisation that you could probably do as well. To make it a really good letter. Look at the criteria of a letter like this and why they want to adopt.

**Translator:** I tried to omit the repeated ideas from all over the text. It was all over the text and I didn’t see the point of saying it in every paragraph.

**Lecturer:** Is it more cheesy in US English than UK English? Can you be that cheesy in India? How cheesy can you be? This is something you acquire with cultural knowledge; it’s not linguistic knowledge.

**Lecturer:** I can’t invent emotions and reasons but as long as everything that needs to be said is said it is ok. We did this in the first semester with a letter trying to sell stuff. We rearranged it completely because they weren’t going to sell anything. And if they don’t sell it’s your fault, not theirs.

**Reviser:** I didn’t restructure or reorganise the text because I wasn’t sure to what extent I could do that.

**Lecturer:** you weren’t sure how far you could restructure. Are you sure now how far you can?

**Lecturer:** It’s really difficult to gauge how cheesy you can be. It’s difficult in your own language, let alone a second language.

The higher level of translation challenge analysis and the increased participation made this class particularly interesting. A reason for higher-level analysis and participation could be that the translation challenge being discussed – the boundaries of structural change within a text – was exemplified in a clear but emotive manner in the text provided. An emotive letter to be included in an adoption application provided an interesting and thought provoking basis for discussion of boundaries to take place.

In the above description of UniEspaña, I have demonstrated how student-centred learning was consistently resisted by learners. In spite of classes being structured specifically to increase participation and promote collaborative knowledge construction, learner participation remained low and a passive approach to learning was taken. Learners relied on the lecturer to transmit knowledge rather than taking a more active role in their learning. Similar to educators at UniEspaña, educators at UniOz 1 made a concerted effort to encourage student-centred learning, which was in line with a university-wide learning approach. And while learners still resisted it, their reasons for doing so
were different. Below I detail how student-centred learning was enacted at UniOz 1, where the NAATI test was integrated into the curriculum.

**UniOz 1: trying hard for harmonious learning**

UniOz 1 had a clear commitment to using student-centred learning and it was evident that this had been the case for an extended time. Student-centred principles were evident in the campus layout, the program curriculum and in the teaching and learning methods used in the classroom. In this section, I detail how these principles were displayed in the three areas. Drawing on examples of interactions in the classroom, comments made by learners and educators, and from observations I made while conducting fieldwork, I demonstrate the challenges of enacting student-centred learning when the program is constrained by NAATI’s testing instrument.

Student-centred learning supports were visible throughout the university campus and on their website. As described in Chapter 5, the library was configured so that learners could easily meet in groups and collaborate when needed. For the most part, talking was permitted in the library, although some seating areas were designated silent study zones. Helpful and friendly librarians who could assist learners with locating resources and conducting research were available for consultation at various locations. There was a Learning Centre that provided academic support to learners in a number of ways. Online resources covered writing skills, critical thinking, reading and note-taking, oral presentations, time management, referencing, plagiarism and exam preparation. The resources were in the form of self-help guides that learners could use as needed so that they could improve their autonomous learning. Group work was covered in an online guide, which detailed strategies for managing group work, as well as the advantages of learning in this way. Workshops and courses were additionally provided, which allowed a face-to-face environment for those who preferred to receive support in this way. Specifically aimed at international students, who accounted for the vast majority of enrolments in the T&I program, there was an online orientation resource that provided practical information around enrolment, student identification cards, IT and general safety and wellbeing. There were also comprehensive online tutorials that gave detailed information about settling into university life in Australia, how to manage your studies, and how to prepare for exams. It was evident that these services, facilities and resources were designed with the intent of supporting independent and collaborative learning and knowledge construction.
The scheduling of classes as lectures or tutorials affected how student-centred learning was enacted. Lectures were held in lecture theatres where the furniture could not be moved. Scheduling classes as either lectures or tutorials distinguished whether transmissionist or student-centred learning methods would be favoured. Traditionally, lectures favour transmissionism, as they provide a platform for educators to impart knowledge to learners, rather than for learners to actively participate and create the knowledge themselves. Tutorials on the other hand are generally structured around discussion and individual and collaborative knowledge construction. The combination of the two allowed for transmissionist and student-centred methods to be used where appropriate. In the case of the specialised lecture, it was an opportunity for educators to give learners necessary background information for certain areas of specialisation, or to direct them on how to conduct research needed to complete translation assignments. The tutorials on the other hand were a space where learners and educators could engage in deeper discussions surrounding translation strategies and the difficulties and challenges learners had encountered while translating. Recognising the benefits of such a combination, one learner commented:

They’re compatible. Yeah, so lectures do go hand in hand with what we’re doing (Learner 1, Site 2)

The same learner recognised how the lectures and tutes complimented each other, as shown here:

If anything, they’re [lectures] a little bit more easy to digest. But the work in the tutes has been really like world, eye-opening, real, in terms of how hard it’s been. Like what you could potentially get (Learner 1, Site 2)

The physical configuration of the rooms additionally affected how student-centred learning was experienced and practiced. One lecture theatre was medium sized but the number of learners attending the class was small. The smaller class size allowed for a greater level of interaction. However, the other lecture theatre was large and accommodated a considerable number of learners; its layout was not nearly as conducive to class or group discussions as the smaller room. Although the scheduling and room configurations challenged the ability of educators to enact student-centred methods, they made a concerted effort to overcome these challenges. Questions were directed to the group and to individual learners in the large lecture theatre, as seen in the below example taken from field-notes:

What more can you do? … yeah, if you had one in your personal professional network you could ask a SME [subject-matter expert] (Educator 1, Site 2)

At other times, questions were asked by learners, which then led the educator to deviate from what was being said at the time to resolve the query.
During a lecture, the educator guided learners in a sight translation exercise. Sight translation is where segments of text are translated on the spot without consulting further resources. The learners were instructed to translate the English text into their target language. Below are excerpts taken from field-notes relating to the exercise, which demonstrate how sight translation was used as an active learning activity during a lecture.

We'll do a small sight translation task that is going to be timed and stressful! [said in a light jokey way]. In sight translation as a universal we tend to be quite literal. ... it's difficult to process these texts. Everyone ready with a pen and paper, electronic device, whatever you need (Educator 1, Site 2).

After learners had produced their translations, the educator asked questions of the group as a way of prompting analysis of their translation strategies and approaches.

Would it be more literal translation you went for or meaning? How many sentences were there? How many clauses were there? (Educator 1, Site 2).

I'll put the next one up which is a medical text. Think about the number of sentences, how many clauses there are before looking at the content (Educator 1, Site 2).

The exercise was a good example of how an educator showed their commitment to using student-centred learning in the face of difficulties. That the class was scheduled as a lecture, and that the room configuration did not support an interactive environment, did not deter the educator from giving learners the opportunity to use practical experience as the basis for discussing the strategies they used. The discussion that proceeded the exercise was limited by the room size, however, there still remained a short discussion by a handful of people surrounding how they tackled the task and which aspects they found challenging.

The smaller lecture theatre accommodated a higher level of discussion, which was actively encouraged by the lecturer. Although the seating configuration could not be changed, and all seats faced to the front of the room, the room was small enough that all could hear anyone that was speaking at any one time. The lecturer used examples from the weekly target texts that learners produced as the basis for discussion. Learners put sections of their work that they had found challenging onto the online platform, which was then shown during classes for discussion. The source texts were always in English, however, the target texts that were produced were in a range of languages. In this way, challenges specific to particular languages could be discussed, which offered learners an opportunity to see how others working with the same language solved them. Here is an
example of a target text, accompanied by the learner’s explanation of translating in this way, which was shown from the online platform during a class:

**Target Text:** Algunos no solo eran conscientes de la situación de los aborígenes, sino que hacían lo posible para solucionarla

*Some were not only conscious of the situation of the Aborigines, but were doing what was possible to solve it.*

**Explanation:** Situation does not necessarily have the negative connotation of ‘disadvantage’, but saying this situation needs to be ‘solved’ compensates for that loss by clarifying it involves a problem.

When examples such as these were shown, learners from the same language group actively participated in discussions. Perhaps a reason for the higher level of active participation at UniOz 1 than at UniEspaña in these situations was that all learners had completed the translation exercise. It was only the presenting group at UniEspaña that was obliged to complete the exercise. As all learners at UniOz 1 had translated the text, they were aware of which aspects of the source text were challenging, and had already had to deal with these. They therefore had practical experience to use as a basis for discussion, rather than relying on hypothetical inferences or having to think of solutions on the spot.

Educators dedicated a significant amount of time and effort to encouraging and supporting learners to analyse their translation strategies. They encouraged learners to consider various options when producing target texts, and to be aware of the reasons that influenced their choices. Much of the class was dedicated to discussing options and decisions, with the aim of deepening learners’ understanding of translation challenges, and of their own practices. Below are some examples of such encouragements used by educators:

- There are no set rules but there are principles. What are the principles you rely on when delivering a translation? (Educator 3, Site 2)

- So next time … I would like to see your options. What you tried and then we can discuss this more productively (Educator 3, Site 2).

- We only have to cover one text today so we can have more dialogue (Educator 3, Site 2)

In these examples, the lecturer pressed learners to think of translation in broader theoretical terms, and to apply that knowledge to their practice. Discussions such as these were actively encouraged by educators in all classes. In the next example, the educator does not move onto another point before being satisfied that the learner has grasped the difference between Britain and the UK. The
point was particularly important to clarify, as it arose in the course that leads to NAATI certification, and a misunderstanding in the NAATI assessment would impact the learner’s mark and possibilities of becoming certified. After debating what the difference between the UK and Britain is, the educator asks:

¿Ha quedado claro? Bien, seguimos (Educator 2, Site 2).

Is that clear? Good, let’s continue.

The above example was typical of the extra time and effort spent by educators when discussing translation in the context of the NAATI test. In the below excerpt from my field-notes, the educator is encouraging learners to analyse their translation decisions within the context of NAATI.

Why we have to wonder why this would be wrong in NAATI text? Why can’t we just translate with confidence? What make us wonder if it is ok? (Educator 3, Site 2)

Discussions inevitably surrounded the meaning that was included in the source text and that was to be transferred to the target text. Resources were consulted and translation options tossed back and forth as the group considered them. Learners were pushed to justify their decision when it differed from the consensus of others within the same language group. Below are some examples of discussions of source text meaning, how it could be transferred to the target text, and how resources could be used to aid the process.

Are they simply not sleeping because they are taking too much time to study? Or are they anxious about studying and so can’t sleep (Educator 3, Site 2).

Is ‘help is near’ awkward in your language? In Chinese, Korean, Japanese, French? Why can’t help be near? (Educator 3, Site 2).

Me tienes que justificar lo de ambulación. Porque jamás me ha escuchado (Educator 2, Site 2).

You have to justify that one ambulación. Because I’ve never heard it.

No me encantó, pero como estaba en la lista. Por la estructura de... I thought of cuidados ambulatorias but I thought it referred more to being active than about a change (Educator 2, Site 2).

so we’re left with 2 – cuidados ambulatorios and ambulación. Which do we go with? I thought of movilidad but I’m left in doubt (Educator 2, Site 2).

Vamos a linguee... grupos de base, a nivel base, nivel de raíz, bases populares.. hay muchos (Educator 2, Site 2).

Let’s go to linguee... grupos de base, a nivel base, nivel de raíz, bases populares.. there’s heaps.
Learners from the Spanish stream reported that the large number of international students impacted the academic level of the program, as well as the level of participation. Regarding the academic level in classes, one learner commented that the content depends on the students’ abilities because it is mixed abilities. Students are different levels. Some students they bring very good points and some never speak. There are a variety of input because there are mixed abilities (Learner 3, Site 2)

While another commented:

> I was really not impressed by, I guess some of um... Ok, I’m, the thing is, if the pool of students that are working in master’s degree in linguistics, in interpreting and translation is really high then you learn a lot from like being in your lectures... because of the constant feedback. Considering that, like being honest, ninety per cent of the students are not proficient in English. I did find it, like a real waste of time. Like the tutorials were fantastic because it’s so few of us so it’s like a one-on-one thing and I really found it challenging (Learner 2, Site 2).

While this second comment demonstrates a clear dissatisfaction with the academic level in lectures, the first comment shows some consideration of the variety of strengths that learners brought to classes. The smaller class size in tutorials was another factor that impacted the level of participation, as there was more opportunity to engage in extended dialogue and deepen understanding of translation challenges and strategies.

Notwithstanding the reported impact of a largely international student cohort for translator education programs, NAATI’s testing and marking procedure significantly contributed to the limited effectiveness of student-centred learning. The confidential nature of the testing instrument, and specifically that the marking guidelines cannot be shared with learners (as discussed in more detail in Chapter 3: NAATI), affected the constructive alignment of the program. Constructive alignment ensures that the learning and assessment activities are aligned to the outcomes and objectives of the course and program (Biggs & Tang 2011; Kelly 2005). Learners could not be given clear guidance on how they would be assessed when they completed the NAATI test. Instead of being guided by explicit marking procedures, they had to rely on making sense of extended discussions surrounding translation strategies and the exam conditions of the NAATI assessment to discern which approaches to translation would be rewarded with a high mark. Taken from my field-notes, one learner commented:

> We need an alignment in the course. It is all up for discussion but we need to know how it affects the mark... Having criteria of marking exams is needed for guidance. It gives clarity from the beginning, of objective... (Learner 3, Site 2)
This uncertainty was a source of worry and concern over the outcome of their program, with learners commenting:

Because there are unknown factors I am very worried. I can practice every day but is this the right way according to this marking criteria? (Learner 1, Site 2)

We were giggling with... my colleagues the other day. We were thinking, gosh, you know, we could potentially sit for this whole degree and fail that. You know, that is a reality we’re faced with. And who is actually failing us? You know, and what are their qualifications? (Learner 1, Site 2)

Students would be more relaxed if you just had to work to be a translator rather than pass the test (Learner 3, Site 2)

From NAATI perspective creativity could be considered addition, distortion. And where are the guidelines to say? I think it’s interesting. You need to be competent. But then again it’s like a natural selection. Some people wouldn’t end up being professional (Learner 2, Site 2)

The level of worry and concern about passing the NAATI assessment were heightened by the high-stakes nature of the test. Learners were enrolled in a NAATI-approved degree so that they could attain NAATI certification. During an interview with one learner, the following comment was made:

You know, I’m riding everything on that [passing the NAATI test], like I really want that bloody thing. I want it badly (Learner 1, Site 2).

She reiterated that it was her main motivation for completing the program. Another learner made a comparison between the NAATI test and another high-stakes test, the IELTS test. She inferred that they were equally high in stakes, but that the resources provided to help candidates prepare for sitting the tests were markedly different, commenting that:

In IELTS there is so many examples of tests available so students can self-assess. Doesn’t happen for NAATI... There was no example of what would be acceptable in the exam with written examples (Learner 3, Site 2).

In another class, an educator recognised the restriction placed by NAATI in regards to providing examples of texts that had been used in past tests.

I wonder if we could find any examples in NAATI texts. The thing is we are not allowed to use their texts for our purposes (Educator 3, Site 2).

It was made quite clear that it was impossible for past tests to be used as a learning tool for learners completing a program that leads to NAATI certification, which created differences between how
learners could prepare for the NAATI test as compared to other high-stakes tests, such as the International English Language Testing System test (IELTS).

In spite of the array of student-centred supports, including a very concerted effort on the educators’ part, the extent of their effectiveness in the translator education program was limited. This may have been due to learners having come from diverse and varied education backgrounds, which meant that there were various levels of exposure to student-centred learning among them. However, I believe that in addition to this, the implicit imposition of a transmissionist approach through classes being scheduled and run as lectures and tutorials, and classroom layouts being unconducive to small group and class discussions, was the main reason why student-centred learning was hindered at UniOz 1. Other significant impacts on student-centred learning were a misalignment of NAATI’s testing instrument to the approach, and the secrecy surrounding its marking procedure.

**UniOz 2: towards a more harmonious approach**

As was the case for the English stream at UniEspaña, and on a university-wide scale at UniOz 1, student-centred learning principles were at the heart of education provided by UniOz 2. It was evident in the structure and delivery of programs, in the curriculum and in the classroom. Incorporating NAATI’s procedures into an education program remained a barrier to student-centred learning being delivered and received by educators and learners respectively. However, educators at UniOz 2 were creative and strategic in overcoming it. Below, I detail how student-centred learning took place, and then move on to how NAATI interacted with it.

UniOz 2 supported learners with a flexible approach to education. This approach further supported student-centred learning. Lectures were recorded and available online for learners to access at times that were convenient to them. Distance learning and part-time enrolments were offered so that a variety of people with different personal circumstances were accommodated. Similar to UniOz 1, various online and in-person supports were available to learners in an attempt to make higher education more accessible to a diverse cohort. Online workshops included those that were designed to help learners manage their studies, strengthen their study skills, develop critical thinking and improve their academic writing. Courses that were targeted to international students covered English language proficiency within an academic context. In-person consultations were available with Learning Advisors, who could help guide learners further with their academic writing and study skills. These resources and services were offered on a university-wide basis and were in
addition to any individual consultations with lecturers and tutors within the translator education program.

The classes that I observed at UniOz 2 were a good example of integrating minimal transmissionist methods within a student-centred approach. The classes ran as workshops rather than in a lecture/tutorial format, which as at UniEspaña, allowed for mini-lectures to be delivered when appropriate without this format dominating class time. There was a high level of dialogue between educators and learners, which consisted of a combination of small-group and whole-class discussions. During an interview with an educator, she commented on the high-level of interaction in classes where learners’ presentations were incorporated into and used as the basis for discussion:

As you can see in [refers to specific course], it’s almost a flipped classroom. Not quite, we haven’t quite got there…. We really, we make, we make students participate. So we set it up so they have to. And the feedback we get is fantastic. They are all, they really, they love those presentations because for the first time they’re forced to work in collaborative groups with other students and they find that really exciting (Educator 1, Site 3).

At times, learners were instructed to form small groups and discuss a certain point, which was then fed back to the entire group. At other times, whole-class discussions took place, with only some learners actively participating. Similar to class discussions at UniEspaña, there were some learners who preferred to make comments to those sitting next to them rather than to contribute to the group dialogue that was taking place in the class. To compensate for this, there were times when the lecturer addressed learners individually and asked for their opinion or past experiences. The lecturer’s knowledge of individual learner’s previous experience with interpreting, along with some incidental insights into their personal lives facilitated including more people in these whole-class discussions.

The lecturer encouraged learners to use practical and authentic examples to reflect on how they would practice as interpreters. There were some in the class who had professional interpreting experience. These experiences were exploited by the lecturer so that the rest of the class could hear other professional situations and how they were tackled. The lecturer’s own professional experience was used and learners took advantage of the opportunity to ask questions and advice on these examples of professional practice. In the below example, the lecturer used the example of an interpreter that misinterpreted a segment of conversation to prompt learners to think of how they would handle a professional situation where they did not understand something that was said.

**Educator:** so if you were interpreting in this situation, what would you do?

**Learner:** I would just explain what the expression means.
Educator: But this interpreter didn’t know what it means. So what happens?
Learner: you would have to ask for clarification of what a rolling maul is.
Educator: Exactly. (Site 3).

In another example, the lecturer opens a dialogue about different cultural practices between Australia and other countries when visiting a doctor. She had wanted them to put themselves in the position of someone who was unfamiliar with the Australian medical system.

Educator: so the doctors here feel that they need to build a relationship with the patient. So a patient that comes into our system are going to be wondering why they asking these questions.
Learner: the doctors are very friendly and every time they come in there is some chit chat to make you feel comfortable.
Educator: this is called building empathy. (Site 3).

An example of whether to accept a job that is beyond one’s abilities is used to explore the ethical decisions that professional interpreters have to make. In the below example, a learner and the lecturer share experiences they have had when they have had to question whether they were capable of completing the assignment.

Educator: Ethics says don’t accept work that you cannot do.
Learner: Usually they can’t resist the appealing of money
Another learner: I find that a lot of the time, I’m not experienced but I find that the employer or the agent want me to do it. ‘I’m not sure I can do it’ ‘no, no, no. you can do it’.
Educator: I think that happens a lot.
Learner: maybe I think this is great and the agency would not be satisfied with my work.
Educator: sometimes I have to accept without knowing if I can do the job. And this happens a lot.
Learner: have you ever quit a job?
Educator: no, struggle on. If you know what you’re doing, you know where to get the resources to complete the assignment. (Site 3).

Multimedia was used as a support to class discussions and practical activities. As a way of introducing a topic or point of discussion in relation to practice, the lecturer used a range of videos. The videos showed various interpreting examples in the form of role-plays, with much of the acting exaggerated so that the point being displayed was very obvious. The lecturer showed short sections of the interpreting dialogues and then asked questions to the class so that discussion could take place. At times, learners were guided in what to pay attention to during the video so that they were prepared for the discussion to follow. In the following example, the lecturer uses a video that was designed to educate people who use interpreting services so that they can understand what it is like to work with interpreters. She then asks learners to examine the role that the interpreter took in the situation.
**Educator:** What else did he do or not do as an interpreter?
**Learner:** he was not interpreting... he was too close to one of the speakers.

**Educator:** so what was his role?
**Learner:** as a friend or relative instead of being between two speakers.

**Educator:** so as being impartial... Anything else you picked up there?
**Learner:** they were having their own conversations and jokes.

**Educator:** exactly. The jokes were ‘in’ jokes. (Instance 1, Site 3).

In another video, the lecturer asks learners to take note of non-verbal communication when thinking about the role that the interpreter took.

**Educator:** Look at things like her eye contact, whether she intervenes, whether she takes a turn.

**Educator:** so in terms of the way the interpreter played out her role there?
**Learner:** I think she did an excellent job.

**Educator:** what makes you say that? (Instance 2, Site 3).

In another, she prompts learners to make a connection between the example shown on the video and the readings that have been set for the course. Again exploring the role of an interpreter, she pushes learners to consider the feelings of people involved in interpreting situations and how an interpreter’s behaviour may impact them.

**Educator:** so what would we call this?
**Learners:** coordination

**Educator:** so you’ve read the reading.
**Learner:** she not only interpreter between the lawyer and woman only, but for the brother in law.

**Educator:** so she had 3 people present, what did she have to do?
**Educator:** I notice you having a giggle. What about?

**Learner:** at the end, when the lawyer saw the name card. It is probably her husband.

**Educator:** did anyone feel uncomfortable with the interpreter?

**Learner:** a bit abrupt...

**Another learner:** I felt a little bit uncomfortable. I think she should have asked the customer. She just interpreted all that was said.

**Educator:** anyone have another opinion, there is another thing that comes to mind. No one? I think she was a bit bossy. There was a lot attention on her as the interpreter. Any other points you would like to raise? Would you feel comfortable in this situation?

**Learners:** no... because there are many people speaking and it’s complicated.

**Learner:** I think she could have done some whispering. (Instance 3, Site 3).

In this final example, the lecturer uses a video of a police interpreting situation where the interpreter tries to calm the suspect down when he begins swearing. She prompts learners to again
examine the role of an interpreter and to consider the consequences that certain interpreting
decisions could have.

**Learner:** the Korean guys seems to be really resentful and so doesn’t want to talk to the police.

**Educator:** yeah, so what did the interpreter do? ... So it’s going beyond the code. There’s another
word with a, remember. Well obviously accuracy, but there’s another word. Ad-advocacy. Do you
remember what that was? So she was advocating for that suspect. So what does an interpreter do
with swearwords and why?

**Learner:** I’m worried about her mediation because maybe he will be more upset if she pushes him.
I don’t think it’s a good idea.

**Educator:** so how did we make that decision? How did we get to the point that this is an
inappropriate response?

**Learner:** she took sides. She is supposed to remain in the middle of two parties.

**Educator:** so she’s supposed to be impartial. So she’s not doing it. What she’s supposed to do?

**Learner:** depends on what happens on how Mr Lee reacts but the policeman would lose trust in the
interpreter if the conversation goes on for too long.

**Educator:** so he can see.

**Learner:** he could be in danger.

**Another learner:** so looking from the tele- perspective he wouldn’t do it ...

**Another learner:** is it appropriate to interpret it in a good way?

**Educator:** is it? (Instance 4, Site 3).

In each of these examples the lecturer uses videos of interpreting situations as a point of discussion.
These discussions were platforms for learners and educators to collaboratively construct knowledge
within a student-centred paradigm.

Other teaching and learning methods were used in conjunction with multimedia during
classes. In the following example, the lecturer uses a mini-lecture format, along with multimedia
supports, as the basis of an interactive activity. She showed a slide show which depicted a
continuum of the interpreter’s role. While going through the slides, she explained five points along
the continuum where an interpreter’s role changed.

**Educator:** I will show some videos and in your groups I want you to decide where they fall in the
continuum. So you should probably take notes, and you’re in your groups. (Educator 1, Site 3).

The other co-lecturer then went around the room and assigned learners to groups, getting them to
move their seats so that they were facing each other.

**Educator:** so you’ve got 3 instances of interpreting. So I want you to go back to your normative
role. So you’ve now got 4 examples. So what I want you to do in your groups is to discuss each of
those and to discuss where you would put them on the continuum and why. (Educator 1, Site 3).
The mini-lecture provided learners with the theoretical knowledge they would need for the activity that was to follow. They were to discuss the role of the interpreter in each example and to justify their reasons for positioning the interpreter where they had on the continuum of the interpreter’s role. Before they could do this, two educators ensured that learners had a good grasp of the theoretical framework that was to be used, as well as the technical terminology to discuss it. On this occasion, the discussion between learners in their small groups, and then as a whole class, was rich and deep. The two lecturers, who were holding this class in collaboration, roamed the room during the small group discussions. They asked probing and prompting questions with the aim of deepening learners’ critical analysis of the interpreting situations they had watched on the videos.

After roaming and encouraging the groups to discuss the videos in relation to the continuum until they exhausted their ideas, the lecturers guided a short whole class discussion. This discussion was an opportunity for all learners to hear what was discussed in each group, and to add any comments or ask any questions that may have arisen from hearing the groups’ accounts. This particular activity was a good example of how transmissionist methods were integrated into a student-centred approach without undermining or challenging the principles upon which it is based.

UniOz 2 designed their own assessment task to determine whether a learner would be eligible for NAATI certification. And in an effort to make it more conducive to a student-centred learning environment than NAATI’s confidential testing instrument, educators at UniOz 2 designed it so that it was transparent to learners. Learners had to complete a folio of work that included translation assignments, a reflective journal and an exam. The exam was designed in a similar way to the NAATI test in that two source texts were to be translated within three hours. However, the marking differed significantly. Rather than following NAATI’s marking guidelines, educators from UniOz 2 had designed a rubric that detailed key assessment criteria. And quite different to NAATI’s in-confidence commercial document that was unavailable for learners to access, UniOz 2’s rubric and criteria were readily available to learners via the university’s online platform. In addition to the target texts, learners were required to supply an annotation that detailed which aspects of the source texts were problematic, how they overcame the problems and why they opted for the translation solution that they did. During an interview with an educator, it was explained that NAATI certification for the translation stream was granted based the overall grade for the course, as well as for the end of semester exam.

It’s one summative assessment. But it’s based on their, you know, portfolio of their work so they have to get a distinction to get NAATI. So we’ve placed the bar very very high... Very few students actually get it. But if they do, they’re very very good translators and interpreters (Educator 1, Site 3).
Learners had to achieve a distinction or above for the course overall, as well as for the exam, for them to be eligible for NAATI certification. The pass rate for the exam was the same as what was set at UniOz 1 and within NAATI’s testing instrument; however, the key difference was that learner’s eligibility for NAATI certification was determined not just by their exam result, but by their overall grade for the course. When I asked the lecturer at UniOz 2 whether the pass rate I was given for NAATI certification when attempted within an education program (40 to 50 per cent) would be correct for the program at UniOz 2, she responded that it sounded about right.

UniOz 2 used a variety of methods to increase the student-centred and collaborative approach used within the translation and interpreting program. Running each class as a workshop rather than as lectures and tutorials appeared to increase the level of participation from learners. The complementary use of multimedia supports and role-plays provided ample examples for engaged and deep discussions to take place, which allowed knowledge to be collaboratively created by learners and educators alike.

Collaboration was used at all three sites, although to varying degrees. In the following section, I discuss how boundaries between different types of spaces were challenged and blurred by the way that learners used them. This discussion draws on the descriptions provided in the previous chapter, which detailed the physical, virtual and social spaces that were available for use by learners and educators at all three sites.

**Learning Spaces**

This section focuses on the way physical, virtual and social space is used in relation to collaborative learning at UniEspaña and UniOz 1 and UniOz 2. I was unable to analyse how space was used at UniOz 2 in equal depth because the focus of data collection at this site was on classroom interactions between educators and learners, and between learners. Limited time and resources prevented me from collecting more extensive data on the use of learning spaces at UniOz 2.

**Blurred Spatial Boundaries**

Collaborative learning contributed to a blurring of boundaries between the traditional binaries of physical/virtual and social/learning spaces. While learners at UniEspaña and UniOz 1 were physically situated in a formal learning environment – the classroom – they were also connected to virtual spaces, which they used for informal learning and social purposes.
At UniEspaña, the classes were run in a presentation format where a group presented their translation assignment to the class within a project management model. The lecturer facilitated discussion of issues that arose from the presentation and from the target text the group produced. Documents created by the group were shown via a projector, and changes were made to reflect the discussion and input made by other learners and the lecturer. Learners used individual virtual spaces for socialising with other learners inside and outside the class, for communicating with learners about learning, for completing learning activities for other courses, and to complement the learning that was happening in the classroom. One pair of learners at UniEspaña frequently used Google Chat to share possible solutions to the translation challenge being discussed in class. They sat next to each other and used their individual laptops to research possibilities before sharing their solutions with one another. Regularly flicking through a number of pages, they toggled between learning and social activities in their virtual spaces.

At the beginning of each class, the presenting group retrieved their written materials from the online platform – a Yahoo Group – to use and refer to throughout their presentation. During discussions related to terminology, the lecturer often instructed learners to perform Google searches or to look-up online resources related to the source text. Learners took the initiative to conduct their own individual research on their devices and at times contributed this to the class discussion. During one class, a learner had a doubt about what was being discussed. She spoke in a low voice to the person next to her and a small discussion took place. A device was used to consult a small number of websites until they were happy with the solution found. Unfortunately, more often than not, the information found on devices in similar situations was shared only with classmates sitting close by, or not shared at all. The wide use of personal devices during classes, along with the main computer and projector being used to show translation options and conduct further research, contributed to the boundary between virtual and physical spaces being blurred.

At UniOz 1, the boundaries between physical/virtual and social/learning spaces were similarly blurred when collaborative learning was happening. Tutorials were held in a computer lab, which integrated virtual space into the physical space. During revisions of target texts in class, the tutor instructed particular learners to consult websites, corpora or other translation resources to assist in solving the translation challenge being discussed. At one point in a class, each learner and the tutor were conducting individual research for a few minutes on their own devices or computers. After each was satisfied with their translation options and justifications for these, a collaborative discussion took place that developed the understanding of the translation challenge.
A marked difference between UniEspaña and UniOz 1 however, was that the social/learning binary appeared to be upheld to a higher degree at UniOz 1. There was a much lower level of social activity on devices while learners were present in tutorials, when compared to UniEspaña. A few notable factors may have influenced the decreased integration of social and learning spaces. Firstly, the class size and classroom design of tutorials made any deviation from the task at hand obvious to others in the room. There was a maximum of three learners present in any one class and each learner’s computer screen was clearly visible to others in the room. Secondly, in contrast with a homogenous student group at UniEspaña, where all learners were 20-21 years old and the program was an undergraduate degree, UniOz 1 learners were all mature age and were enrolled in a Masters degree. Lastly, ethics clearance was granted to take field-notes of learner observations in tutorials only, and not in lectures. Device use in lectures, which had approximately 30 or 70 learners, may have revealed higher instances of social and learning spaces having blurred boundaries.

Notwithstanding these limitations, boundaries between spaces were blurred during collaborative learning. Virtual space was used during classes at UniEspaña and UniOz 1 to complement collaborative learning that took place in a physical space. Similarly, virtual social space was forged into physical learning spaces through the use of devices. Physical spaces currently available at the Spanish universities are inadequate to support collaborative learning under the Bologna Process. del Rincón Igea and González Geraldo (2010) claim that in order for the Bologna Process to be implemented satisfactorily in Spanish public universities, policies and resources, including physical space, that support collaborative learning methods are required. While I agree that physical space needs to be considered when using collaborative learning, as there were no clear boundaries between physical/virtual and social/learning spaces at UniEspaña and UniOz 1, I believe it is imperative to consider other spaces as equally important to the success of collaborative learning under Bologna.

**Virtual Space Fills a Gap**

Virtual space was used to collaborate in innovative and varied ways. The lecturer at UniEspaña used an online platform for communication with learners and to store documents. She chose to create a Yahoo Group rather than use the university’s online platform, as she found it gave her more flexibility for collaborating with current and past learners. Each learner in the class signed up to join the group and remained in the group unless they opted out, which allowed them to continue collaborating once graduated.
Virtual space was used as a break from collaborating in the physical space. The class length at UniEspaña was two hours with a short five-minute break in the middle. The material was covered in a fast-paced intensive manner, and even the most diligent learner broke off from the class at times. The diversion was usually only for a short period and was in the form of sending SMS or Whatsapp messages, using Facebook, or sending an email. It appeared that even during these short ‘time-outs’, attention was not completely diverted from collaborative learning and events taking place in class. If a learner knew the answer to a question or comment posed by another learner or the lecturer, or if the discussion caught their interest again, they would leave their virtual space and re-enter the physical space to contribute.

Virtual communication tools that learners used for collaborative projects varied according to individual and group preferences. The Yahoo Group at UniEspaña was created by the lecturer for all to use, with the aim of making it a collaborative space. However, learners did not embrace it and preferred to create their own collaborative spaces depending on their needs. One group in semester 1 used email, Dropbox and Facebook to communicate while completing their assigned translations. The Track Changes function in Word was used so that all group members could see any changes made, and comments were added to ask opinions of other group members regarding a term or phrase structure used. Face-to-face discussions about the target text took place before, after and during breaks of classes where comments made via track changes were clarified or other doubts were raised. The group worked comfortably and well in this virtual space and their documents in the Dropbox were clearly labelled, making it easy to follow who had completed each stage and how other comments had influenced the translation’s development.

Although virtual space was the preferred method of collaboration for all groups, one group at UniEspaña in semester 2 opted to meet in person. Due to timetable clashes it was not easy to organise, and only one face-to-face meeting took place during the semester, which did not include all group members. One learner from this group commented:

I don’t like to, like, by Internet. So by person you can speak with the person and... you can do the work better because if you do the revision with everybody... you track changes [with everybody]... It’s difficult to revise with six people so there’s no, a lot of mistakes or I don’t know, most of the members see the same mistakes so it’s better to meet and discuss about the mistake. Because the other way [by Internet] it’s more confusing (Learner 10, Site 1)

The learner recognised the value that discussion adds to collaboration and preferred to do this in person rather than through virtual space. Face-to-face meetings were not practical for this group however, and a Facebook group was set-up and used as the primary mode of communication. Other
groups commonly used Facebook, saying that this was easy because everyone was already familiar with the platform and had an account. None that I spoke to used the discussion function on the Yahoo Group to communicate with other learners and with the exception of one occasion, the only person to send group emails via the Yahoo Group was the lecturer.

At UniOz 1, Moodle was an important information and communication point for learners and educators. PowerPoint presentations were uploaded to the platform and a discussion board was available for learners to ask questions about the learning and assessment activities completed throughout the semester. The discussion board served as a vital communication point between educators and learners in both courses. Questions and feedback posted by learners and educators were visible to all learners. I was denied access to Moodle; however, based on observations of lectures and how Moodle was used, the discussion board was in a question and answer format, which supported collaborative learning in class. Weekly translation tasks for the NAATI preparation course were put onto Moodle and the lecturer asked learners to post questions or comments that were specific to their language group. The lectures were then shaped around the questions and comments posted on Moodle and collaborative discussion took place in class. The specialised course used the online platform in much the same way, however there were structured questions that learners had to respond to rather than it being an open forum. Moodle was used for reflective exercises also, with learners posting accounts of their progress throughout the course. In both courses it was a vital element for collaboration between the educators and learners.

Email was the preferred mode of collaboration between learners at UniOz 1. When collaborative tasks were completed, email was used to share documents and provide feedback to group members. One group met in-person on one occasion, however an uncomfortable group dynamic lead them to revert back to email contact. Phone numbers were at times shared and some learners connected via Facebook, particularly those that were in the same language stream. It was clear from speaking to learners that face-to-face contact was not the primary mode of communication for collaborative work. When thinking of the plethora of physical space available to learners on campus, it was particularly interesting that they continued to use virtual space to collaborate. Reasons given were that it was more flexible and accommodated the different schedules of each learner.

The availability of physical space did not appear to influence learners’ preferences when it came to collaborating. At UniEspaña and at UniOz 1, virtual space was used in innovative ways so that learners could keep in contact with each other when completing collaborative learning
activities. They regularly used virtual tools that were not official university platforms, as they had more flexibility to use them as they wanted to.

Collaboration was a learning tool that was used at all three universities examined in this project. Educators stressed that professional translation practices require one to be competent in group and team work. The following chapter further explores this connection between curriculum and the translation labour market, which is manifested in discussion of employability.
Chapter 7: Employability in Context

Introduction

This chapter discusses how employability was embedded into the translator education programs at UniEspaña, UniOz 1 and UniOz 2. The discussion is framed within the theoretical areas raised in the Chapter 1 sections titled ‘Program Development’ and ‘Employability in Higher Education’. At UniEspaña, and in the context of the Bologna Process and the European Higher Education Area, the degree offered was competence-based. It was designed to align with competences identified in translator competence models, which include some generic employability competences that can be transferred to other professions. Although the degrees at UniOz 1 and UniOz 2 were not competence-based, competence models were implicitly present in curriculum design and employability skills were included. Employability was further emphasised by the programs being endorsed by NAATI to provide learners the opportunity to attempt NAATI certification testing within the program of study. As NAATI is the entry level standard to practice as a professional translator in Australia, the programs were designed with the aim of preparing learners to pass a NAATI-approved assessment task that could lead to them becoming NAATI-certified.

Aligning curriculum with market demands

UniEspaña used competence models to align the curriculum with translation market demands. The university had redesigned its undergraduate translation degree in recent years so that it used a competence-based approach. Those learners who graduated at the end of the 2013/14 academic year, which include the majority of participants in the study reported here, were the first to complete the new degree. The program was designed in the context of European-wide educational reforms brought about by the Bologna Process, which emphasise competence-based degrees (Way 2008, p. 88).

Observations confirmed the use of a competence-based approach, which aligned the course content with translation labour market demands. Translator competence models were visible in class materials, learning activities and assessment procedures. The course reader distributed to learners at the beginning of each semester included a self-assessment sheet for learners to complete a competence analysis. The competences listed conformed to current understandings of translator competence and included the following areas: communication and textual, cultural, thematic,
instrumental, psychophysiological, interpersonal, and strategic. Learners were asked to reflect on their individual competences and identify their strengths and weaknesses, with the aim of highlighting areas that required improvement. The sheet was revisited at the completion of each semester and learners were asked to reflect on any differences between the beginning and the end of the semester. Below is an excerpt taken from my field-notes that show the lecturer advising learners about competences and requesting that they take note of which are their strengths and which needed further development.

It allows graduates to work in almost anything because competence models teach you how to do things. Lifelong learning is going to be made a requisite in some jobs so we need to know what our competences are and what we need to improve on. I’d like you to think about your competences over the next week. You can read on the PowerPoint what the competence models say and think about what your strong points and weaknesses are (Educator 1, Site 1).

Group activities conducted throughout the semester were structured so that learners developed various competences within a translation project management model. The continuous assessment sheet used by the lecturer to record learners’ performance in these activities was designed in such a way that facilitated clear recording of which competences had been demonstrated, and which required further development. The use of such learning materials, learning activities and assessment tools reinforced an alignment between the curriculum and labour market demands.

An alignment with market demands was further emphasised by careers advice given in class. The lecturer made numerous comments relating to jobs inside and outside the translation industry that learners could apply for upon graduation. Below are some examples taken from my field-notes of instances when the lecturer made references to employment options.

**Educator:** editing is something that is well paid... if you put in project management jobs... there are jobs all over the place... not just translation... If you have project management skills you can probably get work in any field... (Educator 1, Site 1).

**Educator:** does anyone know LinkedIn? There are lots of job offers on there as well (Educator 1, Site 1).

During one class, the lecturer highlighted that translating teaches problem-solving skills, and that translation graduates who do a postgrad from another faculty often perform better than learners from that faculty. She stressed the advantages of studying a postgrad in another faculty, which would allow them to specialise and broaden their job opportunities. The below is just one example of this topic being mentioned; it was repeatedly revisited throughout the two semesters.
Another job opportunity that was revisited throughout the semester was translating migration documents. The lecturer noted that in crisis many people leave the country to look for work elsewhere and to do this they need official documents translated from Spanish into English. She emphasised that specialised translation between Spanish and English was required outside of Spain. Profiles of past graduates were used as examples of potential jobs, and job offers were circulated via the lecturer. The lecturer commented that the graduate profiles were new, and that she had begun using them so that learners could see different options and could begin to build networks. She showed profiles of graduates working as project managers in language-related industries and she emphasised that graduates of UniEspaña’s program are particularly sought after because of their project management skills. The lecturer also spoke to me about plans of creating a mentor program between past and current learners. There was a lot of interest from past graduates to be mentors and the lecturer intended to run a pilot project at the end of the second semester and link learners with mentors that were working in fields of interest. While translation and language-related fields were emphasised most, other areas of work were also mentioned.

The lecturer commented on a number of occasions that prospective employers valued UniEspaña’s graduates because the translator education program was renowned for its collaborative work, and that graduates had good prospects of employment. Project manager positions were often emphasised as an option that was not directly within the translation market. The lecturer made the point that project managers with language skills were valued, and particularly UniEspaña graduates because of their collaboration skills. In this way, the lecturer indirectly drew attention to a need for learners to gain a wide range of skills that would place them in a stronger position upon graduation. Without directly saying it, the lecturer recognised that not all learners will become professional translators. The following excerpt demonstrates how the lecturer drew attention to learners’ broader employment options.

You’re part of a team… taking on a bigger role as a multicultural mediator, using your communication skills but not necessarily translating (Educator 1, Site 1).

In addition to signalling employment opportunities, advice was consistently given on professional practice. Below are two examples when the lecturer gave such advice.

If you are not sure why something is on a document, check with the client (Educator 1, Site 1).
When you have to say this to your project manager in an agency you would say ‘is this discourse correct’ not ‘it’s not the way it should be said’ (Educator 1, Site 1).

Classes included many instances of practical advice. Given that I was observing translation practice classes, such an emphasis on practical advice was not unusual. However, rather than simply advising on how to develop professional skills that could be taken to the workplace, the lecturer linked the advice given to employment situations so that it was contextualised for learners and would hopefully be more meaningful.

Educators at UniOz 1 and UniOz 2 similarly gave professional guidance and advice to learners. The programs included practical and theoretical courses, which allowed ample opportunity for practical strategies that were theoretically grounded to be explored within a professional context. Similar to UniEspaña, educators at UniOz 1 contextualised the advice given so that learners could see how translation practice would take place in different work environments. Below are some examples taken from field-notes that demonstrate this contextualised advice:

Nowadays agencies ask proof reader to explain their reasons for changes. ... so we do need technical terms to explain our reasons as a translator (Educator 3, Site 2).

If it is a real job, you may want to get some more information (Educator 3, Site 2).

So in real life you can contact the client (Educator 3, Site 2).

But you want to flag this to your client so that they know that you are not happy with it (Educator 3, Site 2).

Practical learning activities that were used as the basis for class discussions were consistently framed within a professional context without any explicit references to NAATI. The professional advice and guidance was given with the intention of building professional competence rather than preparing learners for the NAATI test.

The fact that the education programs at UniOz 1 and UniOz 2 could lead to NAATI certification was another way in which the curriculum was aligned with the demands of the translation market in Australia. NAATI certification or recognition\(^5\) is required to practice professionally as a translator in Australia. The programs at UniOz 1 and UniOz 2 had been endorsed by NAATI to provide learners the opportunity to attain NAATI certification. As mentioned in the previous chapter, UniOz 1 opted to integrate the NAATI test into the program whereas UniOz 2

\(^5\) NAATI provides recognition of professional competence for languages that NAATI has not designed a testing instrument for.
designed their own assessment task which was used to determine NAATI eligibility of learners. Regardless of how each university assessed eligibility, the presence of NAATI in their programs made an explicit link between the qualification and the translation market. Further links to the translation market were made through translator competence being present throughout the curriculum, which I discuss in more detail below.

**Implicit translator competence**

Although the programs at UniOz 1 and UniOz 2 were not explicitly competence-based, translator competence models remained implicitly present. As discussed in Chapter 1: Higher Education and Student-Centred Learning, translator competence is understood as incorporating inter-, intra- and extra-textual features (EMT Expert Group 2009; PACTE 2003), which includes technical and generic skills. Technical skills that are commonly shared between various competence models can be categorised as language, culture, research and terminology. In terms of generic skills, they can be broadly grouped as either encompassing strategy, or as concerned with interpersonal skills. At UniOz 1, these shared elements of competence models were observed during lectures. In one lecture, an educator commented,

> What we're really pushing is for you to have a process of understanding the source text, building knowledge databases and then tackling the target text. And that you can follow this process for any text type (Educator 1, Site 2).

The translation process was detailed throughout the lecture with the key elements being: understanding the source text fully; filling gaps of knowledge by reading in both languages; terminology management; production of target texts with sensitivity to the target cultures' systems, procedures, standards, expectations, requirements etc.; reflection and repetition of the process in different areas (technical, business, medical, scientific, legal); and a need for generalist specialist knowledge of the industry. The elements covered were reminiscent of those covered at UniEspaña under their competence-based approach, and of the various translator competence models in existence. In terms of technical skills, UniOz 1 included linguistic, research and terminology competence, and in terms of generic skills, they included interpersonal skills and strategic problem-solving. UniOz 2’s program similarly included these core features of translator competence models. Introductory courses to translation and interpreting and courses on communication covered linguistic competence, whereas research and terminology competences were covered in the practical courses. Intercultural and strategic competence was integrated into all courses, as assessment tasks often involved collaborative group work and problem-solving exercises.
Competence models were more visible in the specialised translation classes at UniOz 1 than in the NAATI preparation classes. The specialised classes included detailed instruction and guidance on researcher skills, translation strategies and terminology management. Skills required for revising and editing were also covered, although to a lesser extent. Skills specific to project management were not explicitly visible in the lectures or tutorials I observed, however, learners commented that they were covered in other courses that included assessment tasks in the form of group work. Overall, the specialised translation lectures reflected current understandings of translator competence models to a high degree. Through providing instruction and guidance on an effective translation process, educators covered being bilingual, having general and specific knowledge, knowing how to use documentation and terminology to translate effectively, and being able to reflect and think critically while translating (PACTE 2011, p. 33). In contrast, the breadth of competence covered in the NAATI preparation course was less ample and primarily focused on bilingual ability.

**NAATI and Bilingual Competence**

During the NAATI-preparation lectures at UniOz 1, emphasis was placed on linguistic competence, and in particular bilingual competence. During one lecture, conversation revolved around defining translation quality assessment. The lecturer mentioned a recent conference where Alan Melby defined translation quality assessment. He claimed that translation quality is demonstrated when the product is accurate and fluent, as determined by the audience and purpose, and when it complies with all specifications negotiated between the client and the translator, while taking into account the end-users’ needs. The definition was broken down as containing the following elements: linguistic (accuracy and fluency), adaptation (text type and target reader), technical (format and tools). A guest lecturer in a Specialised Translation lecture spoke about the same definition. After asking for learner input and a short class discussion, the lecturer commented,

> We have to think about the skills required to fill this new definition (Educator 3, Site 2).

The comment highlighted that linguistic skills were what the NAATI assessment tool measured and so that would be the focus of the NAATI preparation course.

Emphasising bilingual competence in a NAATI preparation course was appropriate to its purpose. The course was included in the program specifically to prepare learners for the NAATI test. Educators guided learners in what would be tested in the assessment, which areas of translation to
pay particular attention to, and which translation strategies would be appropriate in the exam setting. In one lecture, an educator advised learners that,

In the NAATI exam they are actually assessing your linguistic competence... They are looking for signs that you are competence (sic) in both languages. That is their main purpose. For NAATI exam, they are looking for linguistic evidence (Educator 3, Site 2).

Many learners were enrolled in the program with the aim of attaining NAATI Professional certification. Given that the exam tests bilingual competence and does not have a facility to measure learners’ use of research, terminology or other elements of translator competence, emphasis on linguistic transfer of meaning is particularly important. It is therefore appropriate that learners are guided in which translation strategies are appropriate for specific language pairs and translation problems in the context of NAATI’s error-deduction marking system.

Although appropriate for its purpose, the emphasis placed on bilingual competence above other competences inhibited learning. Notwithstanding the appropriately directed and high quality instruction that learners received in the course, it still remained that their prospects of passing the test were low. According to NAATI, approximately 40 per cent of learners that attempt the NAATI assessment within a translator education program are successful in attaining certification. Therefore, more than half would be left without the hope of becoming sufficiently qualified to enter the labour market as professional translators in Australia. The breadth of learning was restricted, as learners had to spend more time and effort on linguistic skills than other employability skills.

Translators please... step right up!

In spite of the significant amount of time and effort dedicated to enhancing technical translation skills, and generic skills that are advantageous for translation-related professions, the data revealed that few learners at all of the three sites would be likely to become translators.

At UniEspaña, and by way of promoting the various translation-related jobs available, the lecturer spoke about work and post-graduation options on numerous occasions. She used profiles of ex-learners as examples of employment possibilities and to highlight the importance of creating professional networks. A Yahoo Group acted as a networking tool for current and past learners, as they continued to be connected after completing the course. The lecturer posted links to job offers sent from past graduates, professional tools such as dictionaries and glossaries, materials from professional industry bodies, and blogs of interest to beginner translators. In addition to highlighting
job opportunities that were directly relevant to the translation field, she detailed wider graduation options. A point was made to emphasise that Spanish employers seek UniEspaña graduates, as they are competent in collaborative work and are known for their leadership qualities. Interestingly, in spite of the wealth of information regarding employment in translation provided during classes, very few learners expressed an interest in seeking employment in the field.

By speaking with learners during informal chats and semi-structured interviews, and from analysing written materials, I was given an insight into what they wanted to do post-graduation. An anonymously completed diagnostic test that the lecturer gave in the first class provoked some learners to comment on their hopes and aspirations when they complete their degree. Although responses in the test were not analysed quantitatively, I discuss them with the aid of figures to create a more descriptive account. Responding to the question ‘what do you hope to learn this year in this subject?’ the majority of learners (12/19) wrote responses surrounding learning specialised terminology in legal, economic and scientific fields for use when translating. They wanted to improve their English, learn more translation strategies for specialised topics and learn how to use translation tools such as glossaries and parallel texts to translate from their L1 into their L2/L3. The remaining responses, while echoing these desires, included comments surrounding their options of future employment and skills development. This was curious because although the question did not explicitly ask about the theme, it was evidently something that occupied the thoughts of a significant number of learners (6/19). Below are extracts from these learners:

By this stage I have already decided that I don’t want to be a translator... I do not plan to work in law or sciences [translation areas], but no one knows what the future may bring (Learner, Site 1).

I think I can improve my English level by writing and listening to professor and perhaps, if I really like this subject, I might focus on this kind of studies in the future (Learner, Site 1).

I would like to learn a little bit more about real work as translators and interpreters in this fields: where is more common to find them etc. (Learner, Site 1)

I also want to realize that I like something involved with translation, and if not, discover something I may like (Learner, Site 1).

I am not sure that I would like to end up as a translator, as I would like to be a language teacher, but I really like translating. I am really interested in science, so translating specialized texts will help me expand my vocabulary, and also give me another choice if I ever have to start working as a translator (Learner, Site 1).

I would like to see different types of texts from different subjects in order to decide about my future (Learner, Site 1).

What is interesting from these learners’ responses is that there is an uncertainty surrounding their future employment prospects and what they want to do post-graduation. Although not particularly surprising given their age (21-22) and Spain’s economic situation that places youth unemployment at
more than 50 per cent, it was interesting nevertheless that none of these learners said they would like to be a translator. For those learners that interpreted the question to include post-graduation aspirations, they saw the course as an opportunity to learn more about the translation profession, to see more options, and ultimately as an avenue to help them decide what they would like to do once finished.

Learners at UniEspaña had a poor view of working as a translator, which impacted their desire to work in the field. They commented that educators warn them of the difficulty of establishing oneself as a translator, and that poor work conditions made it an unattractive profession. Interviews during semester one uncovered a hesitation to follow translation as a career path. This was particularly interesting because the degree was designed with a distinct focus on translation. There were ten compulsory courses relevant to translation over the four-year degree, whereas interpreting received only two. However, learners often expressed a preference for interpreting. A learner I spoke with during semester one had a definitive interest in postgraduate studies in T&I, however would prefer to pursue interpreting. Another learner had a fleeting interest in audio-visual translation because he likes videogames and cinema; however this was said in a passing moment and expressed in a sympathetic way to the program, as though he did not want to say it was worthless. Most learners I interviewed had interests in continuing in language-related fields that were not translation, such as being a foreign language aid, secondary teaching, or simply spending time abroad to improve their languages. Several learners repeated a hesitation to view translation as a career path, as evidenced below:

I don’t know if I want to be a translator as soon as I finish, but maybe, maybe in the future, I don’t know. I’m just, it’s more due to the fact that I know it’s going to be difficult to start, being, you know to start up the whole translation thing. Because I know that it would either mean, uhr, working in some sort of, uhr, translation agency being underpaid and over worked, and I, and I know, you know all the people who have worked from other, from other classes who have done this. Or it would mean living in your parents’ [house] for a year and setting up all a website, trying to get contacts, if you want to do it... You know... Freelance... So it’s that aspect of it at the moment that doesn’t call to me (Learner 1, Site 1).

It’s not my first priority either... I actually like translating... But of course I, I think, I, I prefer teaching. That’s the thing. If teaching doesn’t go well. If I cannot find anything in that, that sense, maybe I’ll go for translation. I don’t know (Learner 2, Site 1).

I don’t want to do a master in translation and interpreting without being sure that it is what I want to do (Learner 7, Site 1).

I would like to explore the sector of translation but I do feel this year abroad is not enough to feel secure in both languages and would love to spend more time in the countries so general vocabulary, grammar and sentence structure is not at all an issue. Maybe after this, when full comprehension is there, try interpreting (Learner 11, Site 1).

I am quite lost... What will I do next year? I’m quite confused... I would like to be, to get a grant or a scholarship to go to Russia or any English-speaking countries... Master, it’s not that I’m not sure; I
don’t know really know what I want to do… So I’m quite lost at this point… Actually… I think I regretted more my decision of being a translator (Learner 3, Site 1).

I don’t like very much translation and interpreting. I am thinking of, relating to the master I am thinking of studying audio-visual translation because I really like video games and cinema. It is more that I like languages [than translation and interpreting] (Learner 4, Site 1).

From a class of 31 learners, I spoke with 7 in depth about their motivations for studying translation and their post-graduation aspirations. Of these, only one expressed a desire to continue within the field of translation, although this was motivated by an interest in language rather than in translation itself.

To gain a broader picture of what final year learners enrolled in UniEspaña’s specialised translation courses wanted to do after graduating I conducted a questionnaire during a class in semester 2. All 32 learners who were present completed the questionnaire, which asked the following questions:

- Why did you choose to study translation?
- Why did you choose to study translation at UniEspaña?
- In an ideal world, what would you like to do in the first year after graduating?
- Realistically, what do you think you will do?
- What career do you want? What field or industry do you want to work in?

Almost all learners (29/32) reported studying translation because they were interested in languages or cross-cultural communication. They opted for translation rather than a degree in philology because they saw their career prospects as being wider. In Spain, philology focuses heavily on literature and the languages’ history rather than on language learning per se, with the only viable career option being teaching (Muñoz Raya 2004). A translation degree gave learners more flexibility with the number and variation of languages they could study, as well as providing wider employment options.

Learners at UniEspaña reported various post-graduation aspirations. Once they finished their degree, more than half wanted to leave Spain to live, work or study abroad, preferably in a country where their L2 or L3 languages are spoken. The economic crisis, rather than a desire to be in another country, was the main reason for wanting to leave Spain. They wanted to improve their languages, gain life and work experience and hopefully be in a better position to look for employment afterwards. Others wanted to continue onto post-graduate study, although only 2 wanted to pursue Translation Studies at this level. A third of learners expressed a desire to work as translators, which was a higher proportion of learners than in semester 1. A reason for the increase
in number could be that the semester 2 course was an elective and presumably attracted those learners who were already interested in specialised translation. Another factor was that some learners chose the course because they had been learners in the semester one course and enjoyed the lecturer’s teaching and learning methodology; they commented that from being in her classes they had realised that they didn’t mind translation so much after all. Notwithstanding the third of semester two learners and the quarter of semester one, the majority did not wish to pursue postgraduate study or employment in a translation or translation-related area.

Similar to UniEspaña, only a small portion of learners at UniOz 1 wanted to pursue a career in translation. This was particularly surprising considering that they were enrolled in a NAATI-approved program that was preparing them to gain the certification required to enter the translation labour market in Australia. The Spanish stream at UniOz 1 had only four learners, which is not uncommon for languages other than Chinese in Australian translation programs. The small numbers made it difficult to discover patterns amongst learners as I had at UniEspaña; however, their individual stories provided an insight into their motivations for studying the program. Below I will provide short narratives of each learner’s motivations and aspirations. The narratives are based on data collected through semi-structured interviews that were supplemented by informal chats.

Maria⁶ was a 35-45 year old international student from the Americas. She had taken a break from her career in medical research to gain further skills and to see another part of the world. She had worked as a translator in the medical field, although this was not the primary purpose of her position. Maria intended to look for work in Australia once she graduated, provided she passed the NAATI assessment, although she did not have high hopes of finding work. Even in the event that she finds employment as a translator in Australia, she intends to return to her previous job in medical research, as she will earn a higher salary. Her desire to work as a translator was to extend her stay in Australia and to make use of the program she was studying.

Jorge was a domestic student with a well-established language-related career and was studying translation to expand his skills. Jorge wanted to practice as a professional translator, however he saw this as an additional skill rather than as a career change; he did not envisage it being a full-time endeavour due to limited employment options.

Christian was a domestic student who had grown up in Australia. He had successfully passed the NAATI test when he completed a diploma approximately ten years earlier but had never worked

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⁶María, Jorge, Christian and Carmen are aliases.
in the area. Instead, he had pursued a career as a language teacher and after working in the field for an extended time was looking to diversify and broaden his work options. Although he had studied translation in the past, he felt that he had a higher chance of passing the NAATI test if he completed another education program. Christian intended to work as a translator provided he was able to attain NAATI certification; however was not certain this would be full-time.

Carmen was an international student from the Americas, aged between 25 and 35. She had wanted to study outside of her country of origin and had always been interested in languages. She was not sure what she wanted to do once she graduated and was uncertain whether she would remain in Australia. She was interested in literary translation more than community translation; however was aware that there are very limited opportunities in Australia. The translation market in Australia is almost entirely community translation assignments, which would leave Carmen with little hope of pursuing a literary translation while she was living here.

Not one learner at UniOz 1 considered a full-time career in translation as a viable option. Limited work prospects and unstable and poor working conditions were common reasons given by learners. A motivation for choosing the program at UniOz 1 was that it was a NAATI-approved program and could lead to them gaining NAATI Professional certification. However, none were committed to the translation profession and did not have high prospects of entering the labour market in this area. If they were successful in attaining NAATI Professional Translator certification, which as mentioned earlier would be less than half, they saw it as an additional skill that they could either use in their current profession or to have a second job ‘on the side’.

Although the data collected at UniOz 2 was focussed on classroom interactions, a short dialogue between the lecturer and a leaner provided an insight into one motivation to study translation and interpreting as an international student in Australia.

**Educator:** Can you tell me about the reasons why you decided to study translation & interpreting
**Learner:** Because I want to settle in Australia. I want to find a new career path in this country
**Educator:** But why T&I, you could have chosen any course
**Learner:** Because I have a strength in Mandarin
**Educator:** So you want to build your English... What did you do in your undergrad?
**Learner:** Chinese.
**Educator:** So you’re interested in language
**Learner:** Yes
The learner appears to have selected translation and interpreting because it matches her interests, and so that she can establish a new life in a new country. A learner from UniOz 1 made reference to this during an interview. She commented that

Most of the people here, their motivation in the end, when you narrow down to success rate. Main motivation is very different, depending on if they are local or are international students. Local are interested in the profession and international want to get the visa and it is a path.

The learner infers that international students want points for visa or permanent residency purposes and that this is a main motivation for studying a translation and interpreting program. Although minimal, NAATI certification attracts extra points for residency applications, which could explain the comments made by this learner.

While the translator education programs at each site were aligned with the translation labour market, only a minority of learners completing them had intentions or prospects of doing so. In Spain, all learners were interested in language and culture, and wanted to become multilingual. A gap in the Spanish education system meant that the only viable option to learn applied languages and have varied career options was to complete a translation and interpreting degree. In Australia on the other hand, NAATI certification is the entry-level requirement to practice professionally. This, coupled with the NAATI test’s low pass rate, made professional translation work unlikely for more than half of learners completing the programs.

I now turn to the final discussion chapter, which examines the consequences, washback and social impacts of the NAATI test and the Selectividad, which are the university entrance exams in Spain.
Chapter 8: Consequences, Washback and Social Impacts of Testing

Introduction

Consequences, washback and impact are useful conceptual tools when identifying and understanding features that support or inhibit learning. They were highlighted as useful in Chapter 1’s section ‘Washback, Consequences and Impact of Testing’, and it is within this framework that the current chapter discusses how they were experienced at each site. The data revealed that elements of consequences, washback and impact played a part in the way that learners learnt and educators educated at all three sites. As outlined in the section titled ‘Washback, Consequences and Impact of Testing’ in Chapter 1, literature that deals with testing consequences, washback and testing impacts can be distinguished by whether the research examines events that occur inside or outside the classroom: washback concerns classroom events, whereas consequential and test impact studies concern external factors. Consequences and impact are further distinguished by the audiences they engage with, with consequences being concerned with validity studies and engaging with test developers, and impact research being concerned with socio-political impacts and engaging with wider society.

I examine the NAATI test and the Selectividad, the high-stakes university entrance exams in Spain, in light of each of the three areas of language testing research mentioned above. It was out of the scope of this PhD research to examine the validity of the NAATI test and to place discussion of consequences within this framework; instead, by drawing on data from UniOz 1 and UniOz 2, I argue that a validation study of the NAATI test is justified so that future developments in translator certification testing can be grounded in empirical validation studies that consider the consequences of such tests for learners, educators, policy makers, administrators and other stakeholders involved in the design, implementation and use of them. I then demonstrate that washback was present in the translator education programs examined, drawing on data collected during fieldwork. Social impacts were observed at all three sites also; however, rather than separate discussion into site, I do so by the setting. I make particular reference to UniEspaña when discussing impacts of the Selectividad, whereas I draw on UniOz 1 and UniOz 2 when discussing impacts of the NAATI test.
A case for validation studies of NAATI

There is a strong case for validation studies of the NAATI test to take place. As noted in Chapter 3, in the section titled ‘High-Stakes Test’, the NAATI test is high-stakes for those undertaking it. Successful completion of the test is a requirement to practice as a professional translator in Australia. It is costly to undertake and is notoriously difficult to pass, with many more than half of candidates being unsuccessful. A common and accepted feature of test development and implementation of high-stakes language tests is that they undergo validation; the IELTS test is one such example. In the case of the NAATI test however, thorough validation studies remain yet to be established (Campbell & Hale 2003, p. 214; Hale et al. 2012, pp. 67-9). An educator at UniOz made reference to the lack of validity research for the NAATI test and commented that in terms of the test’s validity,

we don’t know. Until they actually do the research we don’t know (Educator 1, Site 3).

There are various reasons why the NAATI test has not undergone validation. One factor is that the testing instrument was developed by NAATI. And although NAATI is the lead organisation in translation and interpreting standards in Australia, its main concern is not test development. As such, it cannot be confirmed that the test was developed by linguists who have expertise in test design and development. Keeping the limitation of NAATI’s capabilities in mind, its organisational structure compounds the problems associated with the test being designed in-house. NAATI is a private company. They own the testing instrument, and in-line with other private companies, are not obliged to provide it to other entities. The documents are protected by a ‘commercial in confidence’ classification, which effectively restricts access so that only those individuals who sign a confidentiality agreement with NAATI can access information related to the test’s marking procedures. The agreement stipulates that information cannot be shared with other parties without the explicit consent of NAATI. Although this is consistent with commercial documents that contain intellectual property or trade secrets, it presents a problem when the test’s validity is brought into question. The limited and controlled access to the testing instrument and its related documentation prevents it from being readily available for scrutiny, such as undergoing validation testing, without NAATI’s written consent. At the time of writing, and in spite of continued calls for a validity study to take place, NAATI had not given permission for its testing instrument’s validity to be scrutinised.

Another factor contributing to NAATI not having undergone validation is that there is limited knowledge of how to go about it. Hale et al. (2012) highlight that there are no accepted standards for translator test validity, nor methodological guidance on how to carry out such research. They
claim that a reason for this deficit is that few empirically defined and supported models of translator competence have been developed (pp. 67-8). Although there have been various translator competence models developed to date, which attempt to define the skills that professional translators require, they differ in the specifics, and the majority are grounded in theoretical understandings rather than being empirically based. There is general agreement on core elements that appear in the multiple frameworks; however, debate continues on which elements constitute translator competence.

Amongst the most recent competence models that have translator education curriculum development as a primary focus are those produced by the PACTE Group (2003, 2005, 2008, 2011), Kelly (2005), and EMT Expert Group (2009). I discussed each model in more detail in Chapter 1, in the section titled ‘Translator Competence Models’, but as a reminder I will outline their key aspects. Each model differs in specifics, however, they all share common core features: linguistic competence, terminology management, information mining, or research skills, and collaboration. While the PACTE model implicitly suggests interpersonal competence under the psycho-physiological components of cognitive and attitudinal abilities, the Kelly and EMT models are explicit in the inclusion of interpersonal skills such as collaboration and teamwork. These three models are merely some of the most renowned models and various others can be encountered in the literature, for example Kiraly (2015) and Göpferich (2009). The point to make here is that although disagreement remains on the specifics of translator competence, there is agreement on the core elements.

Empirical and theoretical understandings of competence that have been developed to date provide a basis from which validation studies of the NAATI test can be designed and conducted. The PACTE Group has contributed valuable research to the area by being one of the few to undertake empirical studies to inform their competence model. The various other models that have been developed through a theoretical lens complement empirical studies and together they offer a preliminary but stable understanding of the core elements of translator competence. With this greater understanding, a more solid foundation is created and pathways towards developing empirical validation studies of NAATI’s testing procedure are opened up.

Moving on from testing consequences and validity studies, in the following section I demonstrate the presence of washback in relation to having NAATI certification testing integrated into the education programs at UniOz 1 and UniOz 2. I then demonstrate washback at UniEspaña, which was the result of having a highly competitive entrance examination as an entry requirement to the program.
Washback

Washback was observed at all three sites, although the source of it differed. At UniOz 1 and UniOz 2 in Australia, the integration of the NAATI exam into the translator education programs provoked washback being experienced by learners and educators, as well as it being visible in the curriculum. At UniEspaña, it was the high-stakes and competitive university entrance exams, the Selectividad, which provoked washback. Learners were accustomed to learning in one way, which was in stark contrast to the learning methodology being used by the lecturer. Below I detail how I observed washback as it related to the NAATI test before discussing how the Selectividad affected teaching and learning at UniEspaña.

NAATI

Washback was observed in a complex manner at UniOz 1 and UniOz 2. Observations showed that learners and educators experienced washback, which was impacted by NAATI’s testing instrument being integrated into the curriculum. Washback was seen to affect the way that learners and educators participated in the delivery and reception of the program, with experiences differing among educators and learners at the two sites. For the most part, educators strongly resisted washback interfering with teaching and learning and the delivery of the program. Paradoxically, it was just these efforts to ensure that teaching and learning were not adversely affected that made washback all the more visible. In this section, I discuss washback in terms of being experienced by learners and educators, and how these experiences impacted the delivery and reception of the programs. Washback is a complicated phenomenon and can be present in many forms. In an attempt to portray its complex and multifaceted nature, I have integrated the experiences of learners and educators together without trying to box and separate them according to the impacts they had on teaching and learning. This is contrary to much discussion of washback. It is much more common to discuss washback in terms of it being positive or negative. However, I found greater flexibility in discussing it by describing how it was observed, which in many cases was too complicated to box nicely into being positive or negative experiences.

At UniOz 1, washback was observed during lectures and tutorials, and this was confirmed during informal chats and interviews with learners and educators. Questions and comments made by learners in class and during interviews uncovered a tension between ‘real life’ translation practices and those which are appropriate for the NAATI test. It was commonly believed among learners that there was an appropriate way to translate for the test, a literal approach, which was
different to the ‘real world’ where a communicative or pragmatic approach would allow for more creative translation decisions. Learners commented that:

What they teach you here is not what you need to know to pass the test... they [previous students] would do a, like a good translation, a practical translation, a pragmatic translation. But that’s not what the test wants. The test is more focused on like a word-by-word translation (Learner 2, Site 2).

I am wondering if this would be regarded as wrong in NAATI test (Learner 1, Site 2).

Others [professions] you just go and work. But this course conditions a lot because you can’t work without accreditation. At this stage you want to be realistic but are closely conditioned to the accreditation that limits you. This course conditions you to how you will practice in the future (Learner 3, Site 2).

These examples demonstrate that the NAATI test was at the forefront of learner’s minds while they were learning translation strategies. They did not want to learn strategies that they did not consider useful for passing the test. Learners were resistant to discovering and applying strategies that they did not link directly to improving their outcome on the NAATI test. Their ability to select and apply appropriate strategies was therefore affected by washback.

The idea that there are two ways of translating was repeatedly challenged by educators. They fought hard to dispel the perceived dichotomy of real life versus NAATI and to promote best translation practices regardless of the context. Even within the NAATI preparation class, where the aim was to enhance learners’ chances of passing the test, educators made a concerted effort to shape classes around general translation principles rather than test preparation exercises. On one occasion, an educator spent an extended amount of time impressing this upon learners, as is shown in the following excerpt from field-notes:

Why we have to wonder why this would be wrong in NAATI text? Why can’t we just translate with confidence. What make us wonder if it is ok?... There are no set rules but there are principles. What are the principles you rely on when delivering a translation? We are not changing the meanings of source texts but we express the same meanings in the target text because the target text readers use different linguistic resources to understand the target text. So that’s what we’re doing but when it comes to NAATI test all of a sudden you forget. And I think that is totally wrong... why would you pay translators for translation if the translation is not acceptable in TL. So I suggest you don’t’ worry about how markers are going to mark your translation. You don’t’ have to (Educator 3, Site 2).

The same educator revisited the topic various times throughout the semester. Each time, they attempted to reinforce the above attitude that there was only one way to translate professionally,
regardless of whether it was for the NAATI test or not. The following are more examples taken from field-notes:

I feel sad about in translation theories we talk about skopos and context but when you come to this class all of a sudden you forget everything. Why are you walking backwards?... I wouldn’t even worry about getting NAATI accreditation. If it makes me translate in a bad way why would I get it? In my 15 years experience as a teacher, no one marks against the principles. Of course there is a little bit of difference in opinion but I haven’t met a single person that says the NAATI test should be done literally. And I am prepared to fight for you if your translation is marked that way (Educator 3, Site 2).

For NAATI exam, they are looking for linguistic evidence. ‘oh,… didn’t translate this one so probably they don’t understand this modality’. So that is the only difference but we shouldn’t give up our principles (Educator 3, Site 2).

‘I want to know if this is a good strategy?’ is different to I wonder if it is going to be marked down in exam text. So let’s focus on strategies you can make (Educator 3, Site 2).

The above examples show how the lecturer was challenging aspects of washback. She encouraged learners to expand their learning so that various translation strategies could be drawn upon in a translation situation, rather than limiting their range to those they perceived as safe for the NAATI test. Having the NAATI test integrated into the program, and learners experiencing washback through their perception of NAATI-appropriate translation strategies, impacted the washback experienced by educators. They were encouraged to emphasise professional translation strategies rather than focus on test preparation because they could see the restrictions on learning that this would place. The washback was not simply positive or negative for learners and educators. Learners wanted the NAATI test to affect the teaching and learning in the classroom, whereas educators fought hard to limit it. It was therefore difficult to classify classroom experiences of washback as being positive or negative, simply because it depended on whose perspective it was being considered from.

At times learners and educators experienced washback in a way that provoked a breakdown of student-centred teaching and learning principles. In the face of a determined and purposeful attempt by educators to counter washback that would result in learners altering their translation practices, comments and questions regarding ‘NAATI-style’ translations persisted. There were times when learners asked multiple questions and made repeated remarks relating to their perceived real world versus NAATI reality, so much so that it had the effect of wearing educators down so that they were drawn into discussing translation in these terms. As much as they resisted confirming a NAATI form of translating, sustained pressure from learners at times ended in conceit that the test
conditions, in some instances, did call for an altered approach. To demonstrate, during one class, an educator advised that,

For NAATI they would deduct marks. But we know that NAATI are a bit more... (Educator 2, Site 2).

Although the sentence was not finished and the comment left lingering, the tone and body language accompanying it suggested that NAATI’s marking system was in some way misaligned with current professional translation practices. As shown in the examples below, which are taken from field-notes, there were other times when educators were drawn into making comparisons between NAATI and professional translating practices, making it evident that washback was present.

But let’s suppose that this is not exam situation. You have access to all the resources you need, so how would you translate it? (Educator 3, Site 2).

In this example, the educator is recognising that the exam environment of the NAATI test is artificial and does not replicate an authentic professional situation, while at the same time trying to shift learners’ attention away from these differences and back to translation strategy. In the next four examples, although the educator recognises the risk in using certain strategies in an exam setting, she provides solid reasons based in translation strategy and theory. The educator recognises that the NAATI exam is indeed constricted by regulations surrounding its design and execution, which will in turn limit and affect the translation interventions learners will use.

While that might work, I wouldn’t take the risk of it in the exam (Educator 3, Site 2).

Not in the exam. Because if it is a real translation job I would suggest the client. But you can’t communicate with the client, that’s why I would go not that far. Now if I cannot communicate with my clients I would go for a safe choice. .. so you’re translating in a way that is convenient to your markers? (Educator 3, Site 2).

If it is real translation work then I am pretty sure. But in the exam situation what the examiners are looking for are the evidence of the linguistic skills (Educator 3, Site 2).

While that might work, I wouldn’t’ take the risk of it in the exam... if you translate that there were 2 worlds at the beginning of the text, maybe that is not what the author was trying to do (Educator 3, Site 2)

All of these instances of educators entering into dialogues that portray professional practice as distinct from NAATI test practices, occurred within the context of preparing learners for the test. The motivation for the comments was to increase learners’ chances of attaining a successful grade.
In spite of this well-meaning advice, learners failed to view their translation choices as being independent of the NAATI exam, and believed that in order to pass the NAATI test they would have to alter their translation approach. It was commonly thought that one would have to stray away from best practice principles, and towards producing a target text that was more faithful to the source text. One learner commented that,

What they teach you here is not what you need to know to pass the test. So they teach you how to be a good translator and interpreter, but apparently that’s not what the test assesses (Learner 2, Site 2).

While another remarked,

From NAATI perspective creativity could be considered addition, distortion (Learner 3, Site 2).

There was clear confusion among learners as to what the NAATI test was testing, and what best practices were for professional translators. This confusion is understandable given that the marking procedure for the NAATI test is not transparent and that learners relied on general discussion of good translation strategies and practices as guidance on how to improve their mark.

Not only was washback evident in the classroom, but it was present in the curriculum as well. Curriculum design was influenced by the nature and implementation of the NAATI test. In an effort to increase the likeness of the exam to a professional setting, or its authenticity, a translation brief was included with each source text provided in the test. Challenging this authenticity, test regulations dictated that all target texts should be written by hand, Internet resources and subject area experts were unable to be consulted, and there was no avenue to explain translation choices. These strict regulations reduced authenticity, while also impacting the delivery of the NAATI preparation course. Although educators commented that ongoing discussions were underway with NAATI and that they were trying to address some of these issues, at the time of observations handwriting and learner-prepared paper resources were current practices for completing the NAATI test. As such, translation exercises completed outside and within the classroom for the course that prepared learners for the NAATI test were done so by hand with paper-based resources. The aim was to get learners accustomed to writing by hand within the time allocated for the test, and for them to increase their speed when consulting hardcopy or paper-based resources. With the high prevalence of computers in everyday life, it is not uncommon for an individual to type quicker than to write by hand. As such, having to handwrite during the test was a disadvantage for learners who preferred to type or who had learned Latin script as an additional language. It also did not
contribute to building skills that could be further used in a professional context. During an interview, an educator expressed dislike for these inauthentic assessment practices, and remarked:

I do believe that we don’t need to sit for a NAATI test after students have done several translation units throughout the years, and just do, focus specifically on an exam which is still handwritten using paper resources and references. I think it’s go backwards (Educator 2, Site 2).

Although critical of having to sit a test in addition to completing a postgraduate degree in translation studies, the educator recognised the value of preparing learners for sitting the test. She recognised that handwriting is current practice and that learners will have to prepare for this. The below transcript from an interview demonstrates this:

To be honest, I think that if students have been practicing before with other units, to have a course just to prepare for accreditation [certification], it’s, I mean, in a practical sense I think it’s a bit [trails off]... But because we’ve got this NAATI accreditation I think it’s good because obviously you get the students prepared for that very specific exam (Educator 2, Site 2).

In addition to the inauthentic practices of the NAATI test, I identified other restrictions that it placed on the curriculum. In particular, using an examination to assess a learner’s translation skills was considered inappropriate in the below educator’s view.

I do believe that if you have studied translation for two years, and you’ve done several courses in translation, in using CATT [computer assisted translation tools], using new technologies, ah, this [the NAATI test] is a bit of an old fashioned way to assess someone’s skills.

A learner made a similar remark concerning the way that feedback was provided in the context of the NAATI preparation course, commenting that a written test should be given written feedback. Because the final assessment is written it has to match to the type of assessment to make it valid. In an indirect way you infer the benchmark that has to be met. The final mark was summative and the formative part was not sufficient (in the NAATI preparation tutorial). The problem with this test is that you don’t have any benchmark so you rely on the feedback from the tutor... Some of the oral feedback was kind of fake. There was no example of what would be acceptable in the exam with written examples (Learner 3, Site 2).

This learner believed that the NAATI test restricted any formative functions of it as an assessment task, which made it an invalid assessment tool in an education context. The primary reason for this restriction was the commercial in-confidence nature of the testing instrument. The methods for deducting points and arriving at a final grade were not transparent and did not provide any mechanism for formative feedback to the learner.
As can be seen in the discussion above, washback in the classroom was not a straightforward affair. It was experienced by learners and educators, and was evident in the real world versus NAATI dichotomy insisted upon by learners. And although educators resisted and challenged this view, at times, learners’ persistence prevailed. Learners and educators provoked each other to participate in the delivery and reception of the program in a way that each considered appropriate. The presence of the NAATI test in the curriculum and in the classroom influenced learners’ expectations of educators and of the instruction they wanted to receive. While at the same time, educators made a concerted and sustained effort to minimise the effects on learning that the NAATI test, along with its washback, provoked.

As at UniOz 1, educators at UniOz 2 were acutely aware of washback from the NAATI test and did what they could to counter any detrimental effects it had on learning. Educators did not want to change their approach to learning simply because the NAATI test was integrated into the program. During interviews, an educator repeated that there was a conscious effort to avoid teaching to the NAATI test. She commented that

we don’t want to teach to the NAATI test. And we know that there’s washback from NAATI
(Educator 1, Site 3).

During a conversation about the translation stream of the program, the same educator remarked:

I’ve always been very strongly opposed to teaching, you know, the teaching to the test. I used to just teach students to be good translators. So I build in the techniques, build in the groundwork, make sure they were able to evaluate their own translations... umm... and the ones that were good, always went through the NAATI test with flying colours. As you would hope... And so I see no reason to teach to the test. I mean, I think it’s wrong. I think it’s not preparing students for the market. Um, it’s lowering their, you know... Well, you have to teach them to pass the test but it doesn’t mean that you can’t teach them to be good translators at the same time. You just build in the test skills towards the end (Educator 1, Site 3).

This educator was aware that having the NAATI test present in the program had the potential of impacting the curriculum, and classroom teaching and learning. Rather than accepting washback to occur in a way that would restrict learning, the educator took the approach of educating in a way that would provide learners with the skills and knowledge they required to become professional translators. The belief was that once learners had grasped these, towards the end of the education program and before they attempted the NAATI assessment, test preparation skills could be tackled. The end result was that there were few instances during classes where the NAATI test was directly discussed in terms of translation strategies that would be appropriate.
A difference between UniOz 1 and UniOz 2 was that the NAATI assessment used at UniOz 1 followed NAATI’s testing and marking guidelines, whereas at UniOz 2 the assessment task was customised. It was a folio of work that contains translation assignments that were from English into another language, and vice versa, a reflective journal, and a translation exam that required translation into, and from English. For learners to be eligible for NAATI certification they had to receive a Distinction grade for the course, as well as for the exam that was included in the folio; 75 per cent is the minimum needed for a Distinction to be awarded at this university. The percentage required to be awarded a Distinction varies across universities in Australia, and although 75 per cent is the most common, many also only require 70 per cent.

While washback was prevalent at in an Australian context where the NAATI test was integrated into the education programs, it was not unique to this setting. Washback was also present at UniEspaña and was impacted by a culture of competitiveness that had enabled learners to gain entry into the program.

**Competitiveness**

Washback from the Selectividad, the high-stakes university entrance exams, was observed in UniEspaña’s classes. These exams became high-stakes due to being used as a gatekeeping mechanism by universities to select the learners they consider appropriate to study in their programs. The highly competitive nature of these exams, which result from the high entrance scores required to study undergraduate translation programs, called for particular strategies on the part of learners so that they enhanced their chances of securing a place. Competitive and rote learning practices within a largely transmissionist-based upper-secondary education system laid a foundation of learning behaviours, which persisted into university study. It was these behaviours and learning practices that made washback visible in a classroom environment that was trying to encourage collaboration and shared knowledge creation within a student-centred approach.

As mentioned in the Introduction to this thesis, high school leavers complete general and discipline-specific entrance exams, or the Selectividad. The scores of these exams are then used by universities to determine who will be offered places in their programs. English streams of translation and interpreting programs attract some of the highest scores in the county, with UniEspaña’s entrance score being among the top three scores of all undergraduate programs, including law and medicine, which are traditionally associated with being the most competitive programs. The average entrance score for an English stream of a translation program in 2016 was 10.153 out of a possible 14 (El País 2016). This particularly high score meant that these programs
were highly competitive and required learners to be well versed in exam practices to increase their chances of being offered a place.

Learners at UniEspaña had been engaging in competitive practices well before arriving at the undergraduate program. In order to study at an undergraduate level in Spain, a series of exams must be successfully completed. The *bachillerato* is the final two years of secondary school and a prerequisite for university study. An end of year exam is completed for four compulsory units, and there is the option of an additional four exams for those who want to improve their final grade. Results of these exams determine whether the individual is eligible to sit for the university entrance exams, and if they are, they undertake the *Selectividad*, which is an additional seven to eight exams over a three day period in June. The grades received during these three days are then combined with the *bachillerato* end-of-year exams, which gives the individual their *nota de selectividad*, or selection grade. For the majority of undergraduate programs, universities set an entrance score, as discussed above, and those individuals who have received a *nota de Selectividad* that is above the cut-off are offered places in their programs. Some universities set a quota for the program and accept the highest scoring learners until that quota is filled; however, this is the minority. The series of exams, the way the selection grades are awarded, along with the entrance scores set by universities, make applying for university programs in Spain that attract high scores, such as most translation programs, a highly competitive process. It is not uncommon for learners to view their classmates as competition, which can stay with them throughout their higher education.

Learners and educators at UniEspaña commented about learners’ competitive natures on a number of occasions. The lecturer gave an open-ended diagnostic test at the beginning of the first semester, which gives learners the opportunity to say what they like and dislike about the faculty. When I discussed learners’ responses with the lecturer, she commented that

> many students complain about... competitiveness of other students (Educator 1, Site 1).

This was echoed by learners during informal chats and interviews when we were speaking in general terms about the types of individuals the program attracted. One learner commented that others in the faculty were competitive, and that some had the attitude that they were gifted and will secure work within the UN easily. Another learner complained of an individualistic approach to group work where other learners focused on deficits of group members rather than working collaboratively and helping each other. She claimed:

> They don't help each other out. They are just kind of selfish (Learner 6, Site 1).
Competitive learning practices hindered the extent to which student-centred learning could be used in the classroom, with collaborative learning being particularly affected. Classes were designed with the intention of having a high level of participation and discussion from learners so that knowledge could be collaboratively constructed. However, as discussed in Chapter 6’s section titled ‘UniEspaña: student-centred learning in a hostile environment’, learners resisted engaging in collaborative exercises and in class discussions. The above learners’ comments could explain the resistance. With many learners viewing others in their classes as potential competition for future employment, it appeared that there was a conscious withholding of information so that an advantage over others could be secured. This was in direct opposition to the sharing and collaborative environment that the lecturer was trying to create.

Learners’ past educational experiences, which included high-stakes exams and a transmissionist approach throughout their higher school education, additionally affected washback in the classroom. They were familiar with educators taking an authoritative role in the classroom and having to memorise information and knowledge that would be tested in the form of exams. Transmissionist learning was more common than the collaborative student-centred learning approach the lecturer was using at UniEspaña. As discussed in Chapter 6, only a few educators in the faculty used such methods, which compounded learners’ unfamiliarity with them. Although many learners I interviewed made positive comments about the classes, these usually related to parts of the class where the lecturer reverted to a transmissionist approach, as can be seen in the following example:

It’s quite helpful when you see, when you are talking about the translation you are seeing, oh, they made this mistake and the lecturer explains the mistake or how to solve it in the future. I think that part is the most important (Learner 3, Site 1).

The learner enjoyed parts of the presentations where the lecturer could take an instructing role and direct learners to problematic areas of the target text and propose solutions. The washback that I observed from learners’ previous educational experiences was that they were resistant to engage with a new learning approach. They continued to view the lecturer as an authority in the classroom, which was the complete opposite of what the lecturer was trying to achieve.

There was pressure from learners for the lecturer to use a transmissionist learning approach. Wall (2000), writing about the compatibility of innovative teaching practices in Sri Lanka, claims that “there were few rewards for teachers who tried to change their approach to teaching and they were pressured by students and their families to revert back to the traditional model of what teaching should be”. Here, Wall recognises that teaching and learning approaches that learners are
unaccustomed to can be met with resistance and pressure. The reaction to this resistance and pressure at UniEspaña was washback, and it was visible at times when the lecturer reverted to a mini-lecture style during classes. During these times, learners appeared to value the approach. During interviews, learners repeatedly commented that they highly valued and respected the knowledge that the lecturer had. One learner remarked that she preferred presentations by the lecturer than by other learners because they were more helpful to her when understanding concepts and strategies. She commented that

> When the other, when my partners do a presentation, it’s also useful but [the lecturer]’s one are more useful... Because she know more about the topic and she explain things clearly, more clear (Learner 5, Site 1).

It appeared that learners’ extended educational history, which was largely filled with transmissionist teaching and learning methods, had conditioned them to learning in this way.

Although learners preferred it when the lecturer used transmissionist teaching methods, they recognised benefits in being assessed in student-centred ways. In spite of learners’ past educational experiences with exams, which had given them ample opportunity to hone their preparation and performance in them, exams were not valued as a useful learning tool. One learner commented that

> I think that here in this country, there is a, um, because of our culture and our education, I think that exams are more of a type of a, are more of a thing to force you to study. To force you to make an effort. Not to learn (Learner 3, Site 1).

This learner had quite strong views of the Spanish education system, which he had formed after spending time in Finland for an Erasmus exchange program. He was very sceptical of any learning benefits of exams, although he did concede that without an exam he would most likely not study outside of class time. Another learner was equally dubious about the benefits of exams, and when asked which she preferred out of exams and continuous assessment, she remarked:

> I think I prefer continuous. And you can learn more in the continuous assessment than in the final exam. And it’s more, I think it’s easier to pass with the continuous assessment than with the final because if you’re gonna attend the lessons then you’re going to learn. You learn more in the lesson than on your own. I think so (Learner 9, Site 1).

Another learner agreed that more learning occurred during classes, and preferred to learn from the presentations than from exams. She commented:
I like the form of the class. I learn more from the presentations than from the exam. For exams you study lots, vomit it out for the exam and then forget it. I don’t think that everything should be counted on just the exam. I prefer the presentations more. I think we learn more from what happens in class than from an exam. I think that sitting an exam to know that you have reached a level of knowledge is important but it shouldn’t be the only thing. It shouldn’t value most of the mark (Learner 10, Site 1).

However, as with earlier examples, she placed a higher value on the information given to the class by the lecturer than other forms of learning, as can be seen in the below example.

I like the most when we speak to the lecturer after the presentations and the advice she gives then.
It is the most important part – not the written feedback or the verbal feedback during the presentations (Learner 10, Site 1).

While valuing the learning activities performed in class, which were based on student-centred learning principles and counted towards a continuous assessment grade, learners still preferred to receive information and knowledge from the lecturer, and saw some educational benefits to studying for exams.

Learners’ preference for teacher-centred transmissionist learning was visible washback from the Selectividad exams they had to sit to gain places in university programs. However, it is also likely that learners’ had been conditioned to this way of learning from the beginning of their education. Primary schooling in Spain is commonly delivered using teacher-centred methods (Pérez-Chuecos 2015). Therefore, the learners included in this study would have engaged in passive learning during their primary and secondary schooling, making them accustomed to learning from transmissionist methods. These past educational experiences, coupled with the competitive learning practices required to be successful in the Selectividad, impacted the washback that I observed in the classroom at UniEspaña.

The above discussion surrounded classroom events and how teaching and learning was affected by washback. In the following section I look beyond the classroom and consider the social and political impacts of the two high-stakes test already mentioned, the NAATI test and the Selectividad.

**Impacts of High-stakes Tests**

High-stakes tests, such as the NAATI test and the Selectividad, impact individual lives and society. The NAATI test can impact an individual’s ability to migrate to Australia and to function
within the country’s wider society. At the same time, increased communication between all sections of society increases the government’s capacity to govern. While the Selectividad is a vastly different test and has different impacts, it nevertheless affects individuals and society. The Competitive Academic Curriculum, which the Selectividad is included within, advantages some sections of society over others, which in turn affects individual lives. Below, I outline these arguments, which will conclude this chapter.

NAATI

NAATI’s certification system is one, if not the most sophisticated of its kind, in the world. It developed from a need to govern all sections of Australian society, to communicate with immigrants, and for immigrants to access government and community services. Australia is a country of diverse languages and cultures. Approximately 120 Indigenous (Marmion, Obata & Troy 2014) and 52 foreign languages (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011) are spoken in addition to English. Given the large number of immigrants in Australia, and that people from diverse countries and cultures continue to arrive, it was necessary to develop an efficient certifying process across a large number of languages that could adapt easily to shifting language demands. The varying levels of certification offered by NAATI were offered as a way to accommodate this. For higher prevalence languages, such as Spanish and Chinese for example, multiple levels of certification have been offered for an extended time. For low prevalence languages on the other hand, such as indigenous languages and those that have emerged from humanitarian and refugee patterns, the small number of individuals with the relevant bilingual and bicultural skills has impeded the ability to develop various levels of testing. To solve this, NAATI offers recognition rather than certification, as a way of signalling that they deem these recognised individuals as having the minimum experience and ability to provide translation services between English and their LOTE (NAATI). This feature of the system maintains NAATI as an authority in translating and interpreting services. It also sets it apart from other similar systems in the world, as it the key to how NAATI has the capacity to offer certification or recognition for such a large number of languages, which continually change in terms of demand.

The relatively quick turnaround for NAATI to be able to certify or provide recognition to translators increases social cohesion and facilitates government capacity. Vital information about social, educational, legal and medical services can be communicated to members of the public who speak languages other than English, as can occupational, health and safety information in the workplace. Greater access to such services contributes towards increasing equality and fairness within society. In terms of advantages for the government, a cohesive and manageable society makes governing easier. Having communication with speakers of languages other than English
established through NAATI-certified or recognised translators and interpreters, and bearing in mind that NAATI is jointly owned by all the governments of Australia, the government can reach a quite large proportion of Australia’s multicultural and multilingual society. With such increased communication, there is a higher expectation on the part of the government that people will comply with laws and regulations.

On an individual level, having NAATI certification can increase one’s chances of becoming a permanent resident, and subsequently a citizen of Australia. NAATI certification has attracted extra points on a migration application for a number of years, and although the amount of points has been reduced to five, it remains a small incentive nonetheless. The minimum amount of points that one needs to be invited to apply for permanent residency status is 60; however, invitations are only given to those with the highest scores. The study to permanent residency pathway has existed in Australia since the late 1990s, and while it is not as simple to follow as it was initially, it still creates a strong link between migration and education policies. For prospective migrants who are bi- or multilingual, having the option of studying a translator education program that has the potential of gaining them an extra five points on their migration application than other programs may influence their decision of which program to complete. It also gives them extra time in Australia and brings extra income to the universities.

Spain: pre-admission examinations for higher education

In this final section before the conclusion of the thesis, I outline how Competitive Academic Curriculum impacted which learners were successful in gaining entry into the translator education program at UniEspaña.

The Selectividad advantages learners who are accustomed to performing in a competitive environment. Competitive Academic Curriculum is used throughout Spanish secondary schools. Connell (1998) claims such curriculum is defined by its division of knowledge into subjects that are arranged hierarchically, is teacher-centred, individualised, and is assessed by formal competitive exams. During the 1970s and 1980s, there was debate that competitive curriculum emulated social inequality, with a particular emphasis on class inequality. It was argued, and has since been continually substantiated, that Competitive Academic Curriculum disadvantages working class learners (p. 84).

The Competitive Academic Curriculum that learners at UniEspaña had had to engage in to secure a place in the program impacted the profile of enrolled learners. Past research into
competitive curriculum, and curriculum reform in general, has repeatedly highlighted teacher-centred schooling, which relies on examinations for assessment, as suiting individuals who are accustomed to working and thinking independently. Such people would usually have grown up in an environment where individual achievement is celebrated and autonomous living was the norm; characteristics of the middle and upper classes. Working class people on the other hand are more accustomed to a communal rather than autonomous lifestyle, where pooling resources, helping others, and celebrating those who struggle are common features of everyday life. An education system that uses competitive curriculum will therefore, by its nature, be easier for the middle and upper classes to navigate and succeed in. Within the context of Spain’s competitive Selectividad examinations, middle and upper class learners are in the best position to receive grades high enough to gain them entry into translator education programs such as that at UniEspaña.
Conclusion

Reflections on Lessons Learnt

I began this research with the intention of exposing how the NAATI test interfered with learning. I chose a context where translator education was delivered without the influence of NAATI so that I could reveal limitations that the NAATI test imposed on learning. However, shortly after beginning fieldwork, it became very obvious that learning is a complicated affair, and that there are many factors aside from NAATI that impact it. I found that high-stakes, student-centred translator education built around employability has to contend with washback, testing consequences and impact. Of the many lessons I learnt while embarking on this research, understanding that things are often far more complicated than they appear has been the most enlightening. And it is precisely this insight that has helped me to uncover interesting and unexpected complexities of student-centred employability-focused translator education.

Translation Studies is considered a multi-disciplinary field; however, much research that examines translator education engages minimally with other disciplines. Sociology of Education is a body of work that looks beyond classroom events to consider education in context. While reviewing translator education literature, and with the exception of a few studies, I did not encounter research that addresses the wider context of translator education and includes events and processes that take place both in- and outside the classroom. I have attempted to fill this gap by engaging with debates concerning teaching and learning methodologies, employability and career development, and language testing consequences, washback, and test impact. By engaging with multiple bodies of work, I was able to capture how translator education transpires in the classroom, while also encompassing events and processes in wider society.

The methodological approach that I used further enabled me to include outside influences. And while I have discussed my methodology throughout this thesis as being an ethnographic case study, it was only after having completed fieldwork and analysis that I was able to label it as such. The reality is that I carried out the research how I did because it made sense and worked at the time. I wanted to use cases from two settings so that I could contrast one against the other, as a way of highlighting similarities and differences. But when I explored case study designs, they appeared too constrictive, and when I began fieldwork this indeed turned out to be true. Following a strictly defined case study design was limiting my ability to capture influences and events that were external.
to the classroom. By including insights that I had gained from observations and conversations that took place outside the classroom, I had expanded the definition of a case study and integrated an ethnographic approach into it. And while carrying out this research project has helped me to develop my methodological understandings from practical experiences, I still have a lot to learn in the area.

Notwithstanding these challenges, the methodological approach I took helped me to uncover complexities in unexpected areas. Examining three cases in context provided thick descriptions of the teaching and learning that took place at each university. I then used these thick descriptions to create a dialogue between the data and literature, which uncovered themes and later categories of analysis. The dialogue was continual and allowed for new insights from the data to inform which theoretical areas to investigate further, and consequently, which themes or categories to revisit or explore during subsequent fieldwork and analysis. In some cases, the categories and literature reviews led to analysing areas of translator education that I had not anticipated being relevant during the planning stages of the project. And it was often these areas that provided the most interesting findings.

Mind maps played a pivotal role in helping me to visualise connections between the literature and data. I used them extensively during literature reviews, analyses and write-ups. Plotting themes on mind maps helped me to see connections between them clearly, and to organise these connections in a coherent way. After having made sense of how everything was connected, I could see much more clearly how the thesis would be structured and how to discuss the complex nature of translator education.

Although the project revealed aspects aside from NAATI as particularly important and interesting in regards to the teaching, learning and assessment process, NAATI still played an important part. Learners’ determination to pass the NAATI test applied pressure on educators to adjust the delivery of the program so that learners’ chances of passing the test were increased. The more that educators resisted this pressure, the more visible washback effects of the test were. However, given the high-stakes nature of the test and that it is extremely difficult to pass, one can understand the learners’ position. NAATI has received continual criticism that its testing instrument is too difficult, and that it has not undergone rigorous reliability and validity testing that other high-stakes tests such as the IELTS have. And to NAATI’s credit, they appear to have taken-on some of this feedback.
At the 2016 AUSIT mini-conference held in Melbourne, Robert Foote, the Development Manager at NAATI, presented an update on the ongoing Improvements to NAATI Testing (INT) Project. Since 2011, NAATI have commissioned reports and produced papers in response to recommendations made to improve the integrity and efficiency of NAATI’s certification and testing system. In his presentation, Foote reported on the next phase of the project, which will be redesigning their testing instrument. Unfortunately, reliability and validity testing has been deemed unviable due to time constraints. NAATI’s priority is to have a new testing system in place by 2018 and Foote reported that NAATI did not believe reliability and validity testing can be done within this timeframe. While I agree that a new testing system is a pressing priority, and that incorporating validity and reliability testing into the design phase would both increase costs and delay implementation, if this rigorous testing does not take place, doubts will remain as to the test’s validity and reliability. I do not believe that confidence within the industry of the new instrument’s ability to test candidates fairly and consistently will be an improvement on the current system. While it has not yet been determined, it is most probable that the new testing instrument will be protected by the same commercial in-confidence classification that the current instrument has been. I fear that this lack of transparency will add yet another hurdle to increasing public confidence in the testing system. On a more positive note, Foote indicated that the new instrument will include feedback mechanisms so that the test can be further developed and improved as time goes on. It has also committed to completely abandoning the current test’s error-deduction marking system and a rubric will be used instead. I believe these two important changes will help candidates and markers understand the marking system more thoroughly. They will also allow the instrument to be improved from the point of the test’s implementation, and to continue into the future.

In Spain, changes to the Selectividad are also underway. The Spanish Government has recognised potential problems associated with such large-scale exams and has proposed changes for the 2017 academic year. For the most part, the changes revolve around the format and responsibility for the exams, with test design and implementation being given to the autonomous communities, or regions of Spain. While some autonomous communities have opted for a fifty-fifty split of multiple-choice and open response questions, other communities have decided to keep the exam format more or less the same as the current one and for all questions to be open response (Álvarez 2015, 2016; Silió 2016). Discussions are continuing regarding how the new exams will affect university applications and how to prevent learners having to sit multiple exams if applying for universities located in different autonomous communities.
For the remainder of the conclusion, I detail arguments raised in Chapters four, six, seven and eight, and then make suggestions for further research.

**Ethnographic Case Study: uncovering unexpected complexity**

In Chapter four, I discussed how using the methodological approach of ethnographic case study uncovered complex elements of translator education. I had not anticipated that translator education would be so complicated; however, uncovering the convoluted and elaborate nature of it provided insights into areas of translator education that were quite unexpected. During the design phases of this project, the focus had been solely on learning and assessment, with a narrowed focus on the sites selected. The ethnographic approach allowed this focus to be broadened, which was what allowed interesting and unexpected complexities to be uncovered.

This project's fieldwork, which was a combination of observation, interviews and document analysis, provided insights into a range of areas of translator education that would not have been possible using one single method. The integration of transmissionist teaching and learning methods was more evident during observations than what was apparent in curriculum documents. Similarly, the role of employability in translator education programs was highlighted during observations and interviews in a way that contradicted how it was presented in curriculum documents and by some educators' comments in the classroom. While washback and testing consequences were anticipated to be found in the case of the NAATI test, it was surprising that washback was also affecting translator education in Spain, albeit in a different way. Without the combined insights from observations, interviews and document analysis, such areas would not have been explored with the same depth.

Another advantage of using a variety of methods was that the data collected via one method could inform further collection by other methods. Observations uncovered many areas that had not been anticipated before conducting fieldwork. These areas could be investigated in more depth during interviews and document analysis. Interviews served as a way of checking whether the experiences of learners and educators were reflected in my account of what was happening in the classroom. This was not always the case. Having the opportunity to speak with people in depth, and to revisit topics at later stages, allowed me time to reconsider events and make sense of them in other terms.
Analysing the data by looking for puzzles and surprises uncovered unexpected findings. The theme of employment post-graduation emerged from the data, with the lecturer at UniEspaña making numerous references to translation and project management job opportunities during classes. This contrasted with what learners were saying that they wanted to do after graduating from the program, with only approximately one quarter wanting to pursue a career or further study in the area of translation. A contradiction like this struck me as odd and surprising. By drawing on Timmermans & Tavory’s (2012) idea of looking for surprises, puzzles and anomalies in data for the production of new theory, I used this surprising finding to develop my analytical understanding and develop a theoretical explanation for it.

**Student-centred translator education: a balancing act**

In chapter six, I demonstrated how student-centred learning in a translator education context is a balancing act between traditional transmissionist methods and a more progressive student-centred collaborative approach. Each site examined in this study used a combination of the two. Although the lecturer at UniEspaña had been using student-centred teaching and learning methods for the past decade or so, such methods were only embraced on a university-wide scale during the time of observations and in the few years preceding. In Australia on the other hand, UniOz 1 and UniOz 2 had a long history of student-centred learning across the university, which educators were already very familiar with. In spite of any particular site’s familiarity and comfortableness with using student-centred methods, there were times at all three sites when deviations were made and transmissionist approaches were drawn upon. These times were necessary because learners expected and wanted some parts of their education to involve knowledge transmission, or because educators quite consciously used a selection of learning methods to enhance learning.

Regardless of the way that classes had been scheduled, lecture formats were used by all educators at all sites. Lectures are usually associated with transmissionism; however, there were times when educators considered it appropriate to integrate a mini-lecture into a class that was for the most part being delivered in a student-centred way. These times were generally when learners required some background information before they could discuss translation strategies in depth. A question from a learner at times highlighted the need for a mini-lecture on a topic, but more often than not, educators anticipated their need and delivered them at the beginning of a new or complicated topic.
NAATI’s testing instrument reduced learners’ desire to engage in student-centred learning. At UniOz 1, where NAATI’s instrument was integrated into the curriculum and used as an assessment task, learners could not receive transparent marking guidelines. Their insecurity around how they would be assessed resulted in educators spending large amounts of time and energy to divert their attention away from the test and towards developing sound translation strategies that could be applied in a range of professional situations. However, the sustained pressure on educators inevitably meant they abandoned student-centred teaching and learning methods, albeit temporarily, so that information about the test could be transmitted to learners. At UniOz 2, NAATI’s testing instrument was not used. Instead, educators designed assessment tasks that were transparent. As they had been approved by NAATI, the assessment tasks could also determine NAATI certification eligibility. Learners appeared more engaged in student-centred methods and less time was dedicated to using transmissionist methods when NAATI’s testing instrument was not used.

Collaboration was used at all three sites to encourage knowledge creation and enhance learning. At UniEspaña, learners completed group translation assignments in a project management model where the roles of project manager, researcher, terminologist, translator/s, editor and reviser were represented. During each class, a different group presented their translation, and these presentations were used to promote whole class discussions. Knowledge was created through these conversations and learners contributed significantly. Class discussions were used in a similar way at UniOz 1, with short discussions taking place in lectures and longer discussions in tutorials. While the length and depth was restricted in the specialised translation course by the large number of learners and the lecture theatre layout of the room, the NAATI preparation lectures were able to accommodate deeper learning and a variety of discussion types. The most common discussion involved the whole class and surrounded translation strategies, and difficulties learners had encountered in the translation exercises they completed individually outside of class time. There were times when the lecturer asked them to discuss an aspect of a source or target text in their language groups, although this only happened on the rare occasion. Tutorials on the other hand were dedicated to extended dialogue about translation strategies, as the small number of learners in these classes facilitated group discussions easily. UniOz 2 used small group exercises and discussions, which then fed into whole class discussions, to create knowledge. Each class ran as a workshop rather than a lecture + tutorial format, which allowed for greater collaboration and for learners to engage in knowledge building for an extended period of time. Collaboration was a key feature of classes at all sites. The physical, virtual and social spaces available to educators and learners impacted the way in which learners collaborated.
Learning spaces: blurring boundaries with innovative uses

Fieldwork illuminated new ways of viewing (blurred) boundaries between physical/virtual and social/learning spaces, as well as the importance of flexible virtual spaces for collaborative learning. There was a fluid movement between physical and virtual, and social and learning spaces, which highlighted a need for a renewed understanding of spatial boundaries; one that blurs the boundary, rather than fixes it. Learners at all three sites integrated virtual spaces into physical spaces. When physically present in a class, they were virtually connected elsewhere. Virtual space therefore played a large part in the way that learners collaborated. Considering what I found at the three sites, I agree with Souter et al. (2011) and Lynne, Henk and Michael (2012) that space is integral to teaching and learning, and that when different spaces are blended together collaborative learning is enhanced. However, contrary to Fox and Lam (2012), who believe a single virtual tool (the blog) can assist one to cross spatial boundaries, I believe that flexible, adaptable and personalised spaces are the key to blurring and breaking down such boundaries, and that this blurring of boundaries can lead to increased collaborative learning.

Educators and learners at each setting used virtual space in innovative ways to support collaborative learning. Developing the ideas of Keppell and Riddle (2012) that physical space needs to be flexible and adaptable, fieldwork illustrated the advantages of virtual space having the same characteristics so that innovative collaborative learning can take place. While Souter et al. (2011) and Sundberg (2013) take important steps towards physical spaces being designed with collaborative learning in mind, I believe that considering virtual space design is integral to increasing support to innovative and collaborative learning.

Employability: chaotic careers for translation graduates

In Chapter 7: Employability in Context, I raised questions surrounding the relevance of aligning curriculum design with translation labour markets. Curriculum is increasingly designed with market needs at its core; however, few learners undertaking translator education programs in this study have intentions or prospects to practice as full-time professional translators. In Spain, an education gap exists for learners wishing to pursue studies in modern or applied languages. Learners at UniEspaña selected a translation degree primarily because they were interested in languages and it provided them with flexible language choices and increased post-graduation study
and employment options. Only a minority of learners aspired to pursue work or post-graduate study in the translation field.

Learners at UniOz 1 and UniOz 2 similarly had few prospects of continuing in the area of translation, although for different reasons. NAATI certification is notoriously difficult to attain, and this significantly reduces the chances of translator education graduates entering the labour market in Australia. The learners in this study did not consider working full-time as a translator a viable employment option. Their reasons included insecure work opportunities and poor working conditions. Taking into account the limited opportunity or desire to be professional translators that learners at UniEspaña, UniOz 1 and UniOz 2 have, I raised questions surrounding how translator education is designed and what is prioritised.

Learners can be introduced to, and prepared for, the chaotic careers they will embark on upon graduation. Remaining in one occupation, let alone with one employer, is no longer the common working experience. Graduates are more likely to move between various jobs, often working multiple part-time or casual positions rather than securing ongoing full-time employment. Employment pathways are non-linear and flexibility is required if graduates are going to be successful in securing jobs that suit them in a continually changing environment. Extending career advice provided in the classroom beyond a mere promotion of translation, translation-related, or other language-based positions could result in conversations that better represent the reality for graduates. Encouraging learners to be flexible, to take advantage of chance and opportunity, to be aware of their skills, knowledge and experience, and to create diverse networks is more appropriate careers advice in the current employment climate. Such advice could be more beneficial than proposing job ideas that have unrealistic, rigid and linear outcomes.

Consequences, washback and social impacts: barriers to student-centred translator education

Chapter eight highlighted that consequences, washback and impact of high-stakes tests are barriers to fully enacting student-centred learning within translator education programs. I argued that consequential validity studies of the NAATI test are warranted, that washback is a complex phenomenon, and that test impact affects individuals as well as wider society. In terms of washback, discussing it as having positive and negative effects on learning did not allow me the freedom needed to convey its complex and intertwined nature. So rather than trying to box washback into these constractive terms, I discussed the experiences of washback in open terms that
revealed the intricate and labyrinthine nature of it. Testing impacts on the other hand were characterised quite differently in each of the two settings. In Australia, NAATI’s existence impacted individual lives, as well as societal cohesion and government capacity. And while Spain does not have a high-stakes test to enter the translation profession, the Selectividad exams that are used as the basis for university entrance impacted the type of learner that was able to enter an English stream of a translator education program.

Washback experienced by learners at UniEspaña was evident in their resistance to the collaborative learning methods used. They were unaccustomed to sharing and building knowledge in collaboration with others. The competitive environment of the Selectividad ensured that only those learners who were well-versed in working autonomously amongst competition were successful in gaining a place. The competitive nature required of learners to enter such high scoring programs was not only counterproductive to the collaborative methods used in the classroom, but also for developing interpersonal and teamwork skills for professional life. Such skills are repeatedly called for in employability frameworks as needing to be developed before or shortly after entering the labour force. Having an extended history in an education system that requires one to be competitive and non-collaborative to succeed has embedded behaviours in learners that were not only difficult to alter during their higher education, but will most likely persist into their professional lives.

**Implications for Further Research**

Further research that examines translator education and training would benefit from taking a multi-disciplinary approach and attempting to look beyond classroom events to understand those events. Ethnographic case study is well placed to cover such breadth. Ethnography is a well-established methodology for Sociology of Education research that is based on classroom events; however, translator education research is yet to embrace the approach. By expanding the way that case studies are commonly understood within translator education research so that there is greater capacity to include the context within which the education program and classroom events operate would be a step towards uncovering unexpected areas that the design had not envisaged. A more widespread use of ethnographic case studies to explore translator education has the potential of opening up new areas of research that have not yet been anticipated.

Employability was one such unanticipated area that this research uncovered. After considering the impact of employability on learning, I agree with Boden and Nedeva (2010) and
Tymon (2013) that it is important that learners gain skills that they can take with them to other professions. In the current employment environment, it is much more likely that graduates will have multiple jobs in various industries. Integrating courses from other disciplines or combining translation and interpreting degrees with others, such as law, criminology, international relations or business are examples of how translator curriculum could better prepare learners for the current chaotic labour market. Further research that looks at where translation graduates are employed upon graduation will provide insights that can be used to design programs that will produce dynamic and widely employable graduates.
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Appendix

**College Human Ethics Advisory Network Notice of Approval**

**Design and Social Context College Human Ethics Advisory Network (CHEAN) Sub-committee of the RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC)**

**Notice of Approval**

**Date:** 13 August 2013

**Project number:** CHEAN B – 0000015512 - 07/13

**Project title:** The nature of the teaching and learning process and the role of assessment in a Spanish/English translation practice class

**Risk classification:** Low Risk

**Investigator:** Dr Caroline Norma

**Approved:** From: 13 August 2013 To: 23 January 2015

I am pleased to advise that your application has been granted ethics approval by the Design and Social Context College Human Ethics Advisory Network as a sub-committee of the RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

Terms of approval:

1. **Responsibilities of investigator**
   It is the responsibility of the above investigator/s to ensure that all other investigators and staff on a project are aware of the terms of approval and to ensure that the project is conducted as approved by the CHEAN. Approval is only valid whilst the investigator/s holds a position at RMIT University.

2. **Amendments**
   Approval must be sought from the CHEAN to amend any aspect of a project including approved documents. To apply for an amendment please use the ‘Request for Amendment Form’ that is available on the RMIT website. Amendments must not be implemented without first gaining approval from CHEAN.

3. **Adverse events**
   You should notify HREC immediately of any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants or unforeseen events affecting the ethical acceptability of the project.

4. **Participant Information and Consent Form (PICF)**
   The PICF and any other material used to recruit and inform participants of the project must include the RMIT university logo. The PICF must contain a complaints clause including the project number.

5. **Annual reports**
   Continued approval of this project is dependent on the submission of an annual report. This form can be located online on the human research ethics web page on the RMIT website.

6. **Final report**
   A final report must be provided at the conclusion of the project. CHEAN must be notified if the project is discontinued before the expected date of completion.
7. **Monitoring**  
Projects may be subject to an audit or any other form of monitoring by HREC at any time.

8. **Retention and storage of data**  
The investigator is responsible for the storage and retention of original data pertaining to a project for a minimum period of five years.

In any future correspondence please quote the project number and project title.

On behalf of the DSC College Human Ethics Advisory Network I wish you well in your research.

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