



A Cross-National Overview of Translator and Interpreter Certification Procedures

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Abstract: This paper provides an overview of the process by which potential translators and interpreters demonstrate minimum standards of performance to warrant official or professional recognition of their ability to translate or interpret and to practise professionally—commonly known as “certification.” Certification can be awarded by governmental or professional authorities on the basis of testing, completed training, presentation of previous relevant experience, and/or recommendations from practising professionals. Certification can be awarded by a single authority for all types of translation and interpreting, or by authorities that specialise in a particular mode or type of inter-lingual transfer. This paper compares certification procedures in 21 countries to present a cross-national perspective of how (and if) certification is awarded and which features and requirements are contained in it. The comparison reveals that the pragmatic, needs-based and socially focussed policies of translation and interpreting services in some New World countries such as Australia, Canada, and the US mean that a demonstration of ability level is performed in single tests. Successful completion of a test is the usual minimum requirement for certification, which itself may be specified according to general or specialised ability, or mode and context of inter-lingual transfer (e.g., “healthcare interpreter certification,” “telephone interpreter certification”). In other, typically European and East Asian, countries a demonstration of minimum standards is provided through lengthy training, commonly as part of a university post-graduate degree where translation and interpreting performance is principally required for high-level political, business or literary interaction. In such countries, “certification” may be a term reserved for a restricted type of performance, e.g., court interpreting. Parallels are drawn between the procedures and conventions employed in various countries and how common elements may form a basis for greater cross-national equivalence and comparability.

Keywords: certification, translation standards, interpreting standards, translation and interpreting testing, translation and interpreting training

Note from the guest editor about updates: Any overview of this scope is usually partially out of date before it is published, even though much of the information in this article will still be valid several years from now. Therefore, the author has agreed that the Translation and Interpreting Summit Advisory Council (www.tisac.org) will be allowed to post the country-by-country information to a wiki that can be updated by interested parties as the status of certification of translators and interpreters evolves.

1. Introduction

Discussion on quality assurances and credentialing for occupational groups is now commonplace in most developed and many developing countries. Credentialing of minimum standards and skill levels required for individuals to perform certain tasks usually occurs on the basis of marketplace needs, industry capabilities and availability of training facilities. Occupational or professional associations may also play a role in the setting of standards, sometimes acting in concert with educational institutions and/or governmental bodies that confer recognition of skill level and permission to

practise. Within the Translation and Interpreting (T&I) sector cross-nationally, there is great variation in minimum requirements for practice, availability of training facilities and formal bodies that certify practitioners and that monitor and advance T&I practices. The T&I sector is characterised by increasing diversification according to new technological advances (cf. telephone interpreter skills testing offered by the largest global provider, Language Line) or socio-demographic changes (cf. the introduction of “social” or “public service” interpreting courses for recently arrived “immigrant” languages in Europe alongside the long-standing T&I courses at European universities whose programmes include major world languages only). Other changes are also underway owing to further technological advances (cf. the AVIDICUS project on video-link and remote interpreting and recommended protocols) and the popularisation of machine translation tools that now automatically provide inter-lingual transfer (of various degrees of quality) that further extend the outreach and accessibility of inter-lingual transfer services.

This paper first provides a brief account of national and cross-national standards, relevant to the T&I sector, that have emerged over the last 15 years. Following this, there is methodological discussion on the selection and attributes of countries that are included in this overview, which precedes a brief note on various terms used in relation to particular demonstrations of practice. Further, a listing of particular features and their representation within the certifying systems of the 21 countries provides cross-national comparison. The body of this paper contains short descriptions of the certifying process in each country. The conclusion summarises the main attributes of certification in this cross-national sample and contextualises them within current discussions on professional standards. Professional standards and those of certifying authorities will be key areas of interest in international initiatives that seek to investigate the possibility of global meta-standards. Such global meta-standards may one day apply to a number of countries’ national certifying authorities, allowing recipients of certification gained in one country to have a “portable” credential that is recognised in other countries. A collation of practices and regulations in 21 countries allows generalisations to be drawn about the “state of play” of the T&I sector internationally.

2. The emergence of local and global standards in the T&I sector

While the T&I sector is undergoing advances in diversification and specialisation it is, conversely, beginning to be subjected to regulatory standards in the same way that work practices in other fields of employment are. This is a global trend in which the practices and credentials of a service provider are measured and formally ascertained so that certain guarantees in regard to service quality in the marketplace can be made. In the first place, regulatory standards appear to offer protections primarily to service users, the consumers. However, regulatory standards also perform the function of formalising informal benchmarks of work practice within a profession. In so doing, they raise the profile and standing of that profession through consumers’ knowledge that that profession is regulated by standards. Further, formalisation of standards pertaining to the relationship of service-provider to service-user offers protections to the former in disputes with the latter, and also regulates internal work practices pertaining to the service-provider.

In many countries, there are now authorities, either governmental or belonging to professional associations, which perform the regulation of standards. Regulation is performed on the basis of any or all of the following:

evidence of training, formal testing, collected evidence of work performed, and recommendations from fellow practitioners. This type of regulation verifies individuals' capabilities to perform tasks for which they seek employment and is primarily intended to provide quality assurances for service-users and to "formalise" the profession. Recent research of T&I agencies and vendors also indicates that certification of practitioners enhances a business's standing and increases the number of job offers received (Chan, 2010).

Another means of quality assurance is now also being introduced to the T&I sector in some countries: that of "standards." There are two applications of the term *standard*: in a narrow sense, a standard refers to demonstrated performance by a practitioner; in a broader sense, a "(macro-)standard" refers to organisational and policy features that a business or organisation has in place to ensure that its products or services conform to acceptable levels of consumer expectation and conform to occupational health and safety requirements for employees. This latter application of a "meta-standard" finds form in the American ASTM F2575-06 "Standard Guide for Quality Assurance in Translation," which is directed at organisational features, but with components more specific to T&I than the generic standard ISO 9001-2008 (cf. Gouadec, 2007). In 2006, the European Standard EN 15038:2006 "Translation Services—Service Requirements" was introduced, which provides stipulations for performance "at the ground level" for individual practitioners as well as at the organisational level for agencies etc. (Heaton, 2008). A Canadian standard, CAN/CGSB-131.10-2008, also prescribes micro- and macro-processes for translation services. Almost all standards address translation but not interpreting. Only one standard, ASTM F2089, addresses components of quality interpretation in the areas of conference simultaneous and court interpreting.

The significance of supra-national standards which may assume global authority is that they regulate not so much an individual's training or demonstrated level of performance in front of a panel of examiners but the procedures that practitioners and agencies must uphold to present themselves to the market as providers of a quality-assured product. The manner in which standards now prescribe practitioners' attributes is different from the manner through which T&I training, testing or certifying bodies benchmark (potential) practitioners' attributes. But the different perspectives from which both mechanisms operate need not have conflicting impacts on the way potential T&I practitioners seek entry into the profession and gain employment. Instead, training and professional bodies are now contributing to the content of standard specifications. For example, in North America, professional associations are active in technical committees such as ISO TC37 ("Terminology and other language and content resources") that are developing specifications such as ISO/TS-11669 "Guidance in Translation Projects" (Dolatschko & Putz, 2008). The latter specification, TS-11669, provides a guide for best practices for the translation industry, including clarification of the roles and responsibilities of project manager, translator, editor, reviewer, and the client (Rumsey, 2012). What this all means is that educational, testing, and professional organisations can and should be involved in the design of national and international standards as parties that are best qualified to provide occupation-specific guidelines. This discussion on standards is timely as it is closely associated with an evaluation of current credentialing processes.

3. Methodology

This overview is restricted to a limited number of countries. The choice of countries selected for the overview was determined based on their socio-political, linguistic, educational, and/or immigration-policy attributes. The following countries were selected on the basis of the attributes listed: Australia, Canada, and the US as Anglophone countries of the New World; Sweden and Norway as countries with official or semi-official policies of multiculturalism; Austria, Belgium, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands and Spain as European countries with long-standing T&I traditions to which local and community-based T&I training initiatives for “immigrant languages” are being added; Croatia as a central European country with a legacy of acquired multilingualism and long-standing T&I programmes embedded in foreign language university departments that are now, as in many post-community economies, beginning to expand and diversify; China and Japan as East Asian countries that are now investing substantially in T&I training and infrastructure; the UK and Ireland as other Anglophone countries in which T&I training and certification are undergoing reform and expansion; South Africa as a country with progressive national policies on multilingualism, including the provision of T&I services for all 11 national languages; Argentina and Mexico as the two largest Spanish-speaking countries, and Brazil as the fastest-growing economy in the New World; Egypt as a widely-acknowledged centre of T&I training, media-subtitling and literary translation in the Middle East.

Details on countries’ certification conventions have been gained from information gathered from governmental or professional organisations’ websites, and from accounts of situations in research literature. This overview draws substantially from two sources: Jiri Stejskal’s (2005) *Survey of the FIT Committee for Information on the Status of the Translation & Interpretation Profession* and Turner and Ozolins’ (2007) *The Standards of Linguistic Competence in English and LOTE among NAATI accredited Interpreters and Translators. A Review*. The first one was undertaken for FIT (International Federation of Translators) as a “state-of-the-affairs” survey, eliciting information from 63 organisations from 40 countries. Much of the information is backgrounded by data collected by Stejskal from 2000–2004 on various countries and published in the ATA chronicle. The other source, Turner and Ozolins (2007) was commissioned by Australia’s National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI). Where possible, information has also been sourced from the certification bodies and organisations’ websites, as well as from academic studies and surveys.

4. A note on terminology

The formal process through which a test candidate applies for and goes through a process of formal testing, fulfilling specific criteria that demonstrate a particular standard of performance, after which this is recognised by the testing authority, is (for translators and interpreters in the US, Canada, most parts of Asia and Europe) known as *certification*. (Elsewhere, e.g., Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa) the term *accreditation* is used for this process.

There is little difference in the meaning of the two terms *certify* and *accredit*. Both can refer to the awarding of (an official) recognition to a person or organisation. However, some authorities use the terms differently. In North America and increasingly in Europe, the body that issues formal recognition to individuals is a “certifying body” that “certifies.”

Hierarchically, this body is subordinate to another authority that checks that the “certifying body” is following required standards in issuing “certification.” This higher authority is an “accrediting body” that “accredits” the certifying body. This overview examines “certifying” bodies only.

There are other terms that come close to the meaning of “to certify.” In the UK, the term “chartered” is used with “linguist” to refer to a member of the professional association there. “Registered” is also used in the UK, in reference to those who have passed the Diploma of Public Service Interpreting. “Sworn” is a commonly used term, particularly in countries in which the courts were the first or only setting to provide formal recognition of status and skill level (EULITA, n.d.). In Table 1 (below), 10 out of 21 sample certification organisations report that they grant an official legal title to successful candidates who gain certification. An official legal title is likely to refer to a specified acronym or formal description of the credential that can be used with a practitioner’s name. In some cases this is one of the terms used above, e.g., “sworn” or “registered”; in others it is the name of the credential itself, e.g., “NAATI accredited senior translator.”

5. Overall global features

Stejskal (2005) canvassed information internationally from organisations that either certify translators and interpreters or that are associated with the process of official recognition or certification through these being prerequisites to membership in an association. In some countries, it is a governmental organisation that administers and conducts certification, in others a governmental organisation only administers certification and certification itself is conducted by another (usually professional) organisation. In other instances, there is little or no governmental regulation and certification of potential practitioners occurs only through professional organisation and/or tacitly or semi-officially through recognised training institutions. Stejskal’s (2005) report on professional organisations also includes those that provide information even where there is no formal testing available at all in the country in which the organisation is based.

Variation in terminology is also addressed by Stejskal (2005), who locates different legal conceptualisations of the authorising body and of the role that T&I practitioners have vis-à-vis these bodies as the reason for differences in terminology:

Certification by the government is essentially a license, which means that certain tasks can be performed only by “authorized,” “sworn,” or “public” translators or interpreters. This type of certification process is typically governed by legal statutes, which date back to the 19th century in some countries. For example, in Argentina, where “certified public translators” are considered to be assistants to justice, they are the only ones authorized to act in an official capacity as court assistants, experts, and/or interpreters. Certified translations are required in a number of official contexts: personal documents, certificates and diplomas, public deeds, documents that are involved in legal actions, expert witness reports, and also for commercial documents such as contracts, financial statements, corporate documents, etc. A government-certified translation will also be required in circumstances involving other types of documents, such as medical reports or expert opinions that are part of a legal

procedure or an audit or a claim in an insurance company. Similar procedures are employed in other Latin American countries and most of Europe, particularly in the member states of the EU. In some countries (for example in Norway), the title “government-authorized translator” uses a similar wording and carries the same weight as the title “certified public accountant.” The procedures employed in government certification are quite uniform across the board in terms of eligibility requirements. The following set of criteria is used consistently in nearly all countries offering such a credential:

- Minimum age (18, 21, or 25);
- Citizenship;
- Place of residence;
- Legal competence of the candidate; and
- Clean criminal record.

(Stejskal, 2005, p. 4)

There is a contrast between government-sponsored certification and professional-association certification: the former sometimes focuses also on moral integrity of the candidate as well as other attributes, but this focus is rare for the latter group, which usually concentrates on the candidate’s linguistic competency. Continuing education requirements are not common in government certification. Of the 63 organisations sampled, 55% did not actually organise a credentialing programme—this relates in particular to the organisations whose role is that of professional association only and not training or testing authority (Stejskal, 2005, p. 13). Sometimes certification was a prerequisite for membership of a professional association (62%), while there were few obstacles for practitioners in other countries to become members, with 80% of organisations allowing non-certified individuals to join (Stejskal, 2005, p. 14). Stejskal (2005, p. 17) also researched testing conditions and instruments and found, for instance, that for the translation tests, only eight organisations allowed the use of a computer, 15 did not and 40 did not respond to this question. The average pass rate is 37% for candidates sitting tests, with rates ranging from 5% to 75%. Most organisations (67%) do not offer a practice test (Stejskal, 2005, pp. 17–19). Pre-test requirements for candidates also vary. The most common requirements are (in order of frequency): T&I experience (76%), training (68%), professional membership (64%), references (56%), and a screening test (36%) in the language of the given country (Stejskal, 2005, p. 15).

In some countries, language testing has been discontinued (e.g., Norway), while China does so in a component of its test through vocabulary selection (completing incomplete sentences), vocabulary replacement (replacing words from multiple-choice lists), correcting grammatical errors (selecting words from a list to correct a grammatical error), and reading comprehension (answering questions or completing unfinished statements regarding a text) (Turner & Ozolins, 2007, p. 44). Other specialised components are a feature of testing in the Czech Republic, Finland, Norway (interpreting), South Africa (translation), Spain (translation), the UK (translation), and the US (Turner & Ozolins, 2007, p. 55). To demonstrate the similarities and differences between certification organisations internationally, Table 1 below lists the features that accompany certification procedures from a sample of 21 organisations from around the world.

| Feature | Yes | No | No information available / Not applicable |
|---|------------|-----------|--|
| Certification conducted by a governmental organisation | 8 | 13 | 0 |
| Language proficiency test | 7 | 14 | 0 |
| Formal examination | 18 | 3 | 0 |
| Separate portfolio | 2 | 19 | 0 |
| Minimum age | 9 | 12 | 0 |
| Membership of accrediting association obligatory | 6 | 8 | 7 |
| Minimum experience level | 7 | 13 | 1 |
| Minimum education level | 10 | 8 | 3 |
| Lack of criminal record | 6 | 10 | 5 |
| Sign-language interpreting | 4 | 10 | 7 |
| Video or audio recording of exam | 2 | 2 | 17 |
| Availability of practice/sample tests | 8 | 4 | 9 |
| Permission to use resources for exam | 7 | 2 | 12 |
| Available statistics on pass rate | 0 | 14 | 7 |
| Details of the content of translation texts | 8 | 7 | 6 |
| Details of the content of the interpreting test | 4 | 14 | 3 |
| Test / exam contains a general component | 6 | 6 | 9 |
| Test / exam contains specialist components | 13 | 6 | 2 |
| Test / exam accompanied by training | 1 | 18 | 2 |
| Availability of any training | 3 | 12 | 6 |
| Conferral of official legal title | 10 | 9 | 2 |
| Re-registration/re-validation of certification required | 7 | 9 | 5 |
| Availability of examiners' manual | 1 | 1 | 19 |

Table 1. Features of testing procedures reported from 21 sample organisations

Table 1 above firstly shows a roughly even split between governmental and non-governmental authorities that function as the administrators of certification testing. One third of the exams contain language proficiency as a separately identifiable part of testing (either as a preliminary, “hurdle” test or as a set section of a longer complete examination). Two thirds do not have language testing, but the structure of representative test papers shows that almost all marking systems include accuracy and expression in the target language. Exams are the most popular form of certification overall and portfolios are offered as an alternative demonstration of proficiency by two organisations. Membership with the certifying organisation (where this is possible) is not usually required—successful completion of a test is often a prerequisite to applications for membership to an organisation. Most organisations do not require information as to whether a candidate has a criminal record.

Surprisingly, only four organisations offer certification for signed interpreting—in many countries sign language interpreting is co-ordinated and tested by organisations that are specifically targeted for deaf people. Few organisations provided details about the recording of (interpreting) tests and few organisations provide information on the details and type of texts or spoken/signed tasks in T&I testing.

Table 1 above also shows that most testing procedures contain specialist components, which usually relate to court and/or medical

interpreting, sometimes also conference interpreting, terminology and/or technical translation. Testing (and training) in specialised areas now appears to be a common and widely practiced means of benchmark assurance for many areas of the T&I sector in a number of countries. Specialist training has been a part of most four-semester post-graduate university T&I courses in Europe as well.

Certification authorities do not generally conduct training, as the nature of their establishment has often been to test and certify rather than train. Most certification bodies have educational level pre-requisites. Nearly 30% of certification bodies require evidence of previous experience. This means that certification bodies, if not reliant on previous experience as a pre-requisite for test entry (which is often not possible because few applicants can or should gain experience without certification), rely on previous T&I training not as a pre-requisite, but as a strong expectation or recommendation before admission to the test. In recently developed tests such as the Social Interpreting test in Flanders, Belgium, preliminary testing, 102 hours of pre-test training, and even re-training in the event of failure are required of applicants to the test (Vermeiren, Van Gucht & De Bontridder, 2009, p. 315). Training is now widely recognised as the best means of test preparation. The certification bodies, as Table 1 above shows, may not be legally allowed or administratively intended to function as training centres. Where existing T&I training centres are available, these centres are the logical venues for pre-test candidates to gain training.

As mentioned in section 1 above, the question of industry-set benchmarks or standards is an associated area increasingly relevant to the T&I sector, as all fields of business or work-related activity are now subject to standards. Their criteria are more detailed than macro-level standards and they seek to encourage not only safe and fair work practices between providers and users, but also contain criteria that address practitioners' ability to engage in further professional development.

6. An overview of the certification / credentialing systems in 21 countries

This section provides a brief description of the certification process in 21 countries. In some countries, only one organisation or authority bears responsibility for this; in others there may be different procedures for type of inter-lingual transfer, e.g., translation vs. interpreting; spoken vs. signed interpreting, or differences based on governmental jurisdiction (e.g., in Germany, the registration of court sworn interpreters falls not under federal but state jurisdiction and various German states have different regulations and organisations that oversee this registration). In addition to Stejskal's (2005) comprehensive survey and Turner and Ozolin's (2007) report, data presented in sections 6.1 to 6.19 are drawn from the national professional organisations, university and other training centres, and relevant governmental and industry authorities. A report prepared for the European Commission's Directorate-General for Translation, entitled *The status of the translation profession in the European Union* and published in July 2012 is also drawn on, as it provides comprehensive data on a large number of EU member states and cross-national comparison with other non-European countries such as Australia, Canada, China and the US. Further, local FIT delegates in a large number of the 21 countries listed below were contacted in November 2012 to confirm and verify information pertaining to their country. This paper therefore claims to present a contemporary description of the T&I sector in 21 countries.

6.1. Argentina

In Argentina, the only way to become a *traductor público* (sworn translator) is first to gain a university degree. In order to be admitted to such a programme, prospective students must pass a language admission examination. The university programmes vary from four to five years and such university courses are focussed mainly on legal translation (Stejskal, 2002a). In addition, there are three- and four-year college programmes to earn a degree in literary, scientific, and technical translation.

Sworn translators must be Argentine citizens licensed by a *colegio profesional*, a “professional board.” Registering with such a board allows translators to certify their translations, but only in the particular jurisdiction where the board exists; as of July 2012, nine such professional boards (located in CTPCBA, Zona Norte, Catamarca, Tucumán, Río Negro, Santa Fe, Córdoba, La Rioja, San Juan) and a few smaller satellite boards (known as *círculos*) existed in the 23 provinces of Argentina. Most of these boards are members of the Argentine Federation of Translators (FAT) (Marita Propato, FIT delegate in Argentina and member of the *Asociación Argentina de Traductores e Intérpretes*, email correspondence, Nov. 2012). In the remaining provinces, translators must register at the courts. Thus, the certification process for becoming a translator in the legal field in Argentina does not involve sitting an exam: “to work as a scientific or technical translator, no license is required, and there is no certification programme in place” (Stejskal, 2002a, p. 14). However, university degrees and professional affiliations are often cited as independent demonstrations of certification or translation competence.

6.2. Australia

In Australia, the certification process is administered by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI), a not-for-profit company owned jointly by the Australian federal and all eight State and Territory governments. NAATI has awarded translation, spoken and signed interpreting certification in 116 languages and offers testing in 60 of these (John Beever, NAATI CEO, email correspondence, 10 April 2012). It is important to note that certification in Australia is not a consequence of legislation or legal requirements that individuals must satisfy to practise in the T&I sector. Instead, certification reflects the governmental regulations that specify the standards of practice and level of proficiency that should be possessed by T&I practitioners contracted by institutions or organisations funded by federal, state or territory governments. NAATI certification has, tacitly, become a regulatory benchmark of T&I standards in Australia through governmental policy rather than legislation. There are four certification levels, the titles of which are:

- Paraprofessional Translator / Paraprofessional Interpreter;
- Professional Translator / Professional Interpreter;
- Advanced Translator / Conference Interpreter; and
- Advanced Translator (Senior) / Advanced Interpreter (Senior).

There are five ways to gain NAATI certification:

- passing a NAATI accreditation test
- successful completion of a course of studies in translation and/or interpreting at an Australian institution as approved by NAATI

- providing evidence of a specialised tertiary qualification in translation and/or interpreting obtained from an educational institution overseas
- providing evidence of a membership of a recognised international translating and/or interpreting professional association
- providing evidence of advanced standing in translating or interpreting.

NAATI (2011)

In addition to translation or interpreting tasks, the NAATI test contains questions on ethics and knowledge of socio-cultural characteristics of Australian society and that of those of the countries or communities in which the other language is spoken/signed. In the years 2005–2006, the average rate of awarded certifications for all NAATI tests was 19%, and 27% for certification by overseas qualification (Turner & Ozolins, 2007, p. 18). NAATI also has a system of “recognition” in languages for which NAATI does not test, but with an accompanying requirement of documented work experience. In such cases, candidates must provide evidence of (a) appropriate language proficiency in English and (b) having completed basic preparation training.

At present, pre-test training is recommended but not compulsory. Most tertiary institutions that offer T&I training and a qualification have also been approved to conduct NAATI testing. For most of the languages that NAATI offers, testing is the usual avenue for candidates to gain certification. However, the popularity of training courses for high-demand languages such as Chinese (Mandarin) together with a steady increase in the number of training providers resulted in 70% of NAATI certifications in 2011 being awarded through course completions that include testing in their programme (pathway 2 above) (John Beever, NAATI CEO, email correspondence, 10 April 2012). However, for most of the 60 languages that NAATI offers accreditation in, testing remains the most widespread avenue for candidates to gain accreditation.

In Australia, there are professional associations representing T&I practitioners in Australia. The main ones are AUSIT (the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators) and ASLIA (Australian Sign Language Interpreters’ Association), with which NAATI has informal and formal ties. NAATI not only endorses the AUSIT Code of Ethics and ASLIA Code of Ethics for T&I practitioners, it includes the testing of candidates’ knowledge of the AUSIT Code of Ethics in NAATI testing.

6.3. Austria

Austria has a long tradition of multilingualism, dating from the time of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. After World War II, Austria set up two large-scale T&I training centres at the universities of Vienna and Graz. Later, a programme at the University of Innsbruck was set up. Vienna is the third seat of the United Nations; Austria was and remains a neutral country with international contacts with many other countries: the demand for locally-trained T&I specialists in Austria has been considerable since the last half of the twentieth century. Certification as a formal procedure does not exist, except in relation to court interpreting (Austrian Association of Certified Court Interpreters, 2012). The AACCI represents court interpreters but membership in is not mandatory for all court interpreters.

To become a court interpreter a candidate must pass the certification examination, which is open to graduates with evidence of two years’ professional work, or to non-graduates with evidence of five years’ work. The test includes a written test in both languages, consecutive interpreting

and sight translation in both languages, knowledge of the legal systems of Austria and the other country, legal terminology in both languages and ethics. The certification is valid for five years. In order for an interpreter to renew certification, he or she must submit an application to the competent court president for renewal for a further five years (Christine Springer, FIT delegate in Austria and member of the *Österreichischer Verband der Gerichtsdolmetscher*, email correspondence, Nov. 2012). Membership of the Association of Certified Court Interpreters is limited to three years. Renewal is allowed where there is evidence of continuing employment (Austrian Association of Certified Court Interpreters, 2012).

Graduates of T&I programmes often list their qualification before or after their name and this is an accepted form of “declared expertise” that exists in Austria. (In Austria, recipients of a university qualification are obliged to bear this title with their name in official documents.) Membership of “Universitas” (the Austrian Interpreters’ and Translators’ Association) is restricted to those who possess a university qualification in T&I or equivalent academic training (Universitas, n.d.).

6.4. Belgium and the Netherlands

Until 2003 there was no formal certification of translators and interpreters in Belgium. The Belgian Constitution states that any citizen appearing before a court may address that court in the language of his or her choice. A list of “sworn translators” is often kept by courts, drawn up in consultation with the public prosecutor’s office, with each court having its own system for the recruitment and certification of its interpreters and translators (Doris Grollmann, FIT delegate in Belgium and member of the *CBTIP Chambre belge des traducteurs, interprètes et philologues*, email correspondence, Nov. 2012). The conditions to become a sworn translator differ from court to court as to their qualifications. There is no national register of translators and interpreters, and the titles “translator” and “interpreter” are not legally protected (Stejskal, 2003).

Eligibility requirements for those wishing to appear on a court list are: no criminal record, evidence of language proficiency, and a minimum age of 21 years. Some courts offer a written test, but most do not test language proficiency themselves. Belgium has a long history of T&I training and there are well-established university centres in Antwerp, Brussels, and Gent. As in other European countries, completion of a university degree (usually at post-graduate level) is still accepted as a benchmark of ability. Practitioners commonly state their qualifications after their names or in advertising or correspondence to demonstrate their level of expertise. The university sector focuses on T&I training only in other west European languages. The large numbers of speakers of “immigrant” languages in Brussels and in the northern region of Belgium, Flanders, precipitated the development of a Social Interpreting (“community interpreting”) test that includes a preliminary language proficiency test (in both languages) followed by 102 hours of compulsory pre-training before the main test, which includes sight translation, consecutive interpreting, and ethics (Vermeiren, Van Gucht & De Bontridder, 2009).

In the Netherlands, candidates wishing to become sworn translators and interpreters must “provide ample evidence to the court that they have a good command of Dutch and the pertinent foreign language, as well as provide a declaration of good conduct” (Stejskal, 2003: 14). Sworn translators and interpreters need not pass a test but must complete training approved by the Ministry of Justice and become members of the Dutch Court Interpreters and Legal Translators Association (SIGV). A professional association, the Netherlands Society of Translators and Interpreters (NGTV) has existed since 1956 and the benchmark for employment for many

professional interpreters and translators is completion of a degree or diploma course at one of the university or polytechnic centres with T&I training in Leiden, Maastricht, and Utrecht (Stejskal, 2003). The NGTV boasts 1625 members, which, as a proportion of the total number of T&I practitioners in a country of 16 million, is a sizeable number. In addition to the SIGV, there are associations for technical translators and sign language interpreters, as well as literary translators (European Union, 2012, p. 37).

The Netherlands has five centres based at universities or tertiary colleges with T&I programmes: Leiden University, the Free University of Amsterdam, the ITV Hogeschool voor Tolken en Vertalen in Utrecht, the Hogeschool West-Nederland voor Vertaler en Tolk in The Hague, and (the oldest one) Zuyd University Maastricht, established in 1981. The Utrecht centre has four-year bachelor degrees in Dutch and six other languages and has become a major trainer of T&Is for one of the largest commercial T&I agencies in Europe *TVcN Tolk- en Vertaalcentrum Nederland*, a part of the *Manpower group* with over 1500 T&I practitioners servicing 130 languages (TVcN, 2012). The Netherlands, which has traditionally had very strong T&I programmes for other, western European languages, has also only recently undertaken steps to formalise the training and testing of interpreters for languages that are spoken by migrants from North Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. Vonk (2001) reports on the establishment of community interpreter training programmes, which had the support of the Dutch Immigration Naturalisation Service and the Ministry of Justice to primarily serve as court interpreters. In 2007, the Sworn Interpreters and Translators Act was passed (Government of the Netherlands, 2012) and a Bureau for Sworn Interpreters and Translators established. Perhaps reflective of the deregulation of the labour market that has occurred in the Netherlands over the last 15 years, a request for registration rather than educational or certification pre-requisites is listed for interested practitioners who wish to become a sworn translator or interpreter in the Netherlands (Bureau beëdigde tolken en vertalers, n.d.).

6.5. Brazil

In Brazil the Brazilian Translators Association (ABRATES) has developed a certification programme that tests professional skills. This test is available to members, who, to become members, must first produce evidence of graduation in specific and recognised courses, as well as proven work experience. The exam consists of three texts (dictionaries are allowed) and takes up to three and a half hours. The texts are literary, technical, medical-scientific, legal-commercial, and general; candidates have the choice of which to translate. As long as they remain affiliated with ABRATES, approved candidates can make full use of the certification for a period of 10 years (Stejskal, 2001).

6.6. Canada

Canada has two official languages and since the proclamation of the Official Languages Act in 1969 has pursued a national “top-down” policy of bilingualism that has led to the extension and establishment of a large number of university-level T&I programmes, and the formalisation of certification procedures for not only translators and interpreters, but also “terminologists” (specialists who identify, define and describe usually new terms that are to be used in a uniform and consistent way in both official languages). Policies towards indigenous and “immigrant” languages are less clear, but substantial demand for T&I services exists in Nunavut for Inuktitut and there is high demand in Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal for Chinese languages, Punjabi, Italian, and many other languages of immigrants to Canada. Canada is unique in the New World as a country with developed T&I training and

services infrastructure to service the two official languages, while large numbers of speakers of further languages have necessitated the provision of T&I (usually community interpreting) services (Industry Canada, 2007).

In general, translation agencies in Canada are more likely to take on translators/interpreters with university degrees and/or experience, but there is no legal requirement for translators/interpreters to be certified. The titles of “certified translator,” “certified terminologist,” “certified interpreter,” “certified conference interpreter,” and “certified court interpreter” are granted by the provincial regulatory bodies for these professions. The Canadian Translators, Terminologists, and Interpreters Council (CTTIC, 2011) is responsible for the application of uniform standards for professional certification across Canada. CTTIC also administers the various exams that confer the right to use these titles.

Three certification mechanisms are used in Canada: certification on dossier, certification by mentorship, and certification by exam. Currently, only Québec and New Brunswick offer certification by mentorship. In Québec, provincial legislation on professional orders does not permit certification by exam. The title of certified translator, interpreter, or terminologist is granted by the provincial association (or professional order) to which the candidate has applied for certification. Experienced language professionals who do not have a recognized diploma and whose training has not been recognized as equivalent, but who can prove that they have at least five years of professional practice, may become candidates for certification on dossier (Denis Bousquet, FIT delegate in Canada and member of *CTTIC Conseil des traducteurs, terminologues et interprètes du Canada*, email correspondence, Nov. 2012).

In Québec, the mentorship programme offered by the *Ordre des traducteurs, terminologues et interprètes agréés du Québec (OTTIAQ)* leads to certification after a series of meetings spread over at least six months. During this period, the mentor examines the mentoree’s work, discusses all aspects of professional services, suggests areas of practice to be considered, assesses progress made, and suggests improvements. At the end of the mentorship, the mentor evaluates the mentoree’s fitness to practice the profession and makes a recommendation to the certification committee. Candidates who meet the *Ordre*’s requirements obtain certification after completing the mentorship programme. In New Brunswick, the Corporation of Translators, Terminologists, and Interpreters of New Brunswick (CTINB) offers a mentorship programme that is similar to OTTIAQ’s but is adapted to New Brunswick legislation (Denis Bousquet, personal communication, Nov. 2012).

One of CTTIC’s main roles is to ensure consistent application of certification with two objectives: to standardize methods of entry to the profession and to monitor the skills of translators belonging to provincial and territorial organizations. CTTIC administers a uniform translation exam based on the combined efforts of member bodies through the Board of Certification. The Board of Certification reports to CTTIC’s Executive and sets requirements for certification. It also has general oversight over procedures and methods of assessing candidates.

The titles of “certified translator,” “certified interpreter,” and “certified terminologist” are now recognised by legislation in New Brunswick, Ontario, Québec, and British Columbia. The Association of Translators and Interpreters Ontario, CTINB, OTTIAQ, and the Society of Translators and Interpreters of British Columbia (STIBC) obtained these reserved titles after many years of work by leaders in the profession in these provinces. Most other member organizations enjoy a certain *de facto* recognition by public authorities in their province or territory and are working toward obtaining these titles officially.

The STIBC sets out the following criteria for certification: candidates must be of good standing, must have passed the society's ethics exam, and must comply with (a) or (b) before being able to sit the exam: (a) provide evidence of experience of four years (120,000–440,000 words of translation, depending on language); (b) hold a degree in the study of translation, linguistics, interpretation, or language, plus one year of full-time experience (Society of Translators and Interpreters of British Columbia, 2008).

Canada also has some of the oldest T&I institutions in the world: the federal Translation Bureau which plays a “lead role in terminology standardization within the Government of Canada, standardizing the vocabulary used in various areas of government activity” (Translation Bureau, 2009) was founded in 1934; the ATIO was established in 1920 and the OTTIAQ in 1940.

6.7. China

In China, the most authoritative translation and interpreting proficiency certification is the China Accreditation Test for Translators and Interpreters (CATTI), administered by the Ministry of Personnel of the People's Republic of China. The certificate awarded is called the Translation and Interpretation Proficiency Qualification Certificate of the People's Republic of China. This is the official qualification; it is incorporated into the national system of professional qualification certificates, although those without certificates can still legally practise translation and interpreting. The certificate is one of the prerequisites for “translation and interpreting professional and technical posts” (Translators' Association of China, n.d.—a).

It has four levels, from lowest to highest: Level 3 Translator and Interpreter, Level 2 Translator and Interpreter, Level 1 Translator and Interpreter, Senior Translator and Interpreter. Those at the senior level have to be not only experienced experts but also have to “make great contributions to translating and interpreting undertakings and training translators and interpreters in both theory and practice.” At the other end of the scale, Level 3 practitioners have “rudimentary scientific and cultural knowledge and a general competence for bilingual translation and interpretation and can accomplish general translation work” (Translators Association of China, n.d.—b). Tests are designed to evaluate linguistic knowledge, background knowledge, and translation knowledge.

Of the 80,299 examinees who registered for CATTI tests from 2003 to 2008, 12,702 passed it (approx. 16%). Some Chinese institutions of higher learning have incorporated the test into their syllabus and require that post-graduates majoring in translation or interpreting attain a Level 2 qualification. The Translators Association of China (n.d.—b) website also reports that the pass rate for translators of Level 3 is about 20%; for translators of Level 2, 16%; for interpreters of Level 3, 13%; and for interpreters of Level 2, 11%. Similar to Australia's NAATI testing structure, the CATTI tests are the nation-wide benchmarks of T&I performance, with graded levels of certification, similar to those used by NAATI. The influence of the Australian NAATI model and comparisons of it to the CATTI tests are discussed by Liu (2006).

The Translators Association of China (TAC), which claims some 30,000 members (European Union, 2012, p. 34), is responsible for another component of the certificate, which is the “system of continuation education.” Certificate holders must re-register every three years, and are only reissued certificates if they have participated in the “continuation education or special training” organised by the TAC, a measure to “encourage translators and interpreters to pursue professional excellence, renew their knowledge, maintain high professional competence and raise their quality of work” (Translators' Association of China, 2011). Other certifications by other

organisations include the National Accreditation Examinations for Translators and Interpreters (NAETI), the Shanghai Interpretation Accreditation (SIA) and the Accreditation for Interpreters and Translators (AIT) (Chen, 2009).

There is evidence to suggest that some T&I practitioners in China have occupational profiles beyond inter-lingual transfer. Liu (2011, p. 59) reports that younger translators in China may promote other, entrepreneurial attributes about their occupational profiles, and self-describe using terms such as “marketing communications executive,” “public affairs specialists,” “communication consultant.” Analogous situations occur elsewhere in East Asian (and European) multi-national companies, where in-house T&Is may occupy multiple roles.

6.8. Croatia

Croatia is perhaps similar to other central European countries such as Hungary, Slovakia, and Ukraine, which have a strong legacy of T&I instruction as one of the optional components of foreign-language study in under-graduate university degrees. In general, the T&I sector in Croatia is unregulated: many practitioners are graduates of university programmes but many others lack formal training or testing. Professional associations exist which also function as service points for T&I services, such as the Croatian Association of Scientific and Technical Translators, which requires a university degree and five years’ demonstrated experience from potential members (HDZTP, 2010). Similar to Argentina and Spain, the institution of a sworn court interpreter exists, which requires formal demonstration of linguistic skills and familiarity with the Croatian legal system and legal terminology (Croatian Ministry of Justice, 2005). As in Sweden and Finland, sworn court interpreters in Croatia require periodical revalidation on the basis of work completed or continuing education (European Union, 2012, p. 31). There are five different organisations such as the Croatian Association of Professional Court Interpreters (founded in 2007) and the Association of Permanent Court Interpreters of Croatia (founded in 2010) that co-ordinate continuing education for court interpreter practitioners (Croatian Ministry of Justice, 2005).

At Zagreb University, a post-graduate conference-interpreting course was introduced in 2005, in part owing to the greatly increased need for simultaneous interpreters as part of Croatia’s accession to the EU. The Croatian Society of Conference Interpreters (HDKP) has existed since 1974 and accepts new members not based on testing, but according to the criteria of training (four-five year university degree), experience (75 working days over a five-year period) and character (letters of reference from current members) (HDKP, 2011). The HDKP is also an intermediary and referral organisation for those interpreters who sit the admission test for employment with the EU Directorate-General for Interpretation. By 2011, there were approximately 60 Croatian-language interpreters who had gained registration with the EU DG for Interpretation (HDKP, 2011). Other associations exist which have a combination of educational and occupational pre-requisites for membership: the Croatian Literary Translators’ Association, founded in 1952 with 220 members (DHKP, 2012); and the Association of Croatian Audiovisual Translators, founded in 2012 with 29 members (DHAP, 2012).

6.9. Egypt

In Egypt, university qualifications are the usual benchmark for professional employment in the T&I sector. Translation is taught at under-graduate level at 13 universities (Gabr, 2002), with one of the most prominent training institutions, the Arabic and Translation Studies Division of the American University of Cairo, offering non-degree professional certificates in

Arabic/English translation (with variations in specialisation) and Arabic/English interpreting (including consecutive and simultaneous interpreting and sight translation) (American University of Cairo, 2011). The Egyptian Association of Translators (including also interpreters) appears to function more as an agency than as a professional association, but did receive governmental endorsement and permission to organise itself along the lines of a “trade union” (Reffat, 2007). More recently the Egyptian Translators and Linguists’ Association has been established, which has links to training courses, professional development forums and a practitioners’ bulletin. Further information on its site indicates that a university degree is the usual yardstick for professional employment in Egypt (Egyptian Translators and Linguists’ Association, 2012). (Magdy Zaky, ATA-certified translator and FIT associate in Egypt, Email correspondence, Nov. 2012.)

6.10. Germany

In Germany, anyone regarding him- or herself as competent is legally permitted to translate or interpret. This appears to be a rather low benchmark and contrasts with the preferred benchmark of a tertiary qualification in T&I from one of Germany’s many excellent centres of T&I training, e.g., university programmes at Heidelberg (established 1930), Leipzig (established 1953), Mainz-Germersheim (established 1947), and Saarbrücken (1948). Degrees from these institutions are widely accepted as credentials, and in order to become a member of the professional association, the Federal Association of Interpreters and Translators, candidates must have completed a translation or interpreting course in Germany or abroad, or have completed an exam at the State Examination Office or the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce (Federal Association of Interpreters and Translators, 2011b). In Germany, as in most other countries, the term “translator” or “interpreter” is not a legally protected professional term, unlike other professional terms like “lawyer” or “doctor.” However, the professional designation *öffentlich bestellter und allgemein vereidigter Dolmetscher und Übersetzer* (“officially certified and accredited interpreter and translator”) is protected and, depending on the respective German state legislation, persons misappropriating this professional title or variations thereof can be fined up to €5,000 per offence. There are very difficult testing requirements set by the State Examination Office that have to be met to obtain this title in Germany. (Natascha Dalügge-Momme, FIT delegate in Germany and member of *ADÜ Assoziierte Dolmetscher und Übersetzer in Norddeutschland*, email correspondence, Nov. 2012.)

University training centres in Germany typically offer major European languages. One institution, the University of Bonn, has a cultural-economic focus in offering Masters programmes in Translation for Arabic, Japanese and Korean. The University in Mainz (Germersheim) is exceptional in offering also Arabic, Chinese, and Turkish as languages to service local, community T&I needs. This latter (“community” or “immigrant language”) part of the T&I sector is increasingly serviced by T&I practitioners who have been trained or recruited by municipal authorities. Overall, there are around 20 tertiary institutions in Germany that offer T&I programmes, at under- and/or post-graduate level.

There are approximately 15 professional T&I associations in Germany (e.g., ADÜ, ATICOM) with different, but generally stringent criteria for becoming a member. By far the largest is the national organisation, the *Bundesverband der Dolmetscher und Übersetzer* (“the Federal Association of Interpreters and Translators”), founded in 1955, which boasts over 7,000 members and which claims to include 75% of professional T&Is in Germany (Federal Association of Interpreters and Translators, 2011a). The BDÜ, which also functions as a service-point for customers of

T&I services, lists reasonably large numbers of recognised practitioners for a very large number of languages, reflecting the linguistic diversity of contemporary German society and that country's heritage of T&I training (Maida Fischer, FIT delegate in Germany and member of the BDÜ, email correspondence, Nov. 2012).

Most German professional organisations require at least that candidates have been conferred a degree, e.g., M.A. or B.A., from a university or higher education institution recognised in Germany or abroad, or have passed an examination held by state-accredited authorities or by the Chartered Institute of Linguists in the UK or the American Translators Association in the US. Reflecting Germany's rich legacy of translation in the arts and sciences, the oldest professional association is the "Association of German-language translators of literary and scientific texts" which was founded in 1954 now functions partly as a trade union and is associated with Germany's largest multi-service (largely public service) trade union *Ver.di*. It has 1,200 members (Verband deutschsprachiger Übersetzer literarischer und wissenschaftlicher Werke, 2012).

There is also an association that encompasses T&I agencies or employers of T&I products: *QSD: Qualitätssprachendienste Deutschlands* is an association of translation companies, founded in 1998. A member of the EUATC (European Union of Associations of Translation Companies), in 2011 it had some 24 member companies. One of its main initiatives is to offer internships for graduates of translation and interpreting programmes. Many of its member companies have sought and received certification of the standard EN ISO 9001:2008 (see above Section 2) and the association also co-ordinates offers for internships and training for graduates of translation and interpreting programmes (QSD, 2012). This function is consistent with the tradition of private-sector acceptance and support for the training of internees/apprentices in most sectors of the German economy.

6.11. Ireland

In Ireland, the organisation that functions as the national professional association, national directory of T&I practitioners and a certifying authority for translators is the Irish Translators' and Interpreters' Association (ITIA). The categories for membership in the ITIA vary from *student* to *associate* to the highest level, *professional*. This highest level of membership requires a post-graduate degree, two years' experience and successful completion of the ITIA professional-level examination. References and a portfolio (for literary translators) may also be required (ITIA, 2012). The ITIA criteria for membership are closely aligned to tertiary-level training and there are three universities with T&I post-graduate programmes: Cork, Dublin, and Galway. (Anette Schiller, FIT delegate in Ireland and member of the *Irish Translators' and Interpreters' Association*, email correspondence, Nov. 2012.)

6.12. Japan

Unsurprisingly, training and testing in technical translation is well developed in Japan. In the post-WWII period, Japanese businesses identified T&I services, in particular translation into Japanese of the laws and economic regulations of the countries that they wished to export goods to, as a priority, as well as the translation from Japanese of all aspects to do with the marketing and description of their goods and services to other countries. This policy had strong political support and was adopted by private companies, but did not result in a governmental initiative to create a national authority. Therefore, there is no governmental involvement in certification in Japan. Instead, professional or private (business or educational) organisations administer or award different types of certification. To a great extent, the T&I sector in Japan is focussed towards the required services of major Japanese

companies that have substantial export markets. Tanaka (2012) writes that “commercial translation and interpreting, that is, industrial and business translation and interpreting are currently the most important areas for Japanese industry.” In Japan, the industrial and business translation sector currently account for 80 to 90 % of all translation services (Japan Intellectual Property Association, 2004). The private sector is therefore the overwhelming employment provider for T&I practitioners in Japan, and when entering the profession, potential T&Is usually complete T&I training that is provided by a training centre associated with a particular employer, usually a Japanese multi-national company. The primacy of employment in the private sector and their training centres leads Tanaka (2012) to conclude that those students who complete under- or even post-graduate courses at universities may not be able to find employment as quickly as graduates from private-sector centres as the universities’ relationships to private employers is less clearly defined. The tertiary institutions in Japan that have T&I programmes, usually at the under-graduate level, include Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Rikkyo University, Meikai University and Tokyo Foreign Language College.

The following is a description of some of the more conspicuous T&I organisations in Japan. *Babel* is part of a language conglomerate headquartered in Tokyo at the Babel University, which offers both in-classroom and online learning in connection with its Certified Professional Translator testing programme. The Center for the Advancement of Interpreting Skills (CAIS) is a relatively new organisation offering both interpreter training and the Test of Business Interpreting Skills. At the highest level (level 1), certification provides a standard that a successful candidate is able to perform whispered and simultaneous interpretation in a business setting. Level 2 certifies the ability to do consecutive interpretation and familiarity with business practices. Certification at levels 3, 4, and 5 records a test candidate’s lower level of interpreting ability (Fred Uleman, FIT delegate in Japan and member of the *Japan Association of Translators*, Email correspondence, Nov. 2012)

The Japan Translation Association (JTA) conducts tests of translation proficiency for Japanese-to-English and English-to-Japanese only. Test content differs for different specializations and rankings are similar to those used by the CAIS. The Japan Translation Federation (JTF) started standardised screening tests over 30 years ago for member companies and the JTF Business and Technical Translation Examination is now offered twice annually (Japan Translation Federation, n.d.). The exam tests reading comprehension, writing skills, and field-specific knowledge in the applicant’s choice of six fields. Another private tester is the Sunflare Academy, which offers the Translator Qualifying Exam four times a year. About 1,800 people take the test in the typical year. Of these, a little under 10% qualify for level three, which certifies that the translation is basically usable but needs polishing and other improvement (Sunflare, 2011). There are also levels two and one, but these certify that the person’s translation work is commercially acceptable as is, and very few people qualify at these levels.

In another, specialised private-sector area, that of intellectual property, there is a test conducted by the Nippon Intellectual Property Translation Association (NIPTA), which offers certification concentrating on patents and other intellectual property legal work. Similar to other testing regimes, there are scales that range from a high level (level 1) to lower levels. The popularity of testing in specific areas also extends even to literary translation. In Japan, there is a Literary Translation Proficiency Test Association that focuses on literary translation in the belief that it differs from most commercial (e.g., business and technical) translation (Stejskal, 2002c).

Two prominent translator organizations that do not offer certification are the Japan Association of Translators (JAT) and the Japan Society of Translators (JST). JAT is an international network of commercial translators working between Japanese and English that concentrates on helping translators get better at both the translation and the business sides of the translation business, as with the annual International Japanese/English Translation (IJET) Conferences, the *JAT Pharma Handbook*, and other activities. Primarily academic and other for-publication translators, JST awards prizes annually for the most outstanding work in the translation field (Stejskal, 2002c).

6.13. Mexico

In Mexico, the translation and interpreting industry is not regulated by a specific organisation, and thus anyone with language skills can be a translator or interpreter, although most practitioners hold degrees in languages or in translation/interpreting (Cuevas, 2011). Legal translations to be used in Mexican institutions must be carried out by sworn translators (*peritos traductores*) certified by the Supreme Court of Justice. The requirements to become a sworn translator include a degree (or relevant associated knowledge), five years' experience, and no criminal record (Cuevas, 2011).

The Mexican Organisation of Translators (OMT) offers a certification exam for experienced translators. This is not an official (governmental) certification and does not classify as a sworn translator certification. The OMT recommends that candidates hold a degree in translation and have a minimum of three years' experience. The exam is three hours long and includes five documents of 250–275 words, of which the candidate must translate three. One general text is compulsory; the others are in the following areas: scientific/technical, medical, business/finance, and legal. Candidates must use their own computers and may have access to the Internet. In some states, the State Council of the Judiciary requires that sworn translators be members of the professional organisation (Organizacion Mexicana de Traductores, 2011).

6.14. Norway

According to Stejskal, in Norway:

...to become a *statsautorisert translatør* (“government-authorized translator”), a candidate must pass a stringent examination administered by the Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration (Norges Handelshøyskole, or NHH), the leading Norwegian business school. Authorisation is subsequently awarded by the Norwegian government. All those who pass the rigorous examination are then invited to join the Association of Government Authorized Translators (Statsautoriserte Translatørers Forening, or STF). (2002b:13)

More recently, a three-year university qualification has become a pre-requisite for candidates to register for the translation test (European Union, 2012, p. 29).

Contrasted to the formal nature of translation testing and certification, a Norwegian Interpreter Certification Examination was established in 1990 to address the need for community interpreting services in immigrant languages. Later other languages such as Albanian, Arabic, Persian, Somali, Turkish, and Urdu were added. The certification examination was initially administered and conducted by the Linguistics Department of the University of Oslo (Mortensen, 2001), but since 2005, the

Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity has co-ordinated the registration and testing of interpreters. The register grades interpreters' ascertained skill level from those who present information about their educational and occupational attributes who are yet to go through formal testing (or for whom formal testing is not yet available) to those who have successfully completed levels of short-course training and testing (Doria de Souza, 2012). Data from Statistisk Sentralbyrå (Statistics Norway) for the fourth quarter of 2010 show that there were 1,204 "tolker, oversetter mv" (translators, interpreters, etc.) in Norway. (European Union, 2012, p. 140).

In Norway, professional associations exist: the *Norsk faglitterær forfatter- og oversetterforening* ("Norwegian Non-fiction Writers And Translators Association"), the *Norsk Oversetterforening* ("Norwegian Association of Literary Translators") established in 1948, and the *Norsk audiovisuell oversetterforening* ("Norwegian Association of Audiovisual Translators"). In contrast to the surrounding countries of Sweden, Finland and Denmark, there are no tertiary institutions that offer conference-interpreting courses in Norway and most conference interpreters in Norway work as freelancers.

6.15. South Africa

The profession in South Africa is not currently regulated, and the South African Translators' Institute (SATI) has a system of voluntary certification. SATI conducts testing and awards certification in the following separate areas: translation, sworn translation, simultaneous (conference) interpreting, language editing, terminology, and corporate certification (for language agencies and language offices) (SATI, 2011).

In South Africa, there are also eleven post-secondary training institutions that have programmes (usually at the post-graduate level) in T&I, and qualifications from these training institutions are increasingly becoming the benchmark for employment in the T&I sector in South Africa (e.g., SATI accreditation is often listed as a recommendation in advertisements for T&I practitioners). South Africa has progressive political and educational policies that advocate T&I services for and between all of the eleven official languages (Department of Arts and Culture, 2013) as well as for many of the languages of European-descent South Africans (Ndhlovu, 2008).

6.16. Spain

There are a number of excellent T&I programmes at Spanish universities, e.g., Granada, Rovira i Virgili, Tarragona, and elsewhere in universities in nearly all of Spain's *autonomous communities* or regions. Three- or four-year programmes in T&I training, usually at the under-graduate level, were commenced at a number of universities across Spain: Málaga (1990), Alacant (1990), Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona (1992), Vic (1993), Salamanca (1992), Vigo (1992), Comillas in Madrid (1993), Jaume I in Castelló (1994), Alfonso X in Madrid (1994), Universidad Europea in Madrid (1995), Universidad de Valladolid in Soria (1995), and Fundación Felipe II in Aranjuez (1999) (European Union, 2012, pp. 58–62). Masters levels programmes commenced at the following universities: Deusto (1990), Vitoria-Gasteiz (1990), Santander (1991), Valencia (1993), and Valladolid (1995). As in Germany and Austria, a university qualification in T&I has become a yardstick of expertise in the T&I marketplace. The only other formal certification is that for the *traductores/as-intérpretes jurados/as* ("sworn interpreter and translator") issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Language Office. Citizens of all European Union member countries are eligible to sit the official examination for this certificate (Royal Decree 2002/2009 of 23 December, Amending the Regulations for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Language Office) (Javier Sancho, FIT delegate in Spain and

member of *ASETRAD Asociación Española de Traductores, Correctores e Intérpretes*, email correspondence, November 2012). Candidates who have a degree in T&I may be automatically recognised as sworn translators, without passing the exam, if they have passed courses in legal translation. Further, applicants who have been recognised as sworn translators in another EU country are also recognised as sworn translators in Spain for the corresponding language pair (European Union, 2012, p. 157).

There are two nation-wide professional associations; the *Asociación Profesional Española de Traductores e Intérpretes* (“The Spanish Association of Professional Translators and Interpreters”—APETI) which was founded in 1954; and *Asociación española de traductores, correctores e intérpretes*, (“The Spanish Association of Translators, Copy-editors and Interpreters”) founded in 2003. Pre-requisites for membership of the latter organization, which claims 600 members, are based on occupational experience and services provided rather than formal qualifications (ASETRAD, n.d.). In Spain, candidates for the sworn translator exam must be a citizen of a member country of the European Union, possess a degree in translation and interpreting, and sit the official examination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Office of Interpreting of Languages (ATIJC, n.d.).

Ten years ago, Valero-Garcés (2003) reported on initial attempts to formalise and co-ordinate community interpreting training for many of the languages of recently arrived immigrants, where certification was otherwise not available. Local-level and regional-level initiatives were able to formalise training for interpreting services for “immigrant language communities,” and “community interpreting” became an area of research for T&I academics in Spain, e.g., Ortega Herráez and Foulquié Rubio (2008), Martín and Abril Martí (2008), Valero-Garcés (2008), Toledano Buendía (2010). A report in January 2012 indicated that 114 “minority languages” (languages of recent immigrants) would no longer be offered as part of Madrid courts’ T&I services (ABC, 2012). What this indicates is that T&I services for a very large number of “migrant languages” had already been established for courts, and that, reflecting Spain’s distinction between “official” (i.e., indigenous) and “minority” (i.e., immigrant) languages, T&I services for the former would be retained, but not for the latter in a climate of service cuts.

6.17. Sweden and Finland

Sweden is the only European country to have an official policy of multiculturalism. Other countries, such as the UK and the Netherlands have adopted many elements of the political practice of multiculturalism, but no other country in Europe has this as a stated policy with immigration intakes and a co-ordinated network of services that address the welfare, linguistic and other needs of newly-arrived people (Inglis, 1996; Jacobs & Rea, 2007). The policy of multiculturalism led to the large-scale provision of Swedish language classes to all immigrants (compulsory only for social benefit applicants) and to the establishment of extensive T&I services, including community-interpreting services (Boyd, 2007). The existence of free and (usually) non-compulsory language classes in Sweden is not to be confused with the language classes that are obligatory in other countries that seek to offer a “directed integrationist” programme to recent arrivals (e.g., Switzerland, Hungary, or Spain) (Jacobs & Rea, 2007). The “retreat” from multiculturalism that is apparent in countries such as The Netherlands, UK, France, or Germany is an imprecise description because none of these countries adopted a comprehensive and consistent policy of multiculturalism in the way Australia, Canada, or Sweden did and still do (Joppke, 2004). About two thousand people are estimated to be working as translators either part-time or full-time in Sweden (Norström, 2010). About 430 of these are

authorised, i.e., certified by the state. Most of them work within the private sector as freelance translators.

The official means of certification after completion of a degree is to apply to the Swedish Legal, Financial, and Administrative Services Agency (Kammarkollegiet), which is responsible for the certification process in Sweden. The Swedish Federation of Authorised Translators sets an examination that consists of a general, a legal, and a financial test (Föreningen Auktoriserade Translatorer, 2011). The pass rate of presenting candidates is only 10% (Susanne Lomander FIT delegate in Sweden and member of the Sveriges Facköversättarförening, email correspondence, Nov. 2012).

Candidates who pass the examination can become *auktoriserad translator* (“authorised translators”) if they are of known personal integrity and otherwise suitable for was a translation and are not subject to legal guardianship or any similar restriction. There is no residence restriction for authorisation and no academic qualifications are required. Authorisation is awarded for one direction of one language pair at a time. The authorisation, which must be renewed every five years, is intended to be state guarantee of quality, and only authorised translators are entitled to certify documents in Sweden. The *auktoriserad translator* title is protected by law and holders of the title are subject to statutory rules on secrecy. A “code of professional practice” (*god translatorssed*) is published by the Swedish Legal, Financial, and Administrative Services Agency and the Swedish Federation of Authorised Translators has ethical rules that reflect this code of practice. Only holders of state authorisation can become members of the professional organisation Foreningen Auktoriserade Translatorer (Föreningen Auktoriserade Translatorer, 2011).

Even with its multicultural policy, there are limits to the provision for training and testing in the 150 “migrant” languages spoken in Sweden compared with the major western European languages usually taught in university T&I programmes, e.g., English, German, French, other Nordic languages, and indigenous languages such as Sami (spoken in Lappland). Some “migrant” languages such as Polish and Russian are covered in university programmes, but most others are not. Training of interpreters for immigrants has been organised since 1968. Since its inauguration in 1986, the *Tolk-och översättarinstitutet* (“Institute for Interpretation and Translation Studies”) at Stockholm University has had the overriding responsibility for all interpreter training in Sweden, but this is about to change (Susanne Lomander FIT delegate in Sweden and member of the Sveriges Facköversättarförening, email correspondence, Nov. 2012). Stockholm University is now not the only centre for T&I training. There are now two types of interpreter training programmes: (1) academic courses at Swedish universities, and (2) vocational training courses at adult education centres / residential colleges *folkhögskolor* (“folk high schools”) and *studieförbund* “voluntary educational associations” (Institute for Interpretation and Translation Studies, Stockholm University, 2012).

To become a certified translator or interpreter in Finland, candidates must pass a translation exam that has both a general and a specialised component. Candidates must reside in one of the member states of the European Union or in another country included in the European Economic Area. The exams are administered by the Translator Examination Board, appointed by the Ministry of Education in conjunction with the Research Institute for the Languages of Finland (Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, n.d.). There are four university centres for T&I training—in Helsinki, Tampere, Turku, and Vaasa—with well-established, post-graduate programmes.

6.18. UK

In the UK, there are a large number of universities with largely post-graduate programmes in T&I, e.g., Aston (established 1997), Bath (established 1966), Edinburgh (established 1992), Leeds (established 1996), Manchester, Surrey (established 1985), Warwick, and Westminster (established 1963). A four-year Bachelors programme was established at Heriot-Watt University in Scotland in 1976. At the same time, there are two organisations that represent the interests of T&I practitioners: the Institute of Linguists (founded in 1910) and the Institute of Translation & Interpreting (founded in 1986). Both organisations function as professional associations with prerequisites for membership and both offer service-point directories of their members to potential customers of T&I services. The former organisation also conducts “community” translation and interpreting courses, which are directed at trainees with proficiency in the UK’s rapidly growing number of immigrant languages. These languages are served less well by university courses.

The Chartered Institute of Linguists (hereafter: CIOl), co-ordinates and administers the language assessment and the awarding of accredited qualifications to interpreting candidates who pass a test at the end of a long period of non-intensive training and/or preparation. In the case of the CIOl’s Diploma in Public Service Interpreting test (hereafter: DPSI), the final test is given five years after a candidate has fulfilled an initial minimum training requirement, i.e. a candidate has received a “letter of credit” or “unit certificate” as the first part of the diploma sequence. Thus, trainees undergo a long “apprenticeship” but are still required to sit a final examination, which is a pre-requisite for the diploma to be issued. The DPSI serves as a qualifying examination for inclusion in the National Register of Public Service Interpreters. The CIOl also offers a Diploma in Translation with an equivalent testing structure. As a professional association, the CIOl lists practitioners, termed “chartered linguists,” who have gone through a five-year probationary period, who have a university degree, demonstrated expertise in T&I, and three references, but an CIOl qualification is not an obligatory prerequisite. The CIOl Translation Division had 2,700 members in 2006 (Chartered Institute of Linguists, 2006).

It is not clear whether holders of Masters in Translation Studies from British universities are granted permission to be admitted as a member of the CIOl. The CIOl states that depending on content and skills assessed, some Masters degrees in translation may not be acceptable (for qualification). The CIOl appears to assess Masters graduates’ applications on a case-by-case basis. (European Union, 2012, p. 350).

The other organisation, the Institute of Translation & Interpreting (ITI), offers different levels of membership to translators and interpreters, which reflect varying lengths of experience. “Qualified members” of ITI are not certified themselves, (i.e., “qualified members do not themselves bear a credential), but have the authority to confer the quality of “certified” to their translations (Institute of Translation & Interpreting, 2011). Qualified members of ITI have the right to bear the post-nominals “MITI” (Member of the Institute of Translation & Interpreting) or “FITI” (Fellow of the Institute of Translation & Interpreting). The qualification process by which a member acquires this right is by assessment of the candidate’s work by his or her peers and evaluation of references.

There is no system of “sworn translation” in the United Kingdom, and no requirement for certification in order to operate as a professional translator or interpreter, except the DPSI (above) requirement for work in the courts. ITI and CIOl have joined forces as professional associations to establish the status of “Chartered Linguist (Translator or Interpreter).” Whilst CIOl is the awarding body, it works closely with ITI and recognises ITI’s

Qualified Membership (MITI/FITI) as a pre-requisite, along with its own MCIL and FCIL membership grades.) There is an Association of Police and Court Interpreters, which was founded in 1974 and which had 350 members in 2011. But on 1 April 2011 the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) was detached from the CioL and became a not-for-profit company. The Register lists “over 2,350 interpreters in 101 languages.” (Iwan Davies, FIT delegate in Great Britain and member of the *Institute of Translation and Interpreting*, email correspondence, November 2012). Court interpreting in Britain was thrown into turmoil through the allocation of all court interpreting services to a private company, Applied Language Solutions, and the serious breaches of expected performance and sub-standard conditions that it paid court interpreters. A UK National Audio Office delivered a damning report on the company’s performance in 2012 (Bowcott, 2012).

6.19. The United States

In the US, there is great variation in the number and type of T&I training programmes. These range from two-year post-graduate programmes at a dozen or so universities (e.g., Monterey established in 1965, Brigham Young established 1976, Florida International University in 1978, San Diego State in 1980) to 40–80 hour courses provided by local or state authorities (e.g., University of Massachusetts Worcester Campus Office of Community Programs, 2012; University of Texas at Austin Professional Development Center, 2012), online learning programmes (Interpreter Education Online, 2012; Virginia Institute of Interpreting, 2012) and online service providers that specialise in an a specific area of T&I services (e.g., Language Line, 2012). At the same time, there is a major difference between translation and spoken/signed interpreting: certification of the former is conducted by one major organisation, the American Translators Association, while certification of the latter is performed by various state-based authorities, sometimes with further sub-distinctions based on field of interpreting (e.g., healthcare) or mode (e.g., signed interpreting). Kelly (2007) provides a comprehensive and critical overview of the various types of certification and training available to would-be practitioners, and offers open recommendations to all stakeholders in the T&I sector in the US. In recent years, many US universities appear to have introduced non-degree or certificate-level T&I training, so that together with under-graduate and post-graduate programmes, there are now 105 programmes offered at 45 tertiary institutions across the US (TISAC, 2011).

The ATA offers certification tests to ATA members, who, along with other entry requirements, must provide evidence of T&I formal training as part of degree programme undertaken at a US or internationally recognised training facility. The ATA website provides a non-exhaustive list of worldwide training centres and programmes that it recognises. The ATA also accepts test candidates without a degree but with evidence of five years’ T&I experience and letters of reference (ATA, 2012). Practice tests are available and the ATA certification examination itself consists of the translation of two passages in three hours, with ethics questions also a part of the test. A certified translator is obliged to maintain further professional development through completion of continuing education activities. The ATA is also moving towards online computer testing (Melby, 2011). The ATA is a multi-faceted umbrella organisation that functions as a professional association, certification authority, and forum for information on occupational and industry standards. It also has an online directory of certified T&I practitioners and companies. The ATA has developed as the prime certification authority for translators in the US and beyond and boasts of over 11,000 members in 90 countries (ATA, 2012). The ATA conducts certification testing in 15 (mainly European) languages, and ATA

certification appears to have become an attraction for many tertiary-educated, European-based practitioners who are able to gain certification on the basis of completing a single set of tests.

With regard to court interpreting, the National Center for State Courts (2009) manages the Consortium for Language Access in Courts, which in turn co-ordinates the testing of court interpreters in individual states. Although 40 of the 50 US states have signed up to the Consortium, only a dozen states have information on their testing centres online. The court interpreter test consists of sight translation into both languages, consecutive and simultaneous interpreting. There are now moves for interpreters with certification from one state to be granted recognition of their certification in other states (State of Connecticut Judicial Branch, 2012). There is a national-level professional organisation that represents the interests of court interpreters, the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators, which has over 1200 members (NAJIT, 2012).

Medical interpreting in the US “has progressed from an ad hoc function performed by untrained, dubiously bilingual individuals to a fledging profession concerned with standards of excellence and ethical practice” (Beltran Avery, 2003, p. 100). In 2009 the National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters launched a national certification programme with written and oral tests for the following: written English proficiency, sight translation, consecutive interpreting, medical terminology, roles of the medical interpreter, cultural competence, knowledge of standards of practice, and legislation and regulations (National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters, 2011). There are state-based associations of healthcare interpreters (e.g., Massachusetts Medical Interpreters Association) but for nearly 20 years, an umbrella organisation, the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (NCIHC), has co-ordinated the interests of individual members and state-based associations. It has engaged with state- and nation-level healthcare policymakers to advance access, quality, and training in interpreting services. The activities of the NCIHC are characteristic of the prominence and culture of advocacy that local and specialist T&I organisations in the US have gained. Thus, pre-requisites for membership often do not include formal training or even certification and the NCIHC as well as other similar organisations seek to attract other interest groups, academics, administrators, and sometimes even government agencies to their ranks.

In the US, the Registry of Interpreters of the Deaf has seven tests: the Oral Transliteration Certificate, Certified Deaf Interpreter, Certificate of Interpretation, Certificate of Transliteration, the combined certificate (CI and CT), the Conditional Legal Interpreting Permit-Relay, and the Specialist Certificate: Legal. Five of the seven are general in nature; the two industry-specific ones are legal. Sign-language interpreters must hold a generalist certificate before they can sit a specialist exam. “The core focus is on certifying interpreters/translitterators according to their specific mode or type of delivery, not according to subject speciality or industry” (Kelly, 2007, p. 35).

The large number of certifying authorities and professional organisations that co-organise these or represent members who have gained certification suggests that certification is mandatory for work for state or national employers. Mikkelson (2007) states that certification is not a prerequisite for employment with federal government employers and that there is some variation in the credentials of those who gain work in the sector. It appears that only court interpreting and many areas of medical interpreting require certification while in other areas, commissioners or employers may be guided by other criteria. The European Union reports that an unregulated market allows for variation in price and quality, with

commensurate consequences on the status of the profession (European Union, 2012, p. 5). There are some “structural” inconsistencies in the certification regimes that have prerequisites such as either training or demonstrated experience (e.g., ATA certification) or even no pre-requisites (e.g., Court Interpreting Tests administered through the Consortium for Language Access in Courts) for applications for certification through testing. Another inconsistency is that membership in organisations that are primarily professional association is not restricted to only those who have received certification in the relevant area. Thus, individuals lacking training and even certification (where membership in an association does not require it) may present themselves as T&I practitioners. Moves towards global standards that apply to the workplace only, such as ISO standards, are, in part a consequence of a lack of regulation in other areas, as well as reflective of an overall move in all occupations to adopt global, workplace standards that (in a functional sense) prescribe work procedures and client/service-provider relationships. (cf. Section 2 above.)

Another development which originated in the US, and which now encompasses a very large number of T&I professional organisations, as well as some employers and government agencies across the US and Canada, is the Translation and Interpreting Summit Advisory Council (TISAC), which was established in 1991. TISAC aims to “provide a vehicle for cooperation among organizations concerned with language translation and interpreting” (TISAC, 2011).

7. Conclusion

In some countries, typically Anglophone countries of the New World and countries in East Asia, there are governmental or professional bodies that administer testing for the awarding of certification to T&I trainees or practitioners who can demonstrate minimum standards of ability and practice. The usual means of ascertaining these standards is through formal testing. Other means such as compilation of a dossier/portfolio or evidence of long-standing practice are not customary avenues to certification. Historically, the absence of training centres in these countries also accounts for why testing has become the accepted means of measuring standards.

There are obvious benefits to a body that tests applicants and awards certification. Certification is a benchmark term that informs providers and consumers of T&I services that an individual has demonstrated to an authorised and specialist body a required level of ability and performance. In a marketplace that demands demonstration of the level of quality amongst various product and services providers, the existence of a certification process is highly desirable.

The reason why some other countries do not have certification bodies is largely historic and, to some extent, also political. Most countries that do not have certification bodies have not needed them because their educational institutions performed the function of providing training and assuring standards, whereby a graduate with a T&I qualification was equipped to enter the market and work as a practitioner without further verification. This situation applies in European countries such as Austria, Germany, Belgium, Spain, and Croatia. This system serves practitioners and consumers well as long as both are in the same country and the languages required are those that the university institutions provide training in. The Bologna harmonisation of tertiary degree structures across Europe has allowed for a greater portability of European university qualifications so that these are now readily recognised across European borders.

However, the repertoire of languages that most European university T&I programmes offer often does not fully address the T&I needs of that European country or other, neighbouring countries. Traditional, western European “world” languages such as English, French, German, Italian and Spanish are well represented in universities’ T&I programmes and are offered to train future conference interpreters and technical/industrial translators for largely intra-European communication. Languages from East and South-East Europe, the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia, South Asia, East Asia, South-East Asia, and Oceania are less represented, if at all. Where T&I practitioners wish to gain formal training and/or recognition for their skills in these languages, there are no avenues for them to do so. The effect on T&I services in these languages is twofold: the provision of services in these languages is often haphazard and unsystematic and characterised by lay, untrained, and/or volunteer T&Is who are frequently unable to competently perform tasks asked of them; a lack of formal training and certification discourages potential T&Is from considering employment in this area when they recognise that T&I’s lack of status leads to low remuneration and lesser job satisfaction. The absence of formal certification bodies is a causative factor in this. Where European countries have adopted a certification process that can apply to any language, provision and quality of T&I services is likely to improve due to the formalisation of testing, which usually also includes pre-test training. Investigations into interpreting quality for languages which were only recently included in formal training and testing regimes point to the positive trends of a formalisation of testing (cf. Mortensen (2001) for Norway; Vermeiren, Van Gucht & De Bontridder (2009) for Flanders). Certification not only formalises T&I services, it *attracts* potential practitioners because they see it as an instrument to measure their own abilities and to demonstrate this to others.

In general, there are significant differences between the approaches of many countries. The pragmatic, needs-based, and socially focussed approaches of some New World countries contrasts with other countries which conceptualise T&I training as an area that is academic and intended for high-level political, business, or literary interaction. In a way, the initially contrasting positions of the two approaches are now converging: New World countries are increasingly seeking to introduce college- and university-level courses that precede or incorporate testing with a larger number of benchmarks for specialised T&I services; Old World countries are slowly starting to address the T&I needs of large immigrant populations through a combination of extending the languages available in existing university T&I programmes and, more commonly, local- or regional-level training and testing initiatives that may still lack national-level funding and support.

A further step, beyond the features of each country’s certification requirements, is an agreement on common and desirable features that national authorities should require of certification candidates, as part of an international move to assure cross-border equivalence and comparability of certification standards.

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