NAATI Translator Certification: Knowledge, Skills and Attributes

Review Process and Outcomes

December 2015

1. Background and Context

In 2012 NAATI commenced the Improvements to NAATI Testing (INT) Project, a broad review of the credentialing system with the following goals.

A. Improved Validity

This includes validity in the relationship between NAATI's standards and the professional roles to which they relate (with a focus on the future) and of the instrument that purports to demonstrate that NAATI's standards have been met.

In particular the aim was to have:

1. Standards and descriptors that are grounded in the role of practitioners, particularly those components of the role that are seen as central to professional success
2. New standards reflecting both the current and emerging characteristics of the workplace
3. Improved and more comprehensive descriptors for NAATI standards
4. Valid demonstration by the certification process that the standards have been achieved
5. NAATI's standards for certification accepted as appropriate by leaders of the profession.

B. Increased Reliability

It was felt that the existing accreditation system could be improved to provide greater consistency, that is, repeated assessments for the same individual would give the same result.

C. Practicality

A number of flow-on benefits from changes to the approach to certification were intended:

1. Increased access to testing, e.g. via new information/communication technology
2. Platform-independent testing methods i.e. proposed approaches which can be used across a variety of commonly-available technologies
3. Universal applicability of future approaches, including 'new and emerging' and Indigenous languages
4. Streamlined testing and assessment processes
5. Revised assessment methods as needed to align with new testing methods.

Other benefits of this will include the potential for providing enhanced certification test preparation materials enabling candidates to be better prepared for certification testing.

Phase 1 of the improvement process was the publication of *Improvements to NAATI testing: Development of a conceptual overview for a new model for NAATI standards, testing and assessment* Report (INT Report)[1] in November 2012. This Report provided a number of recommendations for change to the accreditation system based on the assessment of the researchers led by Professor Sandra Hale. After considering the recommendations of the INT Report NAATI provided a framework for the work in its November 2013 response[2]. Phase Two of the project has commenced with work to establish the Knowledge, Skills and Attributes (KSAs) on which the professions of translator and interpreter are based. This work will form the foundations for the new certification system which NAATI intends to implement for 2018 onwards. The certification scheme will be designed to consider each of the KSAs - either as a

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[1] http://www.naati.com.au/PDF/INT/INTFinalReport.pdf
[2] http://www.naati.com.au/PDF/INT/INT%20Project%20Discussion%20Paper%20-%20November%202013.pdf

part of the pre-requisites (i.e. eligibility requirements), the certification test or recertification requirements - and ensure that a certified individual holds each of the KSAs.

2. Establishing Validity in a Certification Scheme

NAATI has always referred to the types of credential it awards as *accreditations*. However, internationally the term *certification* is used. Within this context *certification* applies to an individual rather than an organisation for a conformity assessment: a demonstration that the individual has fulfilled specified requirements relating to a product, process, system, person, or body. This is also the specific term used within International Organization for Standardization (ISO) definitions. The term *accreditation* is used for organisations that do the certifying – they are usually accredited by some higher standards-setting body. The NAATI credentialing system, to be consistent with the terminology used internationally, will therefore be referred to as a certification scheme.

A certification scheme is designed "to protect the interests of the public by assuring that practitioners hold an agreed-upon level of knowledge and skill, and by filtering out those with substandard levels of knowledge and skill"[3]. NAATI is establishing a certification scheme to ensure that translators and interpreters have the competence to engage in professional practice. The ISO 17024 definition of competence is:

> *Ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve intended result.[4]*

In considering the INT process the NAATI Board started out with very clear goals in relation to improved validity, reliability and practicality of the certification system.

> *Established practice dictates that competence be broken down into knowledge, skills, and abilities.[5,6]*

> *In the case of a professional activity, this breaking down is done using a technique called job analysis. The results of a job analysis are used in establishing examination validity.[7]*

NAATI considers that there are established processes for ensuring validity for a certification scheme, the first step of which involves clearly defining what is intended to be assessed through identification of areas of competency and KSAs.

> *To be considered valid, an assessment tool [in this case this includes prerequisites, the certification test and re-certification] must test skills [in this case Translation Skills] that are actually required to perform the task in question, and not test irrelevant skills; individuals who can do the job well should pass the test, and those who cannot do so should fail it.[8]*

> *…developing a translator certification examination involves identifying various abilities that are needed by a competent professional translator, along with the knowledge that must be acquired, the skills that must be developed based on those abilities, and any*

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[3] *Market Disorder Within the Field of Sign Language Interpreting: Professionalization Implications.* Witter-Merithew, Anna; Johnson, Leilani. In: Journal of Interpretation. 2004, p. 28.

[4] *Conformity assessment -- General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons*. International Organization for Standardization ISO/IEC 17024:2012, 3.6.

[5] In this paper, NAATI will use the term "attributes".

[6] *Certification and Job Task Analysis (JTA): Establishing Validity of Translator Certification Examinations.* Koby, Geoffrey S.; Melby, Alan K. In: Translation and Interpreting: The International Journal for Translation & Interpreting Research. Vol 5, No 1 (2013), p. 178.

[7] *Certification and Job Task Analysis (JTA).* Koby and Melby, 2013, p. 178.

[8] *Certification and Job Task Analysis (JTA).* Koby and Melby, 2013, p. 69.

personal attributes that are relevant to the job of being a professional translator. Then it must be shown that the examination actually measures those abilities, areas of knowledge, skills, and attributes that comprise translation competence.[9]

Once NAATI has established and validated the KSAs, there will be further work in designing a new NAATI certification scheme, which is however not covered in this paper. As part of this NAATI will consider how and where the KSAs may be assessed through the following components of the certification scheme:

- prerequisites established for eligibility for testing
- a certification test
- re-certification requirements for an individual.

In doing this, NAATI will ensure there is validity in the entire certification process.

Given the scope of the work to be done in improving the testing system, this discussion paper deals only with **Translator KSAs**. A further discussion paper on **Interpreter KSAs** will follow.

3. Producing a Draft Set of KSAs

As part of Phase 2 of the INT Project, NAATI has developed a set of draft KSAs translators possess when effectively working in the industry. As the starting point for the development of these KSAs, NAATI mapped the KSAs common to translator competencies in existing published documents and research including job-task analyses from Australia and overseas. This mapping process focussed on translator KSAs only, and does not attempt to identify degrees of competency.

While working through the existing documents and research, NAATI became aware of a difference in the use of the terms *competence* and *competency*, and considered whether there should be a distinction made for this work based on published definitions. It was considered that there was an important difference.

- *Competence* refers to "measurable, specific and objective milestones describing what people have to *accomplish* to consistently achieve or exceed the goals for their role"[10].
- *Competency* on the other hand refers to the KSAs successful people have. In considering these definitions, NAATI deems that the appropriate terminology in relation to the current NAATI KSA work is *competency.*

NAATI commenced the mapping process by considering the Translating and Interpreting qualifications in the Public Sector Training Package (TP) and drew on the Advanced Diploma of Translation (PSP61012) qualification[11]. Within the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector this is the qualification that aligns most closely with professional work.

The TP document outlines national standards for the delivery of the qualification in Australia's VET sector. It includes required skills and knowledge that underpin each course unit. The qualification consists of six core and six elective units. NAATI extracted all knowledge and skills from the core units (i.e. the units students have to complete in all cases to be awarded the qualification).

The skills and knowledge identified in the TP document provide a suitable starting point for NAATI's mapping process because they have been developed in the Australian context and are supported by industry stakeholders. The TP is a result of "the one complete job analysis in T&I [translation and

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[9] *Certification and Job Task Analysis (JTA).* Koby and Melby, 2013, p. 177.
[10] *Competence versus Competency. What is the Difference?* Teodorescu, Tina. In: Performance Improvement. Vol 45, No 10 (Nov/Dec 2006), p. 27 - 30.
[11] https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/PSP61012.

interpreting] carried out in Australia, that by Service Skills Australia and then Government Skills Australia over 2002-2010"[12]. "The process to establish competencies for the TP identified actual competencies as reported by T&I practitioners, backed up by stakeholder confirmation of the particular roles and functions practitioners carry out."[13] The competences were validated through a consultation process in 2008 and 2009. As a result of these consultations national standards of competences were endorsed, which were then used as the basis for the overhauled translation and interpreting qualifications in the VET sector, including the Advanced Diploma of Translating. These were introduced in 2010. A new TP was submitted for endorsement to the Department of Education and Training in November 2015, but it is considered that the information presented in the new TP documents do not change these findings.

Given the globalised market for translation services NAATI thought it was also vital to take into account international perspectives. Hence NAATI considered the KSAs developed by the American Translators Association (ATA) in its job task analysis (JTA) and the European Masters in Translation (EMT). The ATA offers certification testing for translators and surveyed a large number of translation professionals to determine its set of KSAs. This appears to be the first piece of work that is "based on focus groups and a survey of a large number of translation professionals that resulted in the development of professional KSAs."[14] The EMT is a qualification offered by higher-education institutions in cooperation with the European Commission. As part of the Masters program, an expert group developed the competencies required by translators. Koby then mapped the ATA's KSAs against the EMT competencies[15].

NAATI mapped the almost 120 individual skills and knowledge areas from the TP and then matched or mapped each of these against one or more of the ATA's KSAs and EMT competencies. In completing this work it became obvious that there was a number of broad or overarching categories under which the common aspects of all three processes could be grouped:

- Language competency
- Intercultural competency
- Research competency
- Technological competency
- Thematic competency
- Transfer competency
- Service Provision competency
- Ethical competency.

Each of the identified KSAs was then considered in terms of the area of competency it supported. This analysis revealed that there were significant areas of commonality across the TP, EMT and ATA approaches. However, in many situations the TP, ATA and EMT used different terminology and solutions or approaches to deal with challenges. In drafting the KSAs NAATI had to critically assess the relative merits of the approaches used in each system. In doing this NAATI has not given preference to any one system other than in considering the clarity and simplicity with which they deal with the complex issues.

4. NAATI's Draft KSAs

The result of this work is the draft translator KSAs in Table 1 overleaf. The sections following provide information defining each of the draft KSAs.

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[12] *Job Task Analysis of T&I: Report for Improvement of NAATI Testing [INT].* Glass, Heather; Ozolins, Uldis. July 2015. Unpublished report.
[13] *Job Task Analysis of T&I.* Glass and Ozolins, 2015.
[14] *Certification and Job Task Analysis (JTA).* Koby and Melby, 2013, p. 189.
[15] http://www.ttt.org/trans-int/competence.htm.

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Table 1 – NAATI Draft Translator KSAs

	Knowledge	Skills	Attributes
Language Competency (in two languages)	Vocabulary knowledge Grammar knowledge Idiomatic knowledge Language trends knowledge	Language proficiency enabling meaning transfer	
Intercultural Competency	Cultural, historical and political knowledge	Sociolinguistic skill	
Research Competency	Research tools and methods knowledge	Terminology and information research skills Create and maintain a knowledge bank	
Technological Competency	Translation technology knowledge	Computer skills: Text production and management Computer skills: Internet Computer skills: Computer-Assisted Translation	Attentive-to-detail Desire-to-excel Reliable Willing-to-learn Objective Accepting-of-criticism Respectful Collaborative Self-reflective Problem-solving
Thematic Competency	General knowledge Current events knowledge Subject-matter specific knowledge		
Transfer Competency	Translation methods knowledge	Textual analysis skills Meaning transfer skills Writing skills	
	Translation standards knowledge Textual conventions knowledge	Follow specifications Revision, proofreading and post-editing skills	
Service Provision Competency	Knowledge of the business of translation	Translation business skills Translation business system skills Communication skills Interpersonal skills	
Ethical Competency	Ethics knowledge	Professional Ethics	

5. Scope of Competencies

In this work NAATI identified the KSAs translators require. Despite the areas of competencies being listed individually, it should not be considered that these competencies exist in isolation. In completing any translation task, a translator will integrate many or all of these areas of competency in order to accurately translate a source text into a target text. Any consideration of assessment tools for the purposes of a certification scheme, which include testing prerequisites, the certification test and re-certification requirements, also needs to consider how the competencies are integrated or interrelated.

5.1 Language Competency

Language competency refers to the knowledge and skills required for translation in at least two languages. This includes **Language proficiency enabling meaning transfer, Vocabulary knowledge, Grammar knowledge, Idiomatic knowledge** and **Language trends knowledge**

Language proficiency enabling meaning transfer must be at a level that enables the translator to comprehend and analyse the source text and accurately reproduce its meaning in the target text within the limits of the language pair. This is in contrast to language competence that enables communication in the relevant languages, which may not be sufficient for meaning transfer.

Language competency builds on **Vocabulary knowledge, Grammar knowledge and Idiomatic knowledge** of two languages. More specifically, this relates to knowledge of:

- register and style appropriate to end use
- idiomatic collocation, lexis and syntax
- vocabulary, including non-standard forms and foreign loan words
- grammatical structures, including tense, mood, aspect, voice, gender and grammatical numbers
- punctuation and paragraphing
- orthography and its variations
- word and language usage appropriate to audience and context
- pragmatics, i.e. the underlying meaning of language in context
- textual devices that create cohesion and coherence.

Language trends knowledge refers to how translators must keep up with changes in language usage and changes that may affect different target readerships in different ways to ensure linguistic currency (e.g. in diaspora communities, or in societies undergoing rapid social and linguistic change). It also includes changes in the use of lexicon and grammar over time and between generations. Translators must also be able to deal with an increasing diversity of text types and presentation of content, including greater use of graphics, images, sound and symbols embedded in written texts.

These knowledge areas are essential to understand the intent of source texts, and the way language is used to express meaning.

5.2 Intercultural Competency

Intercultural competency refers to the areas of knowledge and skills required by translators that allow them to identify culturally-specific information in the source text and appropriately reflect these in the target text. This includes **Cultural, historical and political knowledge** and **Sociolinguistic skills**.

Cultural, historical and political knowledge refers to knowledge of events, situations, systems, norms and values that are specific to both the cultures of the source text language and the target text language. Translators must also be familiar with changes and developments in culturally-specific subjects. These knowledge areas are usually acquired through direct experience and/or studies of a culture. This allows the translator to understand non-textual and non-verbal features of the source and target languages, to master the rules or conventions of visual organisation and information design in source and target language cultures and to localise content.

Sociolinguistic skills refers to the way translators analyse and understand how different aspects of society interact with language usage. They allow a translator to identify how a culture, its customs, norms and values are reflected and expressed in the source language, and how they can be expressed in the target language to make them appropriate for the relevant culture. Sociolinguistic skills include:

- recognising form, function and meaning in language variations that are characteristic of social categories (e.g. gender, age, class, education-level, occupation, ethnic background)
- identifying distinctive linguistic forms from or about social groups that carry some form of meaning
- grasping the cultural presuppositions, references and stereotypes of a document

There are areas of overlap between **Intercultural competency** and **Thematic competency**. However, Intercultural competency is broader and refers to cultures in their entireties, while **Thematic competency** may be general or related to the specific topic of a source text. Translators may specialise in specific topic areas and not others, but they must have a general level of Intercultural competence in the cultures concerned.

5.3 Research Competency

Research competency refers to **Research tools and methods knowledge**, **Terminology and information research skills** and the ability to **Create and maintain a knowledge bank** to obtain and refer to information translators need to complete a translation but which they may not already have available to them.

Research tools and methods knowledge refers to familiarity with the various tools a translator can use to gather information relevant to specific texts and text types and how to best utilize them. This includes online and dictionary searches, literature reviews, consultation with experts in particular fields or professional colleagues. Translators must also be aware of the capacities and limitations of specific search tools.

Translators must possess **Terminology and information research skills** to obtain information required for a translation. This includes searching for terminology, expressions, parallel texts or information about a specific subject area to gain better understanding of a source text and to select appropriate terminology and expressions for the target text.

As translators are faced with increasingly technical or culturally specific texts, research skills include:

- recognising gaps and areas for improvement in **Thematic competency** and **Transfer competency**
- developing strategies for documentary and terminological research
- knowing how to extract and process relevant information for a given task (documentary, terminological, phraseological information)
- knowing how to evaluate the reliability of information and sources of information

Create and maintain a knowledge bank refers to the skills required to collect information obtained through research and store it to allow convenient access for future reference. This includes creating and maintaining information and terminology banks, e.g. glossaries, use of translation memory and organising and updating information. This skill intersects with **Technological competency**, and it is acknowledged that the compiling of knowledge banks is supplemented with real-time research and the use of digital resources. However, digital resources are still very unevenly developed across languages, and may not be available to translators in all languages.

5.4 Technological Competency

Technological competency refers to **Translation technology knowledge** and the range of **Computer skills** a translator must possess to provide a translation, i.e. **Text production and management, Internet,** and **Computer-assisted translation.**

Translation technology knowledge provides the basis for working with digital texts and their effective reception, treatment and transmission to clients/commissioners. It includes knowledge of basic software and technologies relevant for translation, including computer-assisted translation tools, and knowledge of Internet and online tools. This intersects with **Research competency** and **Service Provision competency**, which also require knowledge of certain technologies.

Text production and management and **Internet** relate to the application of different computer programs and software for the purpose of providing a translation. These skills are important to allow translators to function in the reality of today's translation industry and to meet client expectations. Furthermore, the use of the text production software enables visual materials like graphs, tables and pictures to be transferred in to the target text.

Skill in the use of **Computer-assisted translation** (CAT) tools is spreading among translators, though currently unevenly due to the lack of technological resources available in some languages. It can facilitate the translation process and is increasingly demanded for particular kinds of texts and translation projects, particularly for those sourced internationally.

5.5 Thematic Competency

Thematic competency refers to the kinds of knowledge required by translators to ensure swift and accurate understanding of the source text and the implication of this in the target text. Included in this are **General knowledge, Current events knowledge** and **Subject-matter specific knowledge.**

Translators should possess a high level of **General knowledge** and **Current events knowledge** across a wide range of fields. This allows them to comprehend and translate source texts in a variety of subject areas. The required level of knowledge will differ according to the nature of the texts to be translated and the purpose of the translations.

Subject-matter specific knowledge refers to specific areas of knowledge such as political, legal, technical or medical in the translator's working languages. It may also relate to the knowledge required to translate a specific text. A translator may specialise in one or more fields in which they have extensive knowledge. This may at times be related to another professional field in which the translator has been educated (e.g. law) or has had significant experience.

Thematic competency intersects with **Language competency**, **Intercultural competency** and **Research competency** in that the translator must be able to see the thematic viewpoint of both the source and target text and also be able to quickly acquire information of any kind in order to fill the inevitable gaps in knowledge presented by texts to be translated.

5.6 Transfer Competency

Transfer competency refers to the skills and knowledge required to reproduce messages using a different language. In the context of translation, this involves **Translations methods knowledge**, **Textual analysis skills**, **Meaning transfer skills**, **Writing skills, Translation standards knowledge**, **Textual conventions knowledge**, the ability to **Follow specifications**, and **Revision, proofreading and post-editing skills**.

A translator has **Translation methods knowledge** and **Textual analysis skills** to comprehend the source text and to cope with the broad spectrum of texts for translation.

Translation methods knowledge refers to knowing how to define stages and strategies for the translation of a document and how to define and evaluate translation problems and find appropriate solutions. This may include knowledge of translation theory. The translator may use a range of techniques to produce a translation that is accurate and appropriate for the context, target audience and end use.

A translator must have **Textual analysis skills** to be able to categorise the source text genre, style, register and complexity in order to make decisions about the creation of the equivalent effect in the target text. This operation requires the use of intimate knowledge of how the texts in question work, including their handling of cause and effect relationships, cohesive and substitution devices, idioms and idiomatic expressions, metaphor, register, anaphora and other time relationships as well as up to date knowledge of the manner in which the languages are evolving.

Meaning transfer skills can be regarded as the actualisation and coming together of all of the **Transfer competencies** which a translator must have. In the process of transferring the meaning from the source text into the target text, the translator must balance the requirements of the original translation brief and the target audience. In addition, they must use appropriate terminology, grammatical features, style and register, and pay attention to the flow and quality of language. It is acknowledged this balancing becomes increasingly difficult when source and target languages are typologically different, and when cultural concepts reflected in the source language have no direct equivalent in the target language.

A translator needs to have **Writing skills** in the target language, with excellent grammar and knowledge of different writing styles. Translators must be able to write in a way that matches the intent, register and style of the source text.

Translators must possess **Translation standards knowledge**, that is understanding of standards to which a translation must be completed to be acceptable for its purpose. This knowledge is required to evaluate one's own work against standards in the field, and to be able to justify one's translation choices.

Textual convention knowledge refers to the knowing the norms about how each language shapes texts, their typical and variant discourse patterns, and textual devices that create cohesion and coherence. This allows the translator to compose a document in accordance with the conventions of the genre and rhetorical standards of a particular culture.

Commissioners of translations expect translators to produce a text for a specific audience and purpose – i.e. **Follow specifications**. Translators must know how to create a translation appropriate to the client's request and to the translation situation and how to clarify and/or identify the requirements, objectives and purposes of the client, recipients of the translation and other stakeholders. Source texts are written with a specific audience in mind, usually without consideration of the readership of a translation of that text in a particular language, and thus may include a range of assumptions of a cultural, technical or institutional kind that challenge translators.

Revision, proofreading and post-editing skills are required to review and evaluate one's own translations, as well as being able to review and evaluate other translations and receive and respond appropriately to revision of one's own translation drafts.

Revision in translation generally refers to an activity aimed at improving the translated text. The skills required are those of re-examining and evaluating one's own translations, as well as other translations and responding appropriately to the revision of one's own translation drafts. The terminology used for this activity is not consistent and terms such as editing, proofreading and checking are sometimes used as equivalents. The term editing is often confused with 'editing' in the publishing domain which is essentially a monolingual activity designed to ensure the text is consistent in style and adheres to form and format conventions.

The process of revision is a bilingual task. It involves comparing the translation with the source text, and assessing the translated text against the specifications for the translation. The process is aimed at ensuring that the translation is

- accurate, complete and coherent
- consistent with its brief
- conforming to style and procedural guides, terminology guides and other quality parameters which have been stipulated, such as target audience and end use.

Proofreading is primarily a monolingual activity to ensure final copy is grammatically and typographically correct, and also properly formatted.

Post-editing "is the process of improving a machine-generated translation with a minimum of manual labour"[16]. Post-editing is at times linked to pre-editing where the language of the source text is manipulated to conform to a stipulated controlled language which facilitates the machine translation of the text. The distinguishing feature of post-editing is that its output is a negotiated level of quality not necessarily equivalent to human translation. These differing levels of quality of the output sees it referred to as light post-editing and full post-editing where the latter is regarded as the equivalent output to a revised human translation.

Ultimately, all of these processes are concerned with ensuring the quality of translations.

5.7 Service Provision Competency

This competency covers the knowledge and skills enabling the translator to provide their service to a client. This includes **Knowledge of the business of translation**, **Translation business skills, Translation business systems, Communication skills** and **Interpersonal skills**. **Service provision competency** is vital to enable translators to function in their industry.

Knowledge of the business of translation relates to how the language services sector operates. It refers to the way the translator handles the entire translation assignment, from initial contact, quoting and specifications, through the translation and revision processes, to the eventual delivery of the translation and dealing with any post-delivery requirements. This knowledge is essential for working as a free-lancer, an in-house translator or translation project manager.

Translation business skills relates to the application of administrative processes in line with regulatory requirements as well as marketing, negotiation, networking, time management, contract management, intellectual property requirements and determining the value of the services provided.

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[16] *Post-editing in Practice.* Translation Automation Users Society (TAUS). March 2010, p. 6.

Translation business system skills refers to skills required to operate a translations business, including the application of software for the purpose of record keeping and communication.

Communication skills and **Interpersonal skills** allow a translator to build and maintain business relationships with stakeholders. **Communication skills** refer to the language proficiency required for service provision, in particular to:

- understand and clarify the specifications of assignments from clients and agencies
- negotiate the translation assignment with any parties involved to determine deadlines, working conditions and contracts
- discuss the translating process, outcomes and potential difficulties
- convey decision to accept or decline an assignment in a professional and timely manner
- use client-provided information appropriately
- justify one's translation choices and decisions.

Interpersonal skills refers to the skills required to:

- relate to people from a range of social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds
- work effectively as part of a translation team
- negotiate and educate about cross-cultural expectations
- seek clarifications on assignments
- maintain ethical practice in the face of opposition, conflict, professional challenges and limited resources.

5.8 Ethical Competency

Ethics knowledge and **Professional Ethics** encompassed in **Ethical competency** refer to both the knowledge of the appropriate code or codes of ethics and the skills required to act ethically as a translator. **Ethical competency** is an essential part of professionalism in all relationships a translator has, including obligations to one's clients, to other stakeholders, to the texts one is translating and their readership, and to the translation and interpreting industry.

A professional abides by the relevant code of ethics (in Australia the codes from the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT) for spoken languages and the Australian Sign Language Interpreters' Association (ASLIA) for signed languages). This means initially translators need to be able to recognise ethical challenges and apply the relevant ethical guidelines.

While adherence to ethical codes is fundamental to translators' work, no code can encompass all situations. Ethical competency entails the ability to use the principles of a code to cover novel situations, and work through ethical dilemmas when principles may seem to clash. Translators are guided by their professionalism in making judgments of appropriate behaviour, to weigh up consequences and appropriateness of particular actions or lack of actions.

Ethical competency includes dealing effectively and appropriately with ethical dilemmas and challenges, and also relates to ongoing professional development and engagement with the profession.

5.9 Attributes

Attributes are inherent personal characteristics required to integrate the knowledge and skills previously described in order to be an effective translator.

> *Sometimes the boundaries among skills, abilities, and attributes are fuzzy. However, in both definitions it is clear that inherent personal attributes and abilities of a competent professional are the basis for integrating knowledge and skills in a particular context in order to accomplish needed tasks.*[17]

These attributes, or lack of them, are most visible when there is a consideration of ethical behaviour or adequacy of service provision.

In considering the range of attributes that should contribute to these KSAs, NAATI considered the ATA job task analysis validation survey which asked respondents to rate the importance of six attributes. The VET TP qualification and EMT do not specifically consider attributes, but the VET qualification integrates attributes in some of the required knowledge and skills.

In addition to these documents, NAATI reviewed O*Net Online, a US-based website that has detailed descriptions of occupations.[18] It includes a report for interpreters and translators (27-3091.00) with lists of attributes and descriptors.

NAATI considered this information and is of the opinion that the attributes of greatest importance in professional translation work are:

- **Attentive-to-detail –** careful about detail and thorough when completing work tasks
- **Desire-to-excel –** motivated to become better and perform work tasks consistently to a high level
- **Reliable –** dependable and responsible in fulfilling work tasks
- **Willing-to-learn –** actively and continuously improving knowledge and skills
- **Objective -** not influenced by personal feelings or opinions
- **Respectful –** considerate of the feelings, wishes, or rights of others
- **Collaborative –** able to work effectively and efficiently with others
- **Self-reflective –** aware of own knowledge and skills, behaviours and beliefs and the influence these have on the performance of work tasks
- **Problem-solving –** able to identify and find effective solutions for issues in order to achieve a goal

Each of these **Attributes** are required in one or more of the areas of competency, and therefore should not be assigned to specific areas. Nevertheless, they are integral in the overall professional practice as they determine how a translator applies their knowledge and skill.

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[17] *Certification and Job Task Analysis (JTA).* Koby and Melby, 2013, pp. 184/5.
[18] https://www.onetonline.org/.

6. Areas of Translation where additional Skills are required

There are areas of contemporary translation practice that combine the competencies described above with other skills. This does not refer to specialised areas of **Thematic competency**, e.g. translating pharmacological, legal or engineering texts, but to technological and linguistic skills that allow the translator to perform translations that involve mediums other than the written word only.

Some of the areas that have been identified in the literature are:

- Audio-visual translation
- Transcript translation
- Translation of audio material.

Audio-visual translation is the contemporary area of multimedia production, both international and local, encompassing sub-titling, dubbing voiceovers, sign language translations, and localisation of voice and text in multimedia production.

Transcript translation refers to the translation of a written transcript of spoken or signed language. There are a number of situations where this might occur – for example situations where the quality of interpreting is being questioned.

Translation of audio or audio-visual material refers to situation where a summary or some form of translation of spoken or signed language is completed without a transcript of the source being produced. These forms of translation occur in situations such as forensic investigation of previously transcribed material, security work or sub-titling. This typically would require higher-order comprehension of spoken source language.

7. Conclusion

Establishing a clear and valid set of translator KSAs is vital to ensure that the new certification scheme has improved validity, reliability and practicality. This will underpin the new certification scheme and provide a mechanism for review and ongoing improvement not present in the current accreditation system.

8. Acknowledgements

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