

# The Conference of Translators: Collaborative Translation in Iran

**Samira Saeedi**

*The University of Melbourne*

This paper springs from recent scholarship on collaborative translation. By 'collaborative translation' I mean a translation carried out by a team with or without the supervision of a main translator or editor. From Alfer we know that team translation can empower translators to 'claim at least a share in the authority, authenticity, and power of attribution traditionally invested in the single author and develop, consequently, a 'translative space' (Alfer, 2017).

In Iran, so far, the topic has received scant attention. Haddadian-Moghaddam (2014) has addressed the multiplicity of agents in the process of publishing translations, but his study is not concerned with collaborative and team translation. Saadat (2017) demonstrated how, by producing unofficial online translations, Iranian amateur translators and their readers challenge the government norms that control translations. Apart from Saadat, no other study has explored the nature and function of collaborative translation in Iran further.

I fill this gap by examining paratextual and extratextual evidence of at least some of the 22 team translations into Persian of *Harry Potter* series (1997-2007). This investigation sheds new light on the incentives and implications behind the development of this type of collaborative translation in contemporary Iran. I will also cross-reference the paratextual evidence with data from oral history interviews with ten literary translators and five literary publishers based in Tehran.

I carry out this analysis of Iranian translations by employing a sociological approach and by adopting conceptual tools from Actor-Network-theory (2005) and Bourdieu's practice theory (1977). I use ANT's focus on the production process and strategies adopted by actors to understand power relations among Iranian translators, editors, publishers, and readers.

My research findings suggest that collaborative translation in Iran is based on a strong hierarchical relationship between these actors and generate social and cultural capital for translators and supervisors. My findings also show that Iranian collaborative translation unsettles Western understandings of author-translator and translator-translator relationships.

### **Key References**

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