



Translation as a Profession in Iran from a Sociological Perspective

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In sociology, a profession is roughly defined as an occupation based on specialized training in order to provide skilled services for a certain financial reward and as such is a sub-set of occupations. An occupation has to have met a number of criteria to reach the status of a profession. The question of the study is whether translation in Iran is only an occupation or it fits the narrower and more prestigious classification of a profession. The study employs a framework, proposed and initially applied to the context of Canada by Godbout (2009), to determine the status of translation in Iran on a spectrum ranging from occupation on one extreme and profession on the other. Based on her framework which entails the most frequently discussed criteria of a profession in the literature on the sociology of occupation-profession, translation in Iran has been evaluated in terms of a number of aspects including a) translation as an academic discipline, b) authority to control access to the profession, c) criteria for admission to the profession, d) a code of ethics enforced by the profession, e) professional development, and f) recognition of the profession's authority by the public society. In the following additionally, translation in Iran in relation to Bourdieu's (1991) sociological concept of capital is discussed. Overall, against the background of the six attributes, it is concluded that while the professional status of translation in Iran is improving, currently in 2014, translation in Iran is a profession in waiting, or in Etzioni's (1969) words, a semi-profession.