A Critical Analysis of the *Iranian Charter of Professional Ethics for Translators*: A Case for Revision

Research Article

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Abstract

Ethical issues are gaining more importance in the realm of Translation Studies. Ethics charters or codes of professional conduct for translators produced by professional associations seek to establish a set of ethical principles and to ensure that all members are adopting those principles in practicing their profession. The present study aims to examine the fundamental assumptions underlying the approved *Iranian Charter of Professional Ethics for Translators* in Iran and to explore the limitations of

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the *Charter*. Eighteen English codes of ethics for translators or translators and interpreters from countries located in various parts of the world were downloaded and analyzed to find the overall values and underlying principles commonly shared by the codes. Then, the principles underlying the *Iranian Charter of Professional Ethics for Translators* were analyzed to reveal the main points of similarity and difference between this *Charter* and the analyzed codes from around the world. Finally, the limitations of the *Charter* were discussed. The analyzed data revealed that the approved *Iranian Charter of Professional Ethics for Translators* is not very practical and could not be successful in regulating ethical practice across the translation profession in the Iranian context. Hence, it requires further modification before application.

Keywords: charter of professional ethics, code of ethics, ethics, translation ethics, translator ethics

Introduction
Ethics

The question of ethics has long been addressed in various professions such as medicine, engineering, law, business, and so forth[1]. This issue has also been raised in the context of interpreting profession, especially in community interpreting (Williams, 2013). Generally, ethics is "the philosophical study of morality" (Audi, 1999, p. 284). The term is also frequently used as the equivalent of 'morality' as well as "the moral principles of a particular tradition, group, or individual" (Audi, 1999, p. 284). Although both ethics and morality refer to right or wrong actions in particular contexts, the distinction between them is that morality is a 'characteristic of individuals' (Koskinen, 2000, as cited in Baker, 2011, p. 276) and ethics is considered as 'a collective effort of a community' to draft a set of rules of established moral behavior (Koskinen, 2000, as cited in Baker, 2011, p. 276). Therefore, ethics is more associated with institutions or professional contexts that enforce codes of ethics, rather than codes of morality to constrain the behavior of those obliged to obey by them (Baker, 2011).

As Pym (2001, p. 129) mentions, "Translation Studies has returned to questions of ethics". House (2016) also considers the question of ethics as a recent influential issue in Translation Studies, which is directly related to the transla-

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1. Balkas (2006) analyzed the content of creative advertisements in Turkey to understand the ethical point of view of such ads. It was revealed that in order to be more creative, the figures and messages in the analyzed ads are full of non-ethical characteristics. It was also suggested that the self-regulation system has to be more effective in advertisers' practice. Kovacic and Van Putten (2011) made an attempt to find a solution to the so-called dilemma about whether formulating a universal journalist's code of ethics is necessary for a national context. It was suggested that if a code is to be accepted by journalists, it must respond to the needs understood in a specific environment, based on a specific problem recognized by all parts of the society, including journalists. Upton (2011) also investigated the role of philosophical, moral theory in an attempt to solve the ethical issues that arise in health care. It was argued that the absence of a generally accepted method of resolving moral issues, plus the improbability of philosophy achieving a determinate theory, should lead us to approach the issues in a spirit of agnosticism.

tor's responsibility in their translation tasks. Chesterman (2001) describes 'four current models of translation ethics' as 'an ethics of representation' (being faithful to the source text or the writer), 'an ethics of service' (being loyal to the client), 'an ethics of communication' (communicating with others), and 'a norm-based ethics' (behaving according to neither the reader nor the client but to the norms).

An 'ethics of representation' emphasizes the values of 'fidelity' and 'truth', that is, a translator is considered to act ethically if s/he represents the source text, the source writer's intention, or the source culture faithfully; without any addition or deletion (Chesterman, 2001). Another line of this ethics has to do with the German Romantic movement and those theorists who valued the representation of the Other (Chesterman, 2001). Schleiermacher's preferred method was foreignizing translation, which suggested close adherence to the foreign text to evoke a sense of foreignness in the translation (Venuti, 2008). Antoine Berman considered Schleiermacher's discussion as an ethics of translation (Venuti, 2008). For Berman, translation ethics is being 'in the service of foreigners', that is, "to bring the foreign work in its pure foreignness to the shore of the translating language" (Berman, 1999, as cited in Nouss, 2001, p. 288). In a similar vein, Venuti (1999) calls for translation projects motivated by an 'ethics of difference' which must consider the original culture of the foreign text and address different domestic constituencies. Such translations change the reproduction of dominant domestic ideologies and institutions and marginalize other domestic constituencies (Venuti, 1999).

For 'an ethics of service', an ethical translator "complies with the instructions set by the client and fulfills the aim of the translation as set by the client and accepted or negotiated by the translator" (Chesterman, 2001, p. 140). The concept of loyalty as an ethical concept is an interpersonal relationship that was initially introduced into the 'Skopos theory' by Nord in 1989 (Nord, 2001). Loyalty, in this sense, goes beyond the conventional intertextual relationship of 'fidelity' or 'faithfulness', which "refers to linguistic or stylistic similarity between the source and the target texts, regardless of the communicative intentions involved" (Nord, 2001, p. 185).

In an ethics of communication, communicating with others is emphasized, not the representation of the Other as in Levinas' work (Chesterman, 2001). Levinas (1989, as cited in Murray, 2000, p. 136) believes that ethics originates in the Other. The self is not responsible to the Other by itself, but rather, it is called to responsibility by the other person (Murray, 2000).

Pym has recently emphasized the ethical aspects of this kind of communication. For him, the aim of translation is to promote cooperation between groups that are 'Other to each other' (Chesterman, 2001, p. 141). If this cooperation is not possible, an ethical translator may decide, adds Pym (2012), not to translate at all. Thus, a basic proposition for translator ethics is translators' initial responsibility for their decision to translate (Pym, 2012). Pym (2012, p. 12) believes that "if we know *why* we translate, then we can deduce *how* we should translate and perhaps even *what* we should translate in each situation".

Finally, a norm-based ethics arises from Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) and 'norm theory' (Chesterman, 2001). This model implies that, generally, trusting a translator and the profession is much simpler if the translator behaves in predictable, norm-conforming ways (Chesterman, 2001).

Codes of Ethics

General ideas about ethics that apply across all professions manifest in ethics charters or codes of professional conduct produced by professional associations. A code of ethics established by a corporation "is the documented, formal, and legal manifestation of that organization's expectations of ethical behaviors by its employees" (Adelstein & Clegg, 2016, p. 55). What makes a corporation to be considered as 'ethical' "is the visibility that a code offers" (Adelstein & Clegg, 2016, p. 55). Charters or codes aim to establish a set of standards of behavior or conduct and ethical principles for all members of a profession that guide their actions. Every association tries to make sure that it is committed to the highest standards of ethics and business conduct. In addition to stating rules that govern their actions, the charters are an expression of fundamental values. In fact, adopting a code of ethics by a profession serving to unite its members is one of the factors that differentiates a profession from an occupation (Cokely, 2000).

Codes of ethics are different across professions; however, there are some commonly shared values among all the codes. These common values are 'solidarity' among the professionals; 'neutrality' as well as 'commitment' to offering good service; disallowing competition through 'price-cutting' or 'advertising'; and prohibiting violation of 'confidentiality' (Sook, 2015). Like other professions, there are different ethics charters or codes of ethics for translators becoming members of professional associations too. These charters establish clear expectations of ethical behavior for translators and clients. They aim at ensuring that every member is adhering to a common set of ethical principles in practicing their profession. Hence, these charters, which include the necessary aspects for an ethical and professional performance, try to maintain public trust.

Literature Review

Although the issue of translation ethics is one of the recent influential concerns in the field of Translation Studies (House, 2016), which is achieving a dominant position in the theoretical accounts and professional practice of translation, it seems that only a few studies have investigated ethical issues in general and ethics charters or codes of ethics for translators in particular. In a number of such studies, limitations and shortcomings of some of the codes have been discussed. In this relation, Dolmaya (2011) conducted comprehensive research on seventeen professional codes of ethics for translators from fifteen countries. Common principles of the codes were compared and their gaps were highlighted. Then, the issues discussed in the *Ethics and Professionalism forum* of *Trans-*

latorsCafe.com were used to show how the guidelines could apply to ethical dilemmas translators have in their profession. It was shown that all seventeen codes addressed only two principles of 'confidentiality' and 'competence'. Other principles including 'impartiality', 'accuracy', 'conflict resolution', 'professional development', 'advertising', 'translator rights', and 'working conditions' were stipulated by only some and not all the guidelines (Dolmaya, 2011). It was also revealed that these common principles apply to all professions that provide services, not just to translation profession. When the guidelines focus on issues specific to translation, the codes are sometimes not very clear and might be conflicting (Dolmaya, 2011).

Focusing on new and developing forms of community translation operating outside the professional realm, Drugan (2011) also discussed the relevance of professional codes in these new challenging contexts. The aim was to highlight the differences that exist between the two approaches and to demonstrate how far these codes are helpful in the new, challenging nonprofessional contexts. In so doing, ten of the codes considered by Dolmaya (2011) and fourteen other translation-specific codes, covering nineteen countries and three international corporations, were studied (Drugan, 2011). A comparison was made between the content of the professional codes and a broad range of community approaches to identify themes common across them. It was shown that community translation initiatives had found novel solutions to some ethical challenges, improved interpretation of code content, and were developing their 'own codes' (Drugan, 2011, p. 112) of ethics and practice.

Referring to the critical areas of weakness of the codes of ethics for translators, Lambert (2018) also asserts that "these codes can also function as client-facing documents that indirectly help translation agencies and associations to sell translations and memberships" (p. 269). This 'selling point' (p. 282) is reached through creating a sense of trust in 'neutral' translators on the part of clients (Lambert, 2018). Similarly, he also made an attempt to suggest some changes in the current codes of ethics toward a code that presents "an empowering image of translation as an active, multi-faceted activity" (p. 269).

In another study, the practical application of the codes of ethics within an Iranian context was also referred. Applying Chesterman's (2001) five models of translation Ethics (ethics of representation, ethics of service, ethics of communication, norm-based ethics, and ethics of commitment), Naderi and Farahzad (2016) investigated ethics of translation in the context of Iran. The data in their research were collected from thirty randomly selected Iranian publishers' contracts with translators. The genre and the type of the texts, the *skopos* and briefs, as well as the name and fame of the translators, were not taken into account in their study. However, the codes included in the contracts, their model and typology, and the values and norms governing each code were examined to extract codes of ethics in Iran. It was observed that ethics of service was the most frequent type of ethics in the articles and notes of the analyzed contracts. 'Ethics of representation', 'ethics of communication', 'norm-based ethics', and 'ethics of commitment' came in descending order. The results suggested that

translation in the context of Iran is not conducted based on balanced, professional, ethical principles. Rather, translation "is seen as a service to meet [the] demands of its initiators and earn money" (Naderi & Farahzad, 2016, p. 69).

Although codes of ethics suffer from potential shortcomings, some of which where mentioned above, Sook (2015) notes that the strict adherence to a set of codes of ethics by members of translation associations is a critical component in turning the translation industry into a well-developed profession. In the same vein, Kafi et al. (2018) also considered the absence of a unified code of ethics as an ongoing challenge facing the translation industry in the context of Iran. Referring to the approved statute in 1393 for official Iranian translators, they asserted that this statute shows a 60% overlap with that of the *International Federation of Translators* and is not applicable nowadays. However, this estimation was without presenting a detailed comparison between the principles of the Iranian statute and the ones included in the *International Federation of Translators' Charter*.

If the absence of a consistent code of ethics to be followed by translation associations is one of the main issues that hinders the development of the translation profession in Iran (Kafi et al., 2018), it would be recommended that Iranian translation associations be reinforced to follow such regulations. Furthermore, if there is an overlap between the approved *Iranian Charter* and that of the *International Federation of Translators*, it should be necessary to examine the underlying principles of the latter or other charters and codes to find out whether these codes have been successful in regulating ethical practice across the translation profession. This analysis would reveal whether or not the approved *Iranian Charter* could fit for the complex and changing world of the translation profession in which Iranian translators work. The review of the literature on ethical codes for translators revealed that they were investigated from different viewpoints, including the limitations as well as the application of the codes in different contexts. However, it seems that none to date has clearly delineated the fundamental assumptions underlying the approved Iranian *Charter of Professional Ethics for Translators* and its limitations. Hence, the present study seeks to analyze the *Iranian Charter* to show the main points of similarity and difference between this *Charter* and some codes of ethics for translators from around the world. Such a comparison would reveal its limitations before it is enforced on the translation profession in Iran.

Research Method
The Corpus

English codes of ethics for translators or translators and interpreters freely available on the Internet comprised the corpus of the study. Eighteen codes from countries located in various parts of the world, namely the US, Europe, Africa, Australia, and Asia, were downloaded. The content of the codes was analyzed to find the general values and underlying principles commonly shared by the codes. The sample includes the following codes of ethics:

1. *ATA (American Translators Association Code of Professional Conduct and Business Practice)*
2. *ATIA (The Association of Translators and Interpreters of Alberta) Code of Ethics*
3. *ATIO (The Association of Translators and Interpreters of Ontario Code of Ethics)*
4. *ATPP (The Peruvian Association of Professional Translators Code of Ethics)*
5. *AUSIT (The Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators) Code of Ethics for Interpreters and Translators*
6. *CFA Institute Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct*
7. *Code of Ethics for Interpreters and Translators Employed (enforced by the Special Court in Sierra Leone)*
8. *FIT (International Federation of Translators Issued Translator's Charter)*
9. *IAPTI (International Association of Professional Translators and Interpreters Code of Ethics)*
10. *ITI Code of Professional Conduct (The Institute of Translation and Interpreting, a membership organization and the professional body for translators and interpreters in the UK)*
11. *International Association of Conference Translators Professional Code*
12. *Language Interpreter and Translator Code of Professional Conduct Code of Professional Conduct (Washington State Department of Social and Health Services)*
13. *NAATI (National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Code of Ethics)*
14. *NAJIT (National Association of Judiciary Interpreters & Translators Code of Ethics)*
15. *NZSTI (New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters Code of Ethics)*
16. *SATI (Code of Ethics for South African Translation Institute)*
17. *STIBC (Society of Translators and Interpreters of British Columbia Code of Ethics)*
18. *Translations.com Code of Ethical Business Conduct*

Regarding the ethical codes for translators working in Iran, it seems that there have been some efforts to draw up a set of codes of ethics and professional conduct for these translators. The only approved Iranian code found on the Internet is titled منشور اخلاق حرفه‌ای مترجمان or literally, the *Charter of Professional Ethics for translators*, written in Persian. To facilitate the analysis, the *Charter* was translated by the researchers from Persian into English, and it was added to the corpus too. This short *Charter*, which was approved in 1393, includes nine principles. The principles will be elaborated in the following section.

Also relevant to the analysis was the classification of the codes provided by Hale (2007). According to Hale (2007, p. 108), the codes could be divided into three general categories:

1. translators' responsibility to the authors of the utterances, which includes accuracy, impartiality and confidentiality;

2. translators' responsibility to the profession, which includes professional conduct issues such as solidarity; and
3. translators' responsibility to self as a professional, including the need for professional development, role definition, adequate working conditions and pay rates.

In order to reveal to which category each tenet belongs, the principles of the *Iranian Charter* were also analyzed according to the classification mentioned above.

Procedure

Three steps were taken to analyze the codes of ethics for translators or translators and interpreters. First, the *Iranian Charter* was translated by the researchers from Persian into English. Second, since all the codes do not share the aspects mentioned in the classification of the codes provided by Hale (2007), the English codes of ethics from countries located in various parts of the world were analyzed and compared to determine those shared principles. In so doing, the codes were compared sentence by sentence to determine those principles which occurred most frequently. Then, the principles underlying the *Iranian Charter of Professional Ethics for translators* were thoroughly analyzed to reveal the main points of similarity and difference between the *Iranian Charter* and the analyzed codes. Finally, the limitations of the *Charter* were discussed.

Data Analysis

In what follows, the analysis of eighteen codes from around the world is provided. Table 1 allows the comparison of these English codes. It should be mentioned that not all the values and principles underlying the codes were outlined here; rather, those general themes commonly shared by the codes were highlighted. The shared principles were categorized into eleven groups, including accuracy, faithfulness, confidentiality, impartiality, competence, professional development, integrity, employment, professional conduct, professional solidarity, and maintaining professional relationships.

The American Translators Association requires professional translators to have sound knowledge of the source language and reasonable familiarity with the subject matter. Faithfulness, confidentiality, and professional development are highly emphasized by the code too. *The Association of Translators and Interpreters of Alberta* generally focuses on integrity, confidentiality, as well as faithfulness.

The Association of Translators and Interpreters of Ontario focuses attention on professional conduct, avoidance of conflict of interest, professional competence, integrity, faithfulness and accuracy, responsibility, confidentiality, as well as professional relationships, including sharing knowledge with colleagues in a spirit of mutual assistance.

Table 1.
Comparison of English Codes of Ethics for Translators

	Accuracy	Faithfulness	Confidentiality	Impartiality/Conflict of Interest	Competence/Proficiency	professional development	Integrity/honesty	Responsibility/Employment	Professional conduct	Respecting colleagues/Professional	Mutual assistance/Cooperation/Sharing
ATA		*	*		*	*					
ATIA		*	*				*				
ATIO	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*
ATPP	*		*		*	*				*	
AUSIT	*		*	*	*	*			*	*	
CFA	*		*	*	*		*		*	*	
Sierra Leone	*		*	*	*		*				
FIT		*			*			*			
IAPTI			*			*		*		*	
ITI	*	*	*	*	*		*			*	*
Conference Translators Code			*		*					*	
Language Interpreter Code	*		*		*						
NAATI	*		*	*	*						
NAJIT	*		*	*		*					
NZSTI			*	*	*					*	*
SATI	*		*			*		*	*		*
STIBC	*	*	*		*			*			*
Translations.com	*		*	*			*		*		

According to the *Peruvian Association of Professional Translators code of ethics*, translators have to be competent, constantly strive for excellence, and be respectful to their clients and colleagues. They also intend to contribute to the use of accurate and uniform terminology to facilitate communication and promote recognition of the translators as high-ranking professionals. The code also emphasizes confidentiality. The *Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators* considers impartiality, disclosing personal or financial conflicts of interest, accuracy, competence, employment, professional development, and professional solidarity as fundamental ethical issues.

The *CFA Institute Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct* attaches great importance to conflicts of interest, competence, integrity, confidentiality, accuracy as well as professionalism, independence, and objectivity. The code of ethics for interpreters and translators who work for the special court in Sierra Leone also includes competence, integrity, confidentiality, impartiality, and accuracy. *The International Federation of Translators Issued Translator's Charter* talks about the general obligations of translators and focuses on the responsibilities of translators. According the *FIT*, bilingual and thematic competences are the main competences translators need to possess. Responsibility and faithfulness, which is different from a literal translation, are also emphasized.

Responsibility, improvement of skills and knowledge, confidentiality, and respecting colleagues are also focused by the *International Association of Professional Translators and Interpreters Code of Ethics*. This code mainly talks about general duties, duties related to the performance of professional activities, duties related to the protection and promotion of the translating Profession, as well as duties related to relationships among colleagues, none of which includes accuracy or faithfulness.

The principles introduced by the *Institute of Translation and Interpreting Code of Professional Conduct* are honesty and integrity, professional competence, client confidentiality and trust, respecting and having relationships with other members. Dominant Professional values members are required to act in accordance with include faithfulness, accuracy, and impartiality.

The *International Association of Conference Translators Professional Code* mainly talks about professional secrecy, competence, friendly relations with colleagues, and not accuracy or faithfulness. *The Language Interpreter and Translator Code of Professional Conduct* also focuses attention on accuracy, confidentiality, proficiency, impartiality, avoidance of conflicts of interest, and professional development.

The *National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Code of Ethics* (*NAATI*) provides information on two primary codes of ethics: the *AUSIT Code* and the *ASLIA Code*. The *AUSIT Code* was initially developed by the *AUSIT* in consultation with the *NAATI*. It is a collection of rules and regulations that must be followed by interpreters and translators in Australia in their pursuit of professional practice. The *ASLIA Code* articulates ethical values, principles, and standards of conduct to direct *Australian Sign Language* practitioners while carrying out their duties. According to the *NAATI*, the general principles contained in the different ethical codes includes privacy and confidentiality, conflicts of interest, accuracy, impartiality, maintaining professional detachment and refraining from inappropriate self-promotion, as well as guarding against misuse of inside information for personal gain.

Accuracy, impartiality and conflicts of interest, confidentiality, as well as maintenance and development of skills and knowledge, are included in the *National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators Code of Ethics* too.

The *New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters Code of Ethics* requires translators to be competent, have mutual assistance with their fellow members, respect confidentiality, and not to exploit the acquired knowledge.

The *Code of Ethics for the South African Translation Institute* talks about the general obligations of translators and focuses on the responsibilities of translators. According to this code, translators are required to transfer the information as accurately as possible, continually pursue self-improvement to ensure the quality of their translations, and observe confidentiality. They are also expected to uphold the highest ethical standards and share their professional knowledge with other members.

The Society of Translators and Interpreters of British Columbia Code of Ethics includes professional competence, faithfulness and accuracy, responsibility, confidentiality, and professional relationships as ethical principles. Finally, the principles introduced by the *Translations.com Code of Ethical Business Conduct* are accuracy, integrity, confidentiality, professional conduct, and conflicts of interest.

Similar to other translation associations all around the world, Iranian associations of translators have recently recognized the need for the existence of professional charters or codes of ethics. The Iranian code used for the purpose of the study was the *Charter of Professional Ethics for translators*. The *Charter* was approved in 1393 and includes nine principles (see Appendix for the English version of the *Charter*).

The analysis of the first principle of the *Iranian Charter* shows that, similar to other analyzed codes of ethics, it states the need for complete fidelity to the meaning and message of the text. However, the *Iranian Charter* immediately requires "reproducing the translation in accordance with the cultural and specialized context of the target language". According to the following principle, translators must accept full responsibility for their translations, consider all the written or oral obligations binding, and meet the deadlines.

The principle of confidentiality also expects translators to avoid disclosing any information about the text unless the owner of the text or a legal authority allows them to do so. Besides, the fourth principle, the principle of adherence to the agreements and contracts, prevents translators from canceling the contracts without giving valid reasons or having customer satisfaction.

Under the principle of honesty and integrity requires "providing honest services to clients and avoiding false or misleading statements about professional competence and professional and specialist qualifications or advertising in a manner that would undermine the competence of other colleagues" is required of the translators.

The analysis of the next principle of the *Charter* reveals that maintaining ethical standards, respecting the translation profession, and avoiding hurting the reputation of the organization or other institutions involved in the field of translation are emphasized by the *Charter* too. Cooperation with colleagues

and avoiding destructive competitions are also emphasized by the seventh principle.

To provide high-quality translations, translators are required by the *Charter* to maintain and develop their language skills. Finally, translators are expected to demonstrate 'customer orientation' in that they should respecting clients' trust, notify clients of any changes to the text that result in any distortion of the text or altering its originality. Translators are also required to satisfy "customers prior to the assignment of the relevant order" and respond "appropriately to their needs that are related to the translation services".

To better analyze the principles of the *Iranian Charter*, they were examined according to Hale's (2007) classification to show to which category each tenet of the *Iranian Charter* belongs. Regarding the tenets belonging to the first category of responsibility to the writers of the texts offered by Hale (2007), the *Iranian Charter* speaks of accuracy and confidentiality, but not impartiality.

The second category of Hale's (2007) classification talks about translators' responsibility to the profession, which includes professional conduct issues such as solidarity. The principle of cooperation and assistance in the *Charter*, which focuses attention on maintaining cooperation and assistance, as well as avoiding destructive competitions among colleagues, refers to translators' responsibility to the profession.

And finally, regarding the translators' responsibility to self as a professional, including the need for professional development, role definition, adequate working conditions, and pay rates (Hale, 2007), the *Iranian Charter* requires continuing knowledge and skill development as well as the adherence to the agreements and contracts too.

Discussion

The analysis of eighteen codes from around the world revealed the main priorities of these codes. It was observed that confidentiality was almost emphasized by all the codes except for the *FIT* (*International Federation of Translators Issued Translator's Charter*). This finding is in line with the findings of Hale (2007), who analyzed and compared sixteen codes of ethics for translators and interpreters from nine countries to explore the purpose and applicability of these codes for interpreters. She found out that the most prominent tenet was confidentiality, with 81.25 percent of the analyzed ethical codes including it, followed by accuracy with 75 percent and impartiality with 68.75 percent. Similarly, analyzing seventeen codes for translators from fifteen countries, Dolmaya (2011) showed that two principles of confidentiality and competence were stipulated by all seventeen codes. Hence, confidentiality, which requires that translators not disclose information received or acquired without authorization during their professional practice, is of utmost importance for the translation profession.

Accuracy, which is generally considered equal to faithfulness, seems to be the next critical requirement of the codes of ethics for translators in general. However, some sort of terminological variation was observed. While thirteen codes used the term accuracy, six codes used faithfulness to refer to the translators' requirement by the codes to reproduce the closest natural equivalent of the source language meaning and message in the target language. On the other hand, the *ATIO*, *ITI*, and *STIBC* used both terminologies as synonyms under the same principles. And three codes (*IAPTI*, *NZSTI*, and *the International Association of Conference Translators Professional Code*) talked about neither accuracy nor faithfulness.

The third common feature observed in the codes, competence, requires that translators have a thorough knowledge of both the source and the target language. According to the next most frequent tenet, translators are supposed to be neutral, impartial, and objective during their practice. This is to ensure that their personal feelings, opinions, beliefs, or interests do not interfere with the primary objective of providing an accurate and faithful translation of the original. The next most common feature among the analyzed code was professional solidarity, according to which translators have to respect and support their fellow professionals.

Professional development, integrity, employment, and professional conduct all stood in ranks next to each other. Professional development requires that translators continue to develop their professional knowledge and skills. According to the principle of integrity, translators must act with honesty in all their professional practice. The principle of employment states that translators will be responsible for the quality of their translations, and they have to accept full responsibility for their translations. In the exercise of their profession, translators are also expected to act according to the high standards of conduct and maintain a professional attitude at all times. Finally, the least common principle among the analyzed code was about maintaining professional relationships. It includes mutual assistance, which requires that translators cooperate with and assist each other in every practical way and share knowledge with other members.

Examining the common themes in the analyzed English codes comparatively with the *Iranian Charter* highlighted both some similarities and differences between the two. It was observed that the *Iranian Charter* talked about almost all the common tenets found in the analyzed English codes from around the world except for impartiality. Hale (2007) believes that this exclusion from some codes could mean that this tenet is taken for granted, or it is not considered necessary. Also, while the first principle of the *Charter* refers to the translator's obligation to remain faithful to the original, it does not support a literal, word-for-word translation. However, this non-literal translation advised under the first principle of the *Charter* does not refer to any personal judgment from translators. It merely reveals the priority of a norm-based ethics of translation in the context of Iran, which in turn reflects the importance of cultural or social values while translating in an Iranian context. Social or cultural context condi-

tions the decision-making process in translation. In other words, translators are not mere linguistic experts; in order to make conscious decisions, they need to have social and cultural expertise. However, it seems that the *Iranian Charter* does not provide a detailed description of what translators should do when they encounter cases that are contrary to the cultural interests of Iranian society. Instead, it provides a broad guideline that tries to help them to decide on an appropriate course of action when encountered with an ethical problem.

Now the question is whether the codes have been successful in regulating ethical practice across the translation profession in general. And are they really practical nowadays? In order to answer these questions, opposing views in favor and against such codes are presented. First, they might be looked positively, as a means of professional performance and maintaining public trust. A code provides guidelines that help translators to make the right decisions in their work in that it protects them from making 'arbitrary choices', which could yield 'negative results' (Solow, 1981, as cited in Hale, 2007, p. 104). Following the same code by all translators, as Hale (2007) notes, makes all participants in the process of translation have the same common expectations of the translator's role, which in turn lessens the possibility of conflict. A code protects translators and elevates the dignity and status of the profession (Hale, 2007). It not only helps to win 'public trust' but also acts as 'an internal control mechanism' (Tseng, 1992, as cited in Hale, 2007, p. 104).

Despite arguments in favor of the existence of a uniform code of ethics for translators, some of which where mentioned above, some have questioned whether to adhere to such a code. Wallmach (2002, as cited in Hale, 2007, p. 104), for example, states that the mere presence of an ethical code does not guarantee that translators will follow it. This could be due to the following reasons: non-professional translators might simply not be aware of the existence of the code; they might find it inapplicable to their practice, or they may not be competent enough to adhere to the principles of the code. Some translators may disagree with the prescriptions in it and may see no reason for complying with them (Hale, 2007).

Lambert (2018) also believes that 'good' translation (p. 283) suggested by the codes, which means complete, impartial meaning transfer or a 'neutral methodology' (p. 284), is neither realistic nor desirable and is potentially harmful in the actual translation practice. Similarly, House (2016) also asserts that the very notions of fidelity and impartiality necessitated by the codes are problematic in the present climate in Translation Studies. House here refers to the major shift that happened in the ethics of translation in the twentieth century from a primary focus on the traditional terms of fidelity and invisibility toward more significant ethical issues such as the 'agency' and 'power' of the translators (Tymoczko, 2014) and challenged the role of the translators as prescribed by the codes.

Similarly, Baker (2011) lists three reasons why it is essential for translators "to develop critical skills that enable them to make ethical decisions for themselves, rather than have to fall back uncritically on such abstract codes" (p.

274). First, in actual practice, it is likely that translators encounter situations in which it is difficult to decide to apply the related code. This is because codes cannot predict all concrete ethical issues that might arise in real situations (Baker, 2011). Second, since such codes are provided by people like us, they are prone to error. Finally, following unquestionable codes of ethics would weaken accountability for decisions made by translators as individuals in society.

Regarding the first reason mentioned by Baker (2011), like all human activities, there are occasions throughout translators' professional life when codes are not applicable in full. For example, the *Iranian Charter*, as well as the majority of the analyzed codes by different researchers, do not stipulate how translators should make ethical choices while working with technology such as CAT software (Dolmaya, 2011). As another ethical dilemma, a translator might also encounter during translation practice, Dolmaya (2011) refers to a situation where a translator translates utterances that might be used to interrogate or intimidate detainees during wartime. She states that the seventeen codes of ethics she analyzed covered such a situation only to a limited extent. There are, of course, more examples of such dilemmas that are ever-present in the translation profession. Part of becoming a translator is accepting and, indeed, embracing uncertainties and dilemmas. Translators need to develop critical skills on these occasions and translate according to the specific situation. In the same vein, House (2016) encourages translators to cease acting in conformity to these standards of conduct, stop to be invisible, and play a more significant role in their business of translating. This means that whenever the expected neutrality and impartiality comes into serious conflict with an individual translator's conscience and his personal code of ethics, the translator must "construct and defend his very own 'code of ethics', in a new conception of the translator's agency and his personal integrity" (House, 2016, p. 131). Van Heerden (2016) takes this 'situational ethics of translation' even further and talks about a 'nomadic ethics' which is not about according to which norms we should translate, "rather about a philosophy of becoming which is situational: embedded and embodied within a specific location" (p. 89). Hence, ethical principles should be seen in reference to a specific context.

Such arguments could call into question the very presence of a uniform code of ethics for translators. Codes cannot provide an answer to all questions or new different ethical dilemmas that may arise in the professional life of translators. Hence, acting ethically does not necessarily mean that translators have to follow a set of agreed guidelines. If there is a question that codes do not address directly, translators should use their sound judgment of what is right to make the best decisions. As House (2016) also notes, there are no general ethical standards that are valid in all actual situations. Humans are concerned in almost any act of translation; they are so complex and likely to change that such generalizations seem unreasonable (House, 2016).

Conclusion

The present study examined the fundamental assumptions underlying some different codes of ethics from countries located in various parts of the world and highlighted their similarities. Then, it made a comparison between the content of these codes and that of the approved Iranian *Charter of Professional Ethics for Translators*. The comparison between the *Iranian Charter* of ethics and the analyzed codes revealed that, generally, the *Iranian Charter* speaks nothing more than the themes or principles such as confidentiality, faithfulness, and so on, which are common across other codes. It was also discussed how such a weakness lessens the impact of the codes on the translation profession.

Despite such a great number of professional codes of ethics for translators, put forward by different professional associations all around the world, as well as such an abundance of research on translation ethics, it seems that these codes have not been successful in regulating ethical practice across the translation profession and, hence, are not very practical nowadays. As it was mentioned, codes of ethics on their own are not a sufficient resource for translators. Such codes are lists of values and principles that demand accuracy or faithfulness of translators. However, they cannot precisely explain how to behave when the values are conflicting. As it was revealed from the analysis of the Iranian *Charter of Professional Ethics for translators*, it also suffers the very shortcoming. The *Charter* talks about almost all the common tenets observed in the analyzed English codes from around the world too. This paper suggested that the *Charter* should more fully recognize and acknowledge changes in the complex and changing world of the translation profession. Hence, before its application, the *Charter* should be modified in a way that it could see "the translator as an active and activist agent in the process of brokering individual and collective intercultural relationships in a world characterized by injustice and power imbalances" (Kruger & Crots, 2014, P. 152). Such a context-based code of ethics gives more freedom to translators and allows them to decide critically.

This study also has an implication for an ethics of translation. An ethics of translation requires of translators an awareness of the context in which they translate as well as a reflection on what they are doing. As Schwimmer (2017, p. 60) also stresses, an ethics of translation requires "autonomous institutions where problematizing, questioning, deviating, doubting and hesitating would be valued, and not just resolving problems, achieving objectives and meeting standards". Therefore, "merely rewriting or rewording the existing codes and assuming that their presence alone is enough to modify behavior" (Lambert, 2018, p. 284) is not sufficient for the translation profession.

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Relevant Websites

ATA (American Translators Association Code of Professional Conduct and Business Practice)
URL: https://www.atanet.org/membership/code_of_professional_conduct.
ATIA (The Association of Translators and Interpreters of Alberta) Code of Ethics)
URL: https://www.atia.ab.ca/about/code-of-ethics
ATIO (The Association of Translators and Interpreters of Ontario Code of Ethics)
URL:https://atio.on.ca/about/by-laws/
ATPP (The Peruvian Association of Professional Translators)
URL: http://www.atpp.org.pe/association.php
AUSIT Code of Ethics for Interpreters and Translators
URL: https://www.ausit.org/ausit/documents/code_of_ethics_full.pdf
CFA Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct
URL: https://www.cfainstitute.org/en/ethics/codes/code-of-ethics-standards-of-conduct-guidance
Code of Ethics for Interpreters and Translators Employed by the Special Court for Sierra Leone
URL: http://ethics.iit.edu/ecodes/node/5594
FIT (International Federation of Translators Issued Translator's Charter)
URL: https://www.fit-ift.org/translators-charter/
IAPTI (International Association of Professional Translators and Interpreters) Code of Ethics
URL: https://www.iapti.org/code_of_ethics/
Institute of Translation and Interpreting (UK) Code of Professional Conduct
URL: http://www.iti.org.uk/pdfs/newpdf/20FHCodeOfConductIndividual
International Association of Conference Translators Professional Code
URL: http://www.tradulex.com/Regles/ProAitcE.htm
Interpreter, Translator, and Licensed Agency Personnel Code of Professional Conduct (Washington State Department of Social and Health Services)
URL: https://www.dshs.wa.gov/fsa/language-testing-and-certification-program/code-ethics
NAATI (National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters)
URL: https://www.naati.com.au/media/1257/ethics_information_booklet.pdf
NAJIT (National Association of Judiciary Interpreters & Translators)
URL: https://najit.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/NAJITCodeofEthicsFINAL.pdf
NZSTI (New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters Code of Ethics)
URL: www.nzsti.org/assets/uploads/files/codeofethics.pdf
SATI Code of Ethics (for South African Translation Institute)
URL: http://translators.org.za/sati_cms/downloads/dynamic/sati_ethics_individual_english.pdf
STIBC (Society of Translators and Interpreters of British Columbia)
URL: http://www.stibc.org/page/code%20of%20ethics.aspx#.WarEjuQVj4g
Translations.com Code of Ethical Business Conduct
URL: https://www.translations.com/about/corporate-citizenship/ethical-code-of-conduct.html
The Iranian Charter of Professional Ethics for Translators
URL:https://tiat.ir/fa/%D9%85%D9%86%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AE%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%AD%D8%B1%D9%81%D9%87%E2%80%8C%D8%A7%DB%8C%D9%85%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%86

Appendix
Charter of Professional Ethics for translators

The principle of professional competence

Partaking of all scientific and professional measures in faithfulness to the meaning and message of the text, reproducing the translation in accordance with the cultural and specialized context of the target language, observing all the scientific and customary principles as well as the principles governing translation, avoiding orders that are for illegal or unethical purposes, or for the purposes contrary to the interests of the society.

The principle of responsibility

Accepting full responsibility for the translation (even if the translation is subcontracted to another translator), considering all the written or oral obligations as binding, meeting the deadlines, and following the delivery methods of the order.

The principle of trusteeship and confidentiality

Keeping the loan in the text and everything entrusted to the translator, refraining from disclosing the information about the text, or any financial or non-financial use or misuse of the information by the self or a third party, and disclosing the information only by the permission of the owner of the text or on the order of legal authorities.

The principle of transparency and adherence to the agreements

Taking advantage of all specialized and executive capacities to determine and implement the timing in accordance with existing guidelines for undertaking the translation project and avoiding modification or unilateral termination of the contract or firm verbal agreement without providing valid reasons and obtaining customer satisfaction.

The principle of honesty and integrity

Providing honest services to clients and avoiding false or misleading statements about professional competence and professional and specialist qualifications or advertising in a manner that would undermine the competence of other colleagues.

The principle of preserving and elevating the dignity and the status of the translation profession

Maintaining ethical standards in dealing with the clients and customers in a manner that is appropriate for the profession and that increases public trust and respect for the profession of translation, and avoiding damaging the interests and reputation of the organization, its members, and relevant institutions in the field of translation in speech or act, deliberately or inadvertently.

The principle of cooperation and assistance

Assisting and dealing honestly with colleagues, maintaining a spirit of cooperation and assistance in interactions and collaborations, and avoiding destructive and unhealthy competitions through actions such as accepting orders below common and standard rates.

The principle of continuing knowledge and skill development

Continuing effort to maintain and develop language skills at the general and specialized level as well as professional knowledge to work in line with existing needs and requirements and to provide high-quality translations.

The principle of customer orientation

Respecting clients' trust, notifying them of any changes to the ordering text that result in distortion of the text or altering its originality, informing and satisfying customers prior to the assignment of the relevant order, and responding appropriately to their needs that are related to the translation services.