

# Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice in Persian - Language on the Move

By Ingrid Piller

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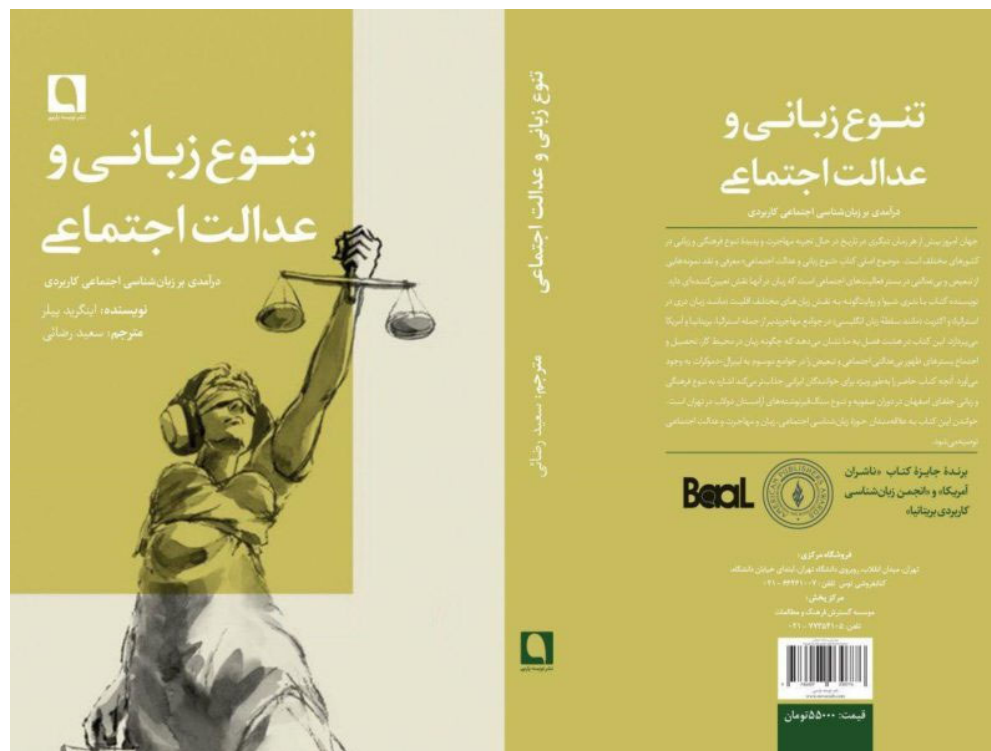
The translator of the Persian version of *Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice*, Dr Saeed Rezaei

The Persian translation of [\*Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice\*](#) (2016, Oxford University Press) has just been published by the Iranian publishing house [Neveeseh](#). *Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice* has been translated into Persian by [Dr Saeed Rezaei](#). Dr Rezaei is an assistant professor in Applied Linguistics at [Sharif University of Technology](#) in Tehran and was a visiting researcher at [Macquarie University](#) in 2012/2013. A [feature post about his research interests](#) from back then is available here on *Language on the Move*.

Most of the research featured in *Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice* and the case studies that examine the relationship between language and social justice are based in Anglophone contexts and/or in societies constituted as liberal democracies. Iran is neither but, even so, the broad questions raised in the book – how language serves to stratify society and how it mediates access to social goods – are pertinent there, as elsewhere, irrespective of which national language predominates and which political system is espoused.

One of the aims of *Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice* has been to broaden readers' understanding precisely of the diversity of relationships in which language and justice can find themselves. In the English original, some of the case studies came from contexts likely to be unfamiliar to the Western reader – such as [the linguistic landscape study of the Doulab Cemetery in Tehran](#), which I use to

exemplify the territorial principle. For the Iranian reader, I hope that this case study, in particular, will not only have the ring of the familiar but also serve as a reality check on the overall argument.



Cover of the Persian translation. As for the English original, the cover image was drawn by artist Sadami Konchi

It has also been my hope that *Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice* would contribute to a new sociolinguistic research agenda examining the relationship between language and social justice. In this regard, it is fitting that the first translation of the book should be into Persian because the field has much to learn from the sociolinguistics of multilingual Iran – both past and present.

I have personally learned so much from [my visits to the country](#) and my interactions with its people, language, and culture. Some of the most pertinent of these lessons I have tried to share throughout the book, such as the case studies in the final chapter. The final chapter features “real linguistic utopias”, where multilingualism and social cohesion do not conflict. One example comes from [17<sup>th</sup> century Isfahan, a highly diverse and multilingual city, which flourished as a transnational center of trade and learning](#). Another one that did not make it into *Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice* (but into the second edition of [Intercultural Communication](#), Edinburgh University Press, 2017) is the cross-cultural brokering in the [friendship of Persian and Mongol politicians in 13<sup>th</sup> century Iran](#). In an age when our own political leaders seem to be more inclined towards erecting new borders, strengthening old ones and tearing down bridges, the friendship of the Mongol Bolad and the Persian Rashid al-Din, which helped to connect east and west Asia, is particularly instructive to consider.

It is in a similar spirit of conversation and engagement that *Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice* was written and conceived as part of a broader conversation about linguistic diversity and social justice. In the English original, this is signaled through the many invitations to the reader to join the conversation on [Language on the Move](#). In the Persian version, the spirit of conversation and exchange also materializes through the very fact of the translation.

I am immensely grateful to Dr Saeed Rezaei for initiating the translation and for his persistence and hard work in bringing it to fruition. I hope the Persian translation will be as well-received as the English original was; and I will be looking forward to the conversations it starts and continues and to seeing the directions they take. Even more so, as dark clouds gather once more over Iran, I hope that the book will find a Persian-language readership in a time of peace and prosperity.

**[The ebook version of the Persian translation of \*Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice\* is available here.](#)**

**\*\*\*NEW\*\*\* [May 20, 2019]: [The preface of the Persian translation of \*Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice\* can be downloaded here.](#)**

**\*\*\*EVEN NEWER\*\*\* [July 23, 2019]: Listen to an interview with Dr Rezaei about the book on [Radio Farhang here \(part 1\)](#) and [here \(part 2\)](#).**

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