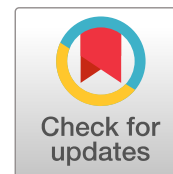


MAPPING TRANSLATION HISTORY IN IRAN: A SCIENTOMETRIC STUDY OF JOURNAL ARTICLES

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Abstract



This study presents a scientometric analysis of scholarly publications on the history of translation in Iran, encompassing 370 articles published over a fifty-year period. Using VOSviewer for data visualization, the research identifies and maps eight key dimensions of the articles: journal titles, journal affiliation, publication date, publication place, historical periods, themes, theoretical frameworks, and text genres. The findings reveal a significant increase in publication volume in recent years, particularly from 2011 onward, coinciding with the academic institutionalization of translation studies in Iran. Tehran and Mashhad emerged as the dominant centers of scholarly output, reflecting their status as hubs for major universities and specialized journals. Thematic analysis uncovered 56 recurring themes, with a predominant focus on linguistic and bibliographical aspects of translation as well as translation movement. The most studied historical periods were the Contemporary, Abbasid, Qajar, Islamic Republic of Iran, and Pahlavi eras, while literary and religious texts were the most commonly examined genres. Although only a minority of articles engaged with explicit theoretical frameworks, the field shows clear signs of development. Overall, the study offers a broad picture of how research on translation history has evolved in the Iranian academic context over the past five decades.

Keywords: translation history, Iran, scientometrics, journal articles

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In recent years, scientometric research has offered valuable insights into the development of translation studies by mapping trends, themes, and scholarly contributions across various domains. While this approach has been applied to numerous subfields and regions, the historical study of translation in the Iranian context remains notably underrepresented. Although Iranian scholars have produced a substantial body of work on translation history, these efforts have not yet been systematically analyzed to reveal patterns in publication, thematic focus, or methodological orientation. This study seeks to address that gap by conducting a scientometric analysis of journal articles published in Iran over the past five decades that focus specifically on the history of translation in Iran.

To guide this analysis, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. Which journals have published articles on the history of translation in Iran?
2. With which institutions are the journals that published these articles affiliated?
3. Which historical periods are most frequently examined in the articles?
4. Which text genres are most frequently analyzed in the articles?
5. Which themes are most frequently explored in the articles?
6. Which theoretical frameworks are most frequently employed in the articles?
7. What are the publication dates of the articles?
8. What are the places of publication for the journals that published these articles?

Literature Review

Over the past two decades, scientometric and bibliometric methods have been increasingly applied to investigate research trends, thematic developments, and the structural evolution of Translation Studies (TS) as an academic discipline. Gile (2015) provides an early foundational account of this approach by tracing the development of scientometric investigation in TS, beginning with the CIRIN Bulletin and moving toward more refined citation analyses. His study underscores both the opportunities and technical limitations involved in applying scientometric tools to a field that remains relatively fragmented and unevenly represented in bibliographic databases. He also highlights the value of scientometrics for training young researchers in understanding the discipline's structure.

Recent studies have continued to build on and diversify the scientometric analysis of TS. For instance, Pan and Wu (2023) examined 15 years of research outputs from eleven leading TS journals indexed in the WoS-SSCI, mapping the intellectual structures of the field and identifying evolving research trends. Their keyword and co-

citation analyses point to a dynamic thematic landscape, with new concepts and paradigms replacing earlier dominant topics, thereby illustrating the multidisciplinary and shifting nature of TS. Similarly, Umeanowai and Hu (2023) analyzed 1,948 papers from the Web of Science using Bibliometrix R and VOSviewer, identifying six major thematic clusters—including pedagogy and technology, audiovisual translation, and cognitive demand in interpreting—and confirming China, the USA, and the UK as central contributors to global TS scholarship. In another study, Hidayati (2024) focused on publications in the ScienceDirect database and identified underexplored areas such as the integration of artificial intelligence tools like ChatGPT, Google Bard AI, and DeepL in translation research. Her use of co-occurrence analysis and authorship mapping demonstrates how bibliometric tools can assist researchers in tracking both thematic gaps and leading scholars in the field. Zhu and Aryadoust (2023) conducted a large-scale scientometric review of TS literature published between 2001 and 2020 across fifteen journals indexed in Web of Science. Their document co-citation analysis revealed ten major research clusters—ranging from translation competence and collaborative translation to media translation and web localization—offering a comprehensive timeline of the field’s intellectual evolution and identifying key publications through burst detection analysis. Moreover, Alyami and Qassem (2024) mapped translation and interpreting research within the GCC states, highlighting Saudi Arabia’s leading role and emerging themes such as technology use and Arabic proficiency. Huang and Liu (2019) provided a bibliometric overview of international translation studies from 2014 to 2018, further contributing to understanding the field’s global dynamics.

Some scientometric studies have turned their attention to translation technology and machine translation, highlighting evolving research trends and thematic priorities. Mohsen et al. (2023) conducted a comprehensive analysis of 541 documents on machine translation published between 1992 and 2022 in journals indexed in Web of Science, employing tools such as CiteSpace and Bibexcel. Their findings identified eleven thematic clusters, with a strong focus on the integration of neural networks and artificial intelligence to enhance machine translation processes. The study also emphasized the growing role of human post-editing in improving translation quality and identified Google Translate as the most widely used tool. Additionally, Lijie (2024) applied CiteSpace to bibliometric data from both Web of Science and China National Knowledge Infrastructure, mapping key research hotspots in translation technology from 2013 to

2023. Her analysis underscored machine translation, computer-assisted translation, post-editing, and neural machine translation as dominant themes, while also identifying natural language processing and talent training as emergent research frontiers. Along the same line, He et al. (2022) offered a comparative bibliometric analysis of translation technology teaching (TTT) across Chinese and international publications from 1999 to 2020. Their study revealed significant methodological and thematic divergences between the two communities, with English-language research prioritizing machine translation post-editing pedagogy through empirical approaches, while Chinese-language studies favored corpus-based TTT using non-empirical methods.

Besides translation technology, other areas in translation studies have been the subject of scientometric analysis. Barturen Mondragón et al. (2024), for instance, examined 417 articles on legal translation and highlighted Spain as the most productive country in this domain, and legal translation, legal language, legal terminology and comparative law as the most frequently used terms. Zhu and Guo (2024) analyzed 237 articles on children's literature translation, revealing English-Chinese as the most studied language pair and noting a dominance of empirical research. They also showed that children's classics and translation strategies are the most investigated topics. Mu et al. (2021) and Xiong et al. (2023) traced the development of eco-translatology in China, identifying key research phases and prominent contributors like Hu Gengshen. Du and Chen (2022) conducted a bibliometric analysis of political discourse in translation, uncovering eight major research themes through keyword co-occurrence. Sun et al. (2023) mapped feminist translation research in China, observing a shift from rapid growth to recent decline, and Huang and Xin (2023) conducted a bibliometric analysis of research on translation criticism in China. Another scientometric study focusing on literary translation is done by He and Xiong (2025). They examined translator's style from a Chinese perspective, tracing its evolution in three stages and identifying corpus-based research as a dominant mode of inquiry.

In addition to theme-based analyses, some scientometric studies have addressed audiovisual translation and also the collaboration among researchers. Wang and Jalalian Daghigh (2024) reviewed two decades of audiovisual translation research, highlighting exponential growth in topics such as subtitling, dubbing, and media accessibility, and noting Europe and Iran as key contributors. Guo (2025) mapped the domain of

multimodal translation, revealing a surge in publications since 2012 and identifying subtitling, corpus-based analysis, and reception studies as central concerns. Sun and Liang (2023) analyzed academic collaboration in translation studies based on journal articles, reporting a marked increase in co-authorship over a decade and observing that researchers from developed countries occupy central roles in collaboration networks. Complementing this line of inquiry, Rovira-Esteva et al. (2020) conducted a large-scale bibliometric study of co-authorship using data from BITRA, uncovering long-term growth in co-authored publications, a slight citation advantage for journal articles with multiple authors, and low levels of international collaboration despite rising co-authorship trends.

A smaller number of scientometric studies have turned their attention to underexplored forms and specific translated works. Li and Liang (2024) conducted a bibliometric analysis of book reviews in translation journals, uncovering a slight decline in review publications, a tendency toward conventional review formats, and regional and topical biases. Focusing on a single canonical text, Wang and Mat Said (2025) analyzed research on English translations of *The Analects of Confucius*, identifying three dominant themes—translator-focused studies, explorations of Confucian concepts, and ideological analyses—while also highlighting the need for more theoretically diverse approaches. Similarly, Wu and Xi (2024) mapped the evolving landscape of translation studies on Mo Yan's works in China, noting shifts in publication trends, the prominence of studies on translation strategies and key translators, and the absence of a cohesive research community.

Several scientometric studies have examined translation research within specific national or regional contexts, revealing distinct scholarly trajectories and institutional dynamics. Li (2017) assessed the international visibility of mainland Chinese scholars, highlighting their limited global impact and distinct thematic focus compared to dominant anglophone research. Alikina et al. (2016) analyzed Russian dissertations on translation pedagogy, identifying key thematic trends and institutional centers of activity. Similarly, Grbić and Pöllabauer (2008) mapped community interpreting research in German-speaking countries, offering detailed insights into publication types, thematic clusters, and collaborative networks.

Taken together, these studies demonstrate that scientometric research in translation studies has examined a wide range of publication types, including journal articles and book reviews, utilizing various databases and software tools. They have explored diverse subfields within translation studies and focused on different geographic regions. However, there remains a noticeable lack of scientometric studies addressing translation history, particularly in the context of Iran—a gap that the present research seeks to fill.

Methodology

To identify articles on the history of translation in Iran which were published in Iranian academic journals, three databases were consulted: Noormags (www.noormags.ir), Magiran (www.magiran.com), and the Humanities Portal (www.ensani.ir). These databases are widely recognized for their comprehensive archives of Persian-language academic journals and serve as essential resources for research in the humanities and social sciences. A list of Persian and English keywords, covering both general and specific topics related to translation history in Iran, guided the search process. The Persian keywords included: تاریخ ترجمه، سنت ترجمه، نهضت ترجمه، مکتب ترجمه، نقش ترجمه، کارکرد ترجمه، تأثیر ترجمه، سیر ترجمه، ترجمه در گذر، ترجمه در دوره، ترجمه در دوران، ترجمه در عصر، ترجمه در سده، ترجمه در عهد، نقش مترجم، نقش مترجمان، دیرینه‌شناسی ترجمه، اسامی مترجمان، تاریخ‌نگاری ترجمه، تاریخ نشر، تاریخچه ترجمه، ترجمه متون تاریخی، کتابشناسی ترجمه، ترجمه و تألیف، فهرست ترجمه. The English keywords used were: “history of translation, translation history, translation movement, movement, history, Persian, Farsi, Arabic, Baghdad, Persia, Iran, translation, and translator”.

The search in these databases was confined to articles published over a period of 50 years, from 1971 to 2021. The year 1971 was chosen as the starting point due to limited or no access to earlier publications or their lack of relevance. The endpoint of 2021 was selected to correspond with the initiation of the research in 2022.

Each keyword was entered into the advanced search fields of the databases. On Magiran, where various article types are indexed, the search was limited to scholarly articles, and keywords were entered into the TITLE, ABSTRACT, and KEYWORDS fields, as full-text search functionality was unavailable. For Noormags and the Humanities Portal, searches included TITLE, ABSTRACT, KEYWORDS, and TEXT fields. While

Magiran's publication year filter was unreliable, Noormags and the Humanities Portal allowed for accurate retrieval of articles published between 1971 and 2021. Some significant journals (e.g., *Iranian Journal of Translation Studies*) were not indexed in these three databases. In such cases, the official websites of these journals were checked to identify relevant articles.

The entire search process yielded 1006 records from Magiran, 6401 from Noormags, 230 from the Humanities Portal, and 117 from independent journal website searches. Each record was briefly reviewed to assess relevance based on content and publication year (1971–2021), and irrelevant results were excluded. Furthermore, each journal's status was verified to ensure it held a "scientific-research rank," a designation in the Iranian system granted exclusively to academic journals by the Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology. Articles from 'review journals' or 'cultural journals' were therefore excluded. Following this filtering process, a final dataset of 370 academic journal articles published between 1971 and 2021 in Iran and focused on the history of translation in Iran was compiled.

These 370 articles were analyzed in two stages. In the first stage, four pieces of bibliographic information were collected for each article: journal title, journal affiliation, publication year, and publication city. This information was obtained without reading the full content of the articles and was recorded in Excel files. To ensure compatibility with VOSviewer, which does not support Persian, all entries were documented in English. Where English bibliographic data were not already available, Persian information was translated accordingly.

In the second stage, the full texts of all 370 articles were read, and four additional categories of information were extracted: the historical period examined in the article, the article's primary theme, the theoretical frameworks applied, and the text genres explored. To carry out these two stages, 12 trained research assistants were recruited and instructed on how to record bibliographic data and conduct thematic analysis using a pre-designed template. The collected data were then reviewed for inconsistencies, such as variations in terminology. For instance, if one assistant recorded a genre as "literature" and another as "literary," these were standardized to "literary." Likewise, thematic terms like "linguistic analysis," "linguistic investigation," and "comparative

linguistics” were reconciled under the unified label “linguistic.” The standardized data were then entered into Excel files.

The data collected in both stages was analyzed using VOSviewer (version 1.6.20, 2023). As VOSviewer supports data from sources like Web of Science and Scopus but not directly from Excel files, the dataset was converted into RIS (Research Information Systems) format, which is compatible with VOSviewer. This required the application of specific RIS tags to the data.

Once converted, the RIS files were imported into VOSviewer to conduct a scientometric analysis and generate density visualizations across eight categories: (1) journal titles, (2) journal affiliations, (3) time of publication, (4) place of publication, (5) historical periods, (6) themes, (7) theoretical frameworks, and (8) text genres. The results of this analysis are presented in the following section.

Results

The scientometric analysis of the 370 articles yielded quantitative insights across eight categories, each aligned with a specific research question. These categories include: journal titles, journal affiliation, publication date, publication place, historical periods examined, dominant themes, theoretical frameworks employed, and genres of texts analyzed. Each category is discussed in the following subsections, accompanied by visualizations generated through VOSviewer.

Journal Titles

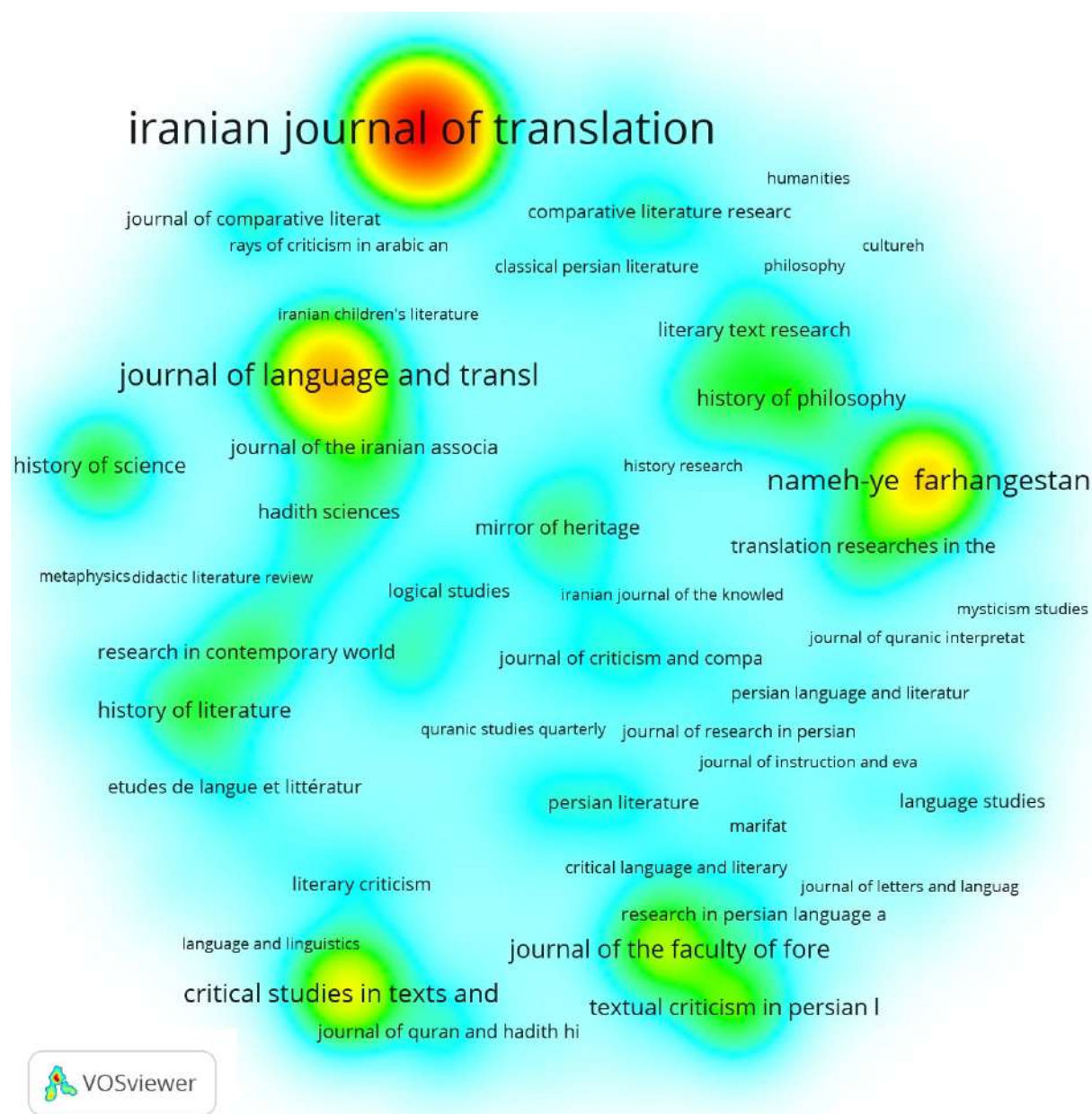
This section addresses the first research question: “Which journals have published articles on the history of translation in Iran?” To identify the primary publication venues for translation history research, journal titles associated with the 370 articles were extracted and analyzed. The results showed that these articles were distributed across 126 distinct Iranian scholarly journals.

The journal titles were imported into VOSviewer to generate a density visualization, with the aim of identifying publication clusters and highlighting journals with the highest frequency of contributions. The resulting map is presented in Figure 1.

The density visualization highlights the *Iranian Journal of Translation Studies* in red, indicating its dominant role as the central platform for the dissemination of research on the history of translation in Iran.

Figure 1

Density Visualization of Journal Titles



This journal, along with the *Journal of Language and Translation Studies*—highlighted in orange—represents the core of specialized academic output in this area. Both journals are dedicated to translation studies, reflecting the pivotal role of field-specific outlets in shaping scholarly discourse on translation history.

Beyond these specialized journals, a significant number of articles were published in journals devoted to Persian language and literature or linguistics, including *Nameh-ye Farhangestan*, *Critical Studies in Text and Programs in Human Sciences*, and *Textual Criticism in Persian Literature*. These journals, while not focused on translation, have served as important venues for exploring the historical dimensions of translation in the Iranian context.

More than 60% of the journals in the dataset published only a single article on the history of translation. This indicates that while a few journals have established themselves as consistent contributors, much of the research remains dispersed across a wide range of less frequent publication venues.

Journal Affiliations

This section addresses the second research question: “*With which institutions are the journals that published the articles affiliated?*” In this study, journal affiliation refers to the academic center, university, organization, or individual responsible for managing and publishing the journal.

An institutional mapping of the 126 journals in the dataset revealed that they are affiliated with 71 different entities, including universities, research institutes, cultural organizations, and individuals. Journals independently managed by individuals, without an institutional affiliation, were categorized as “private”.

These affiliation data were processed using VOSviewer to generate a density visualization, allowing for the identification of key institutional contributors to research on the history of translation in Iran. The resulting map is shown in Figure 2.

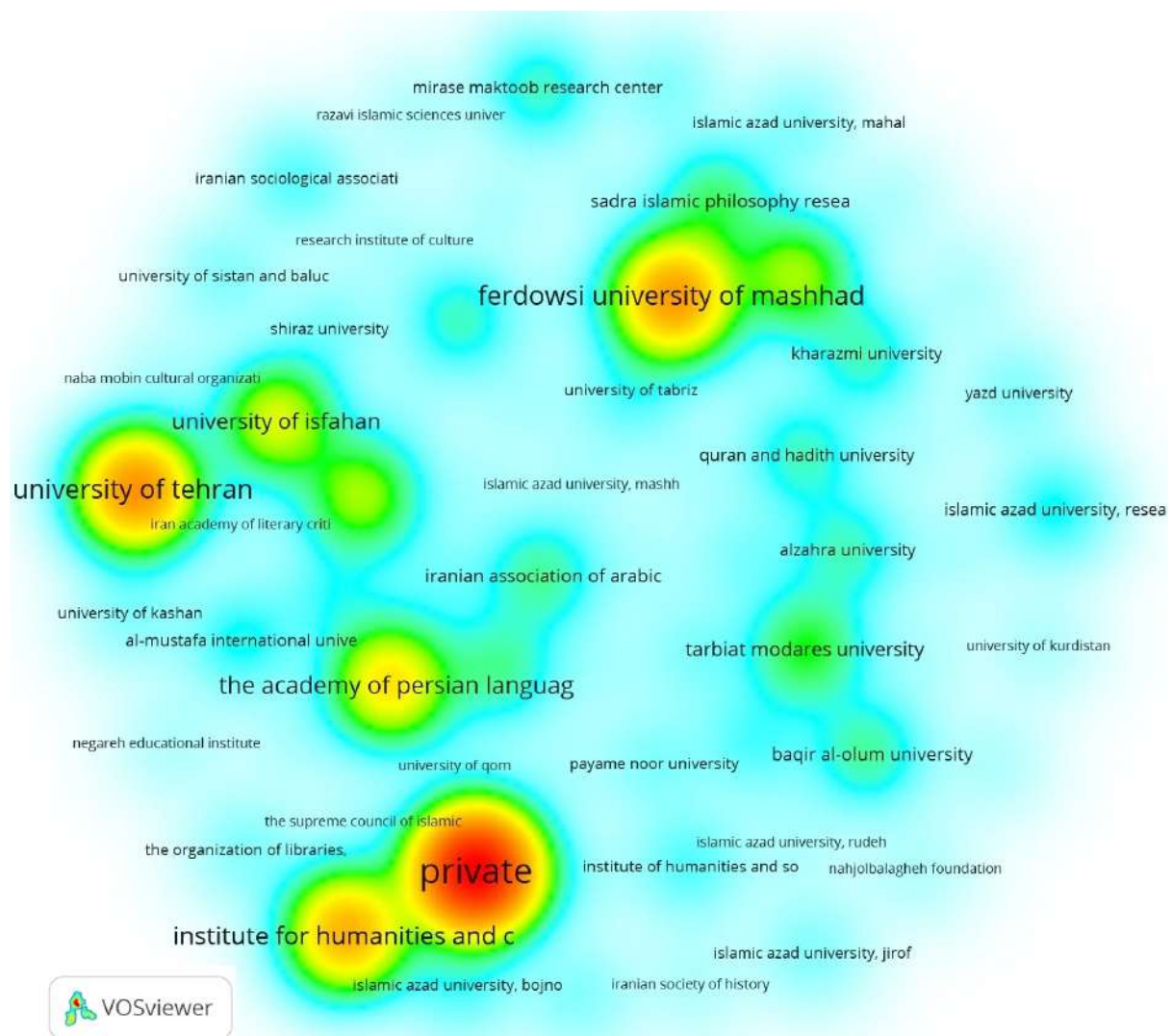
The density map highlights privately managed journals in red, indicating that journals without institutional backing constitute the most frequent contributors to the field. This finding suggests a substantial level of individual or non-institutional scholarly initiative in the area of translation history.

Following the private sector, the *University of Tehran* and *Ferdowsi University of Mashhad* are the most prominent institutional contributors, both marked in orange on the density map. Collectively, these two universities are affiliated with a notable number of journals—together contributing 66 articles to the dataset.

Other significant contributors include national research bodies such as the *Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies* and the *Academy of Persian Language and Literature*, each serving as institutional homes for journals that have consistently engaged with translation history research.

These findings demonstrate that while institutional journals—particularly those affiliated with major universities—play a central role in the publication landscape, a substantial portion of translation history research is also disseminated through privately run journals, indicating a diverse and decentralized publication ecology.

Figure 2
Density Visualization of Journal Affiliations

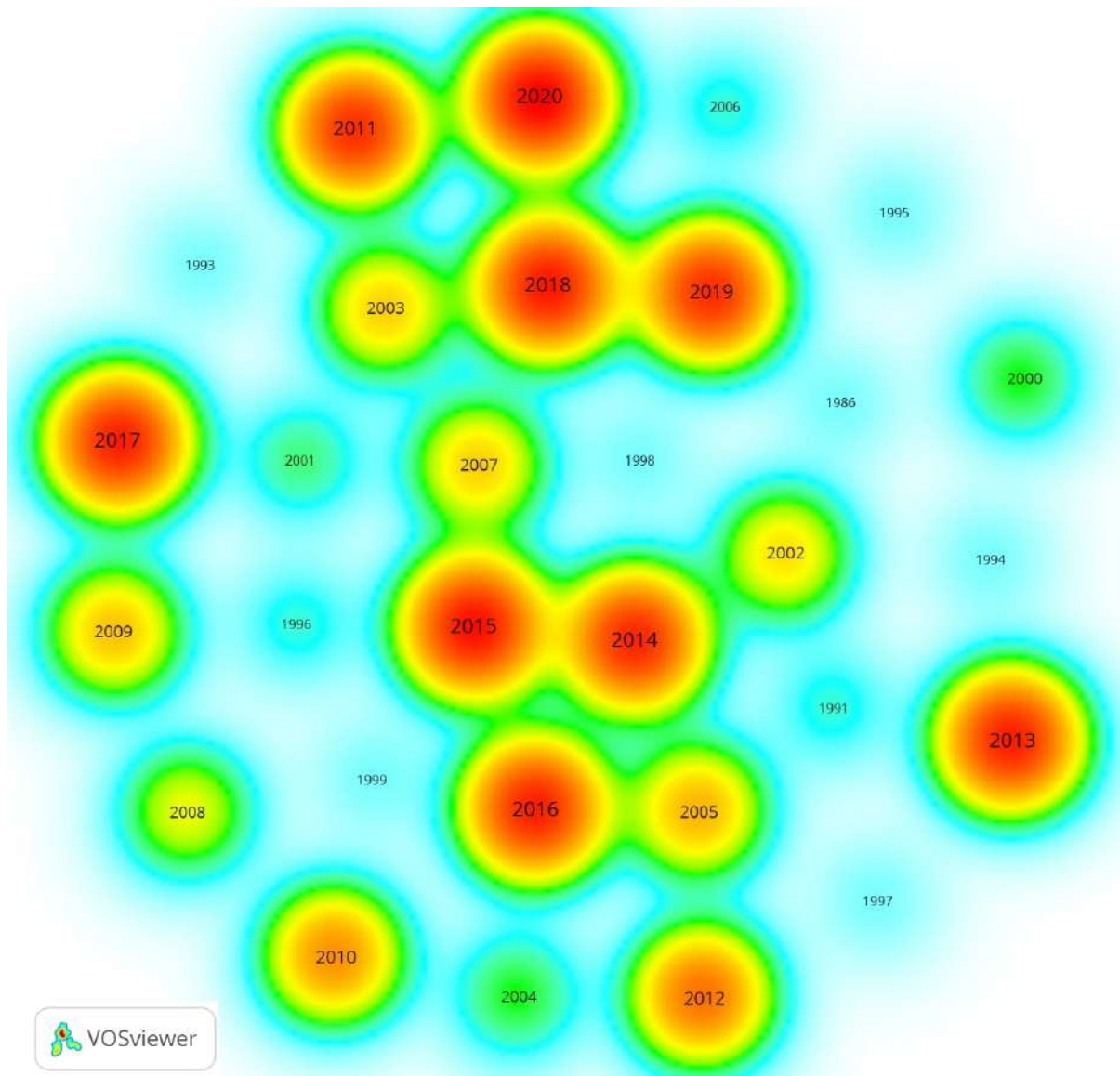


Publication Dates

This section addresses the research question: “What are the publication dates of the articles on the history of translation in Iran?” The temporal distribution of the 370 articles was analyzed across a 50-year span (1971–2021) to identify trends in publication activity. The publication dates were processed in VOSviewer, and the resulting density visualization is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Density Visualization of Publication Dates



The visualization reveals a steady increase in publication frequency over time, with significant clustering observed in the years 2011 to 2020. The years 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013, and 2011 are highlighted in red, indicating peak activity in the field during this period.

This upward trend can be attributed to interrelated factors. First, the overall expansion of scientific publishing over recent decades has led to increased scholarly output across disciplines, and the field of translation history has naturally followed this general pattern of growth. Second, the rising recognition of translation history as a distinct and valuable area of inquiry has contributed to its growing prominence within the academic landscape.

These findings reflect the maturation of translation studies in Iran and suggest a developing awareness of translation history as a legitimate and increasingly important research domain.

Publication Place

This section addresses the question: “What are the places of publication for the journals that published the articles?” In this context, ‘place of publication’ refers to the Iranian city where the journal that published the article is based. The objective of this analysis is to explore the geographical distribution of scholarly output on the history of translation in Iran. The data were input into VOSviewer to produce a density visualization, presented in Figure 4.

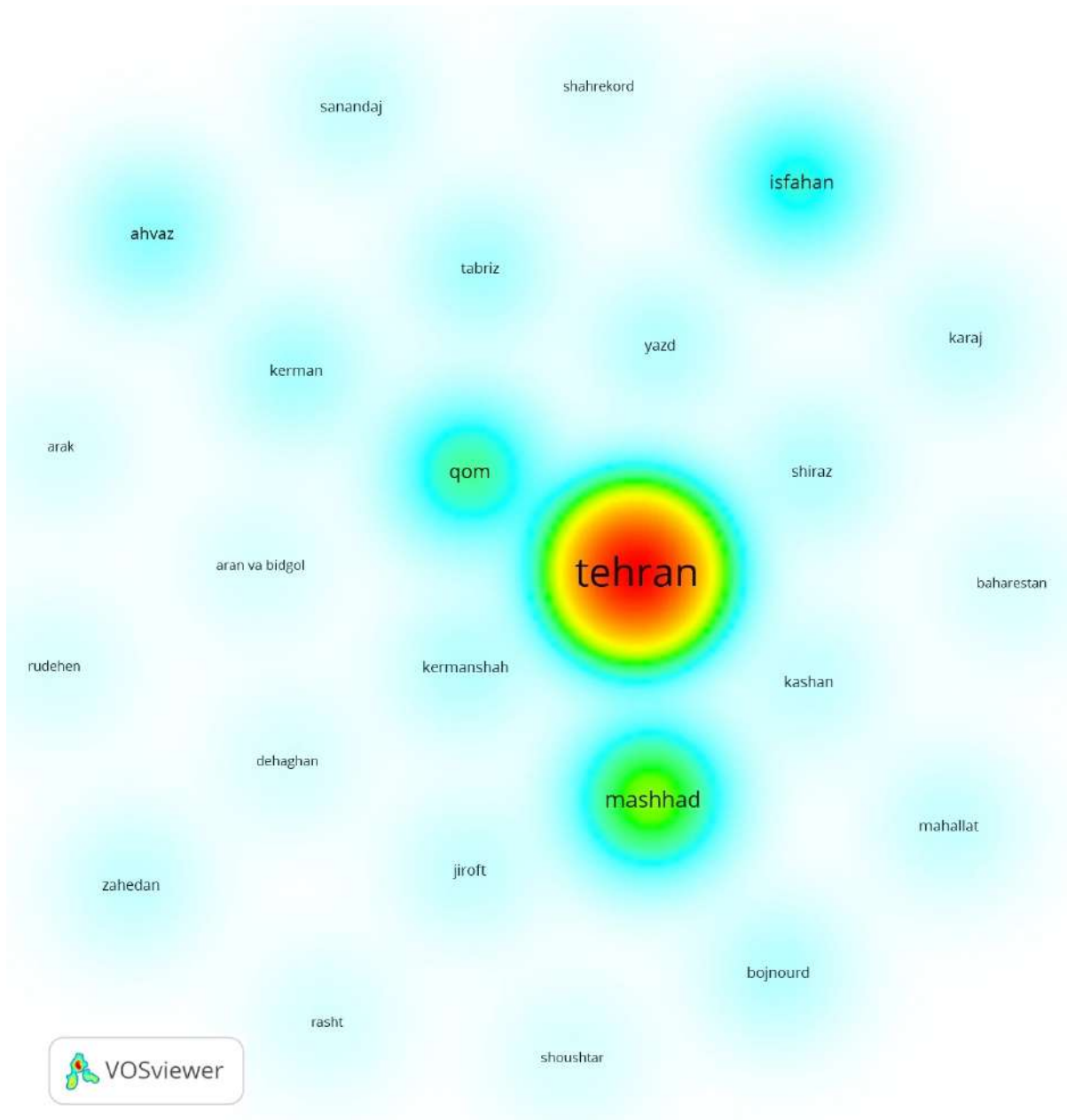
As illustrated in Figure 4, Tehran emerges as the central hub for publications on translation history, marked in red on the density map. This dominance is not unexpected, given Tehran’s dual role as both the political and scientific capital of Iran. The city hosts a concentration of major academic institutions, research centers, and professional publishers. Of particular significance is Allameh Tabataba’i University, a leading center for Translation Studies, which contributes heavily to the scholarly output in this field.

Following Tehran, the city of Mashhad ranks second in terms of publication volume. This position is largely attributable to Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, widely recognized as another highly prominent academic institution for Translation Studies in Iran. Both Tehran and Mashhad are also home to the two most influential journals in the field—*Iranian Journal of Translation Studies* and *Journal of Language and Translation Studies*—which further reinforces their prominence.

Qom ranks third in publication frequency. This is primarily due to the presence of specialized institutions such as Baqir al-Olum University and the University of Quran and Hadith. These universities, focused on Islamic Studies, are responsible for journals like *Hadith Sciences* and *The Journal of History of Islam*, which often publish research on religious translation and the historical development of Quranic translation practices.

Figure 4

Density Visualization of Publication Place



Additionally, both Mashhad and Qom host prominent Islamic scientific centers, which have long-standing interests in the translation of religious and classical texts. This

thematic focus significantly contributes to the cities' roles in the production of scholarly knowledge on translation history in Iran.

Historical Periods

To address the question, "Which historical periods are most frequently examined in the articles on the history of translation in Iran?", a systematic categorization of the temporal focus of each article was carried out. Of the 370 articles analyzed, 276 provided a clearly identifiable historical period, while 94 either addressed multiple periods too broadly to be categorized or lacked specific temporal references altogether. This absence can be attributed to articles that either spanned extensive historical timelines or adopted comparative frameworks across several epochs, thus resisting confinement to a single defined period.

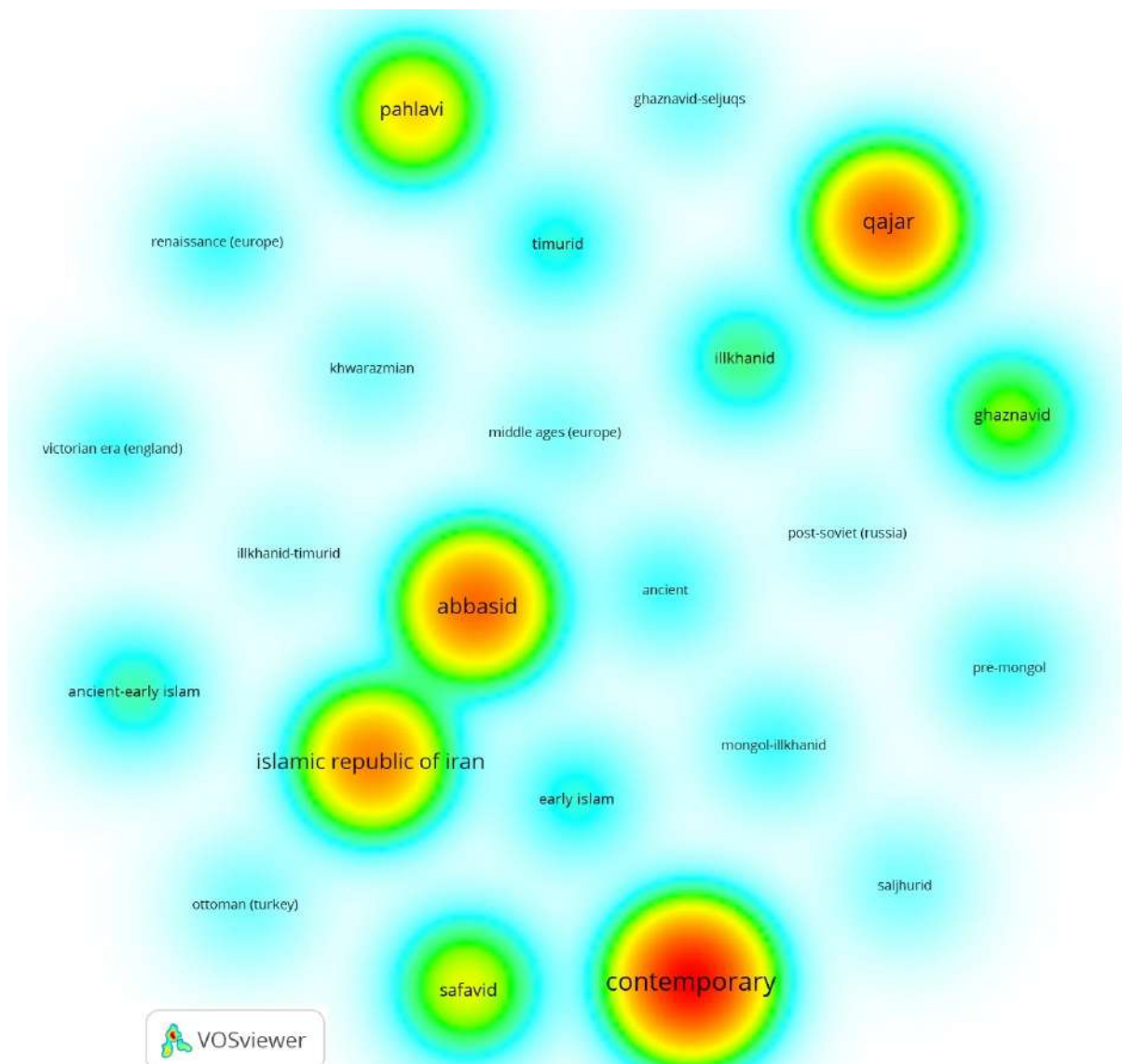
In this phase, historical periods explicitly stated in the articles were first extracted and recorded. Subsequently, similar or overlapping periods were grouped into broader categories where appropriate, resulting in a classification of 25 distinct historical periods. In cases where articles simultaneously addressed the Qajar, Pahlavi, and Islamic Republic of Iran periods, the label "Contemporary" was applied. This designation refers to the period beginning in the 18th century and was adopted to capture instances where these three consecutive periods were analyzed together without clear separation. Additionally, some articles frequently engaged in comparative analyses or explored more than one historical period simultaneously. To account for this pattern, three broader categorizations – "Early Islam", "Ancient" and "Pre-Mongol" – were employed to represent the general historical scope covered in such articles. Furthermore, four historical period labels namely "Post-Soviet", "Renaissance", "Victorian Era", and "Middle Ages" appeared in articles that investigated Europe as the target society of translation activities. These designations were maintained as they were explicitly mentioned in the respective publications.

The 25 categorized historical periods were entered into VOSviewer to generate a density visualization, as shown in Figure 5. This visualization represents the frequency and occurrence of historical periods in the dataset. The denser clusters marked in red and orange correspond to periods that appeared most frequently in the corpus. These include Contemporary, Abbasid, Qajar, Islamic Republic of Iran, and Pahlavi. The

prominence of the Abbasid period is attributable to the renowned translation movement of that era, which has attracted sustained academic attention. The frequent appearance of the Qajar, Pahlavi, and Islamic Republic periods likely reflects both the greater availability of primary and secondary sources for modern history and the continuity of translation movement in post-18th-century Iran. Furthermore, the establishment of new connections between Iran and Europe during these periods may explain the growing scholarly interest in translation as a socio-cultural practice.

Figure 5

Density Visualization of Historical Periods

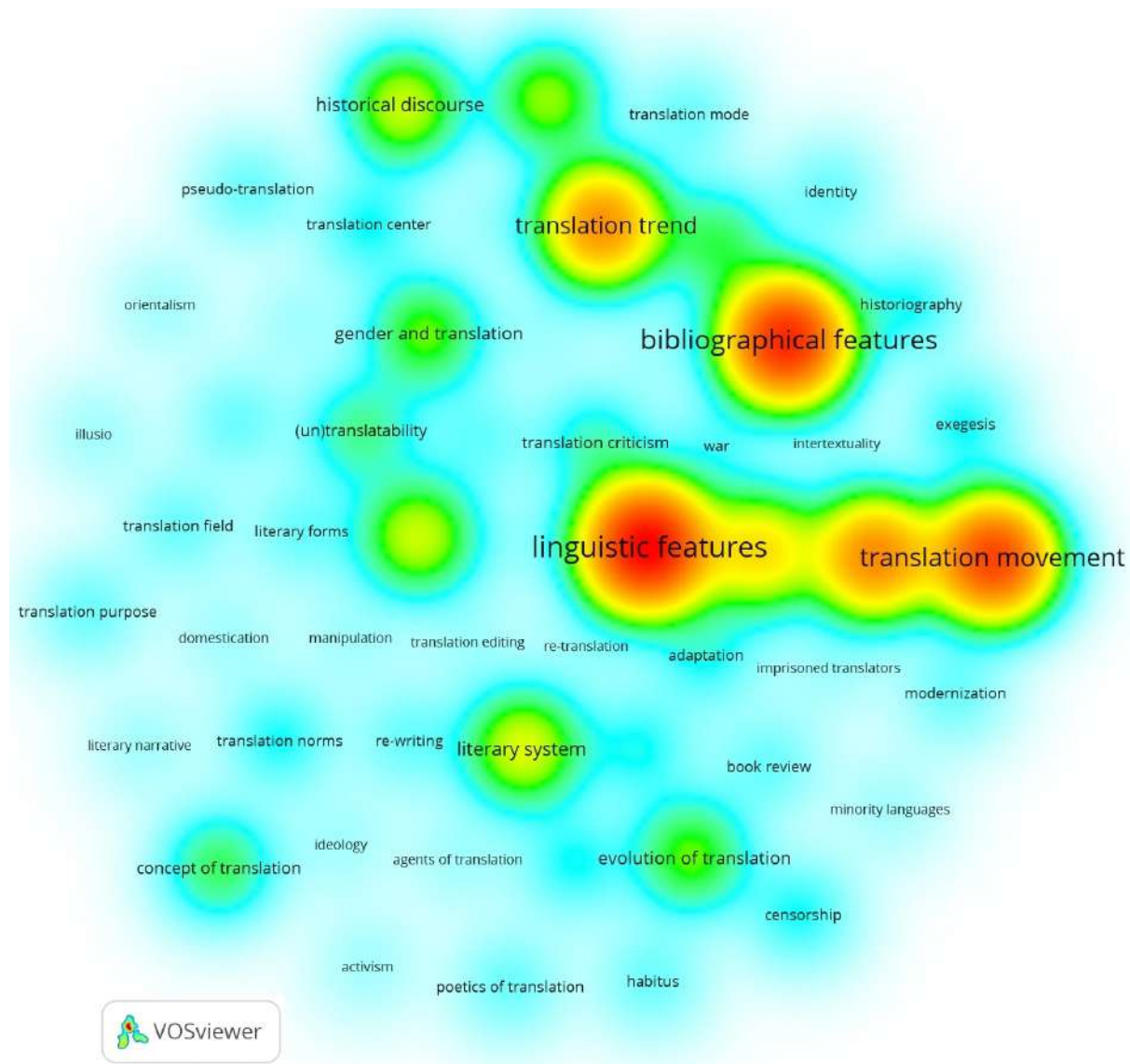


Themes

This section addresses the sixth research question: “Which themes are most frequently explored in the articles?” The thematic analysis focused on identifying the

central topics addressed by each article. Every article was assigned a single dominant theme based on its primary focus. Through close examination, 56 distinct themes were identified, reflecting a broad spectrum of scholarly interests within the field of translation history in Iran. These themes were subsequently analyzed using VOSviewer, and the resulting density visualization is presented in Figure 6.

Figure 6
Density Visualization of Themes



The density map highlights three dominant thematic clusters in red: “linguistic features”, “bibliographical features”, and “translation movement”, indicating their prominence across the corpus.

The high frequency of the “linguistic features” theme suggests that a substantial portion of research in this area has adopted a linguistic lens, analyzing syntactic, lexical, or stylistic elements in translated texts. This trend may be attributed to the influence of linguistics-oriented disciplines—such as Persian language studies and general linguistics—on the study of translation history in Iran. Additionally, it reflects the long-standing scholarly tradition in Iran of treating translation as a linguistic act, even within historical investigations.

The second most frequent theme, “bibliographical features”, points to a focus on the bibliographical aspects of translations, including publication details and translator biographies. The prominence of this theme may reflect the relative underdevelopment of historiographical methodologies in Iranian translation studies. As such, many articles appear to approach historical topics through descriptive accounts of translated works rather than through theoretically grounded historical frameworks.

The third major theme, “translation movement”, captures scholarly interest in the two pivotal translation movements in Iranian history: one occurring during the early Islamic period and the other in modern times. These movements are regarded as milestones in Iran’s intellectual and cultural development, and their historical significance has prompted considerable academic attention.

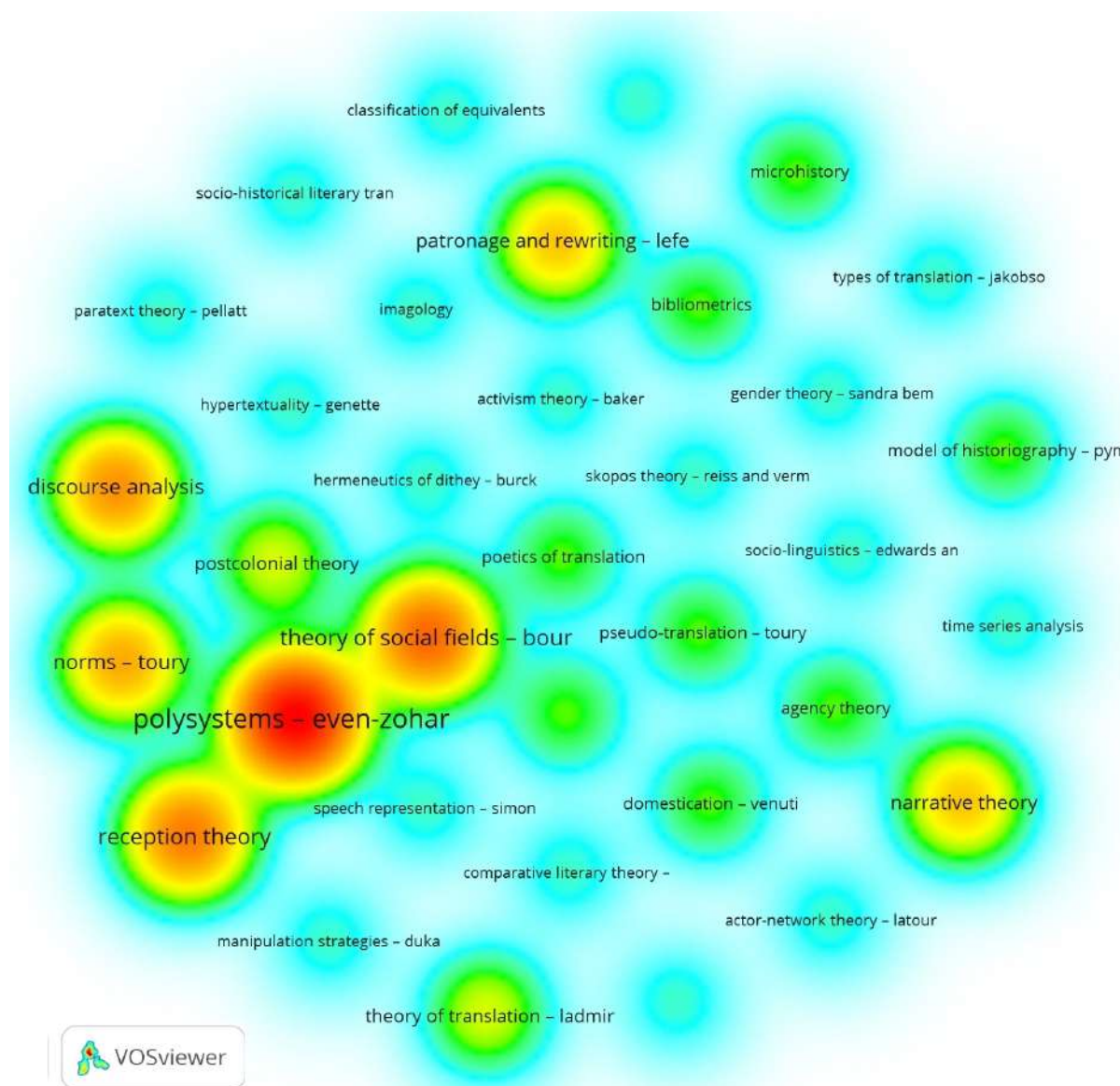
Overall, the thematic distribution reveals that while linguistics remains a dominant lens, there is also growing interest in broader historical and bibliographical dimensions. However, the findings suggest that more theoretically oriented historiographical approaches have yet to become mainstream within the Iranian context of translation history research.

Theoretical Frameworks

This section addresses the research question: “Which theoretical frameworks are most frequently employed in the articles?” Of the 370 articles included in this analysis, 280 did not adopt any identifiable theoretical framework. This observation indicates that a substantial proportion of the literature on translation history in Iran may lack an explicit methodological or theoretical orientation. Among the remaining 90 articles, which employed one or more theoretical frameworks, most were authored by scholars specializing in translation studies. The majority of these studies applied a single

framework, while only a few incorporated two. In total, 35 distinct theoretical frameworks were identified across these 90 articles. These frameworks were imported into VOSviewer to visualize the relative frequency and centrality of each in the literature. The resulting density visualization is presented in Figure 7.

Figure 7
Density Visualization of Theoretical Frameworks



As illustrated in Figure 7, Polysystem Theory, developed by Even-Zohar, appears as the most frequently employed framework, highlighted in red. Its prominence is likely due to its suitability for the historical study of translated literature within broader literary and cultural systems. Other frequently used frameworks include Bourdieu's Theory of Social Fields, Reception Theory, Discourse Analysis, and Toury's Theory of Norms, all of which are highlighted in orange. The recurrence of these frameworks

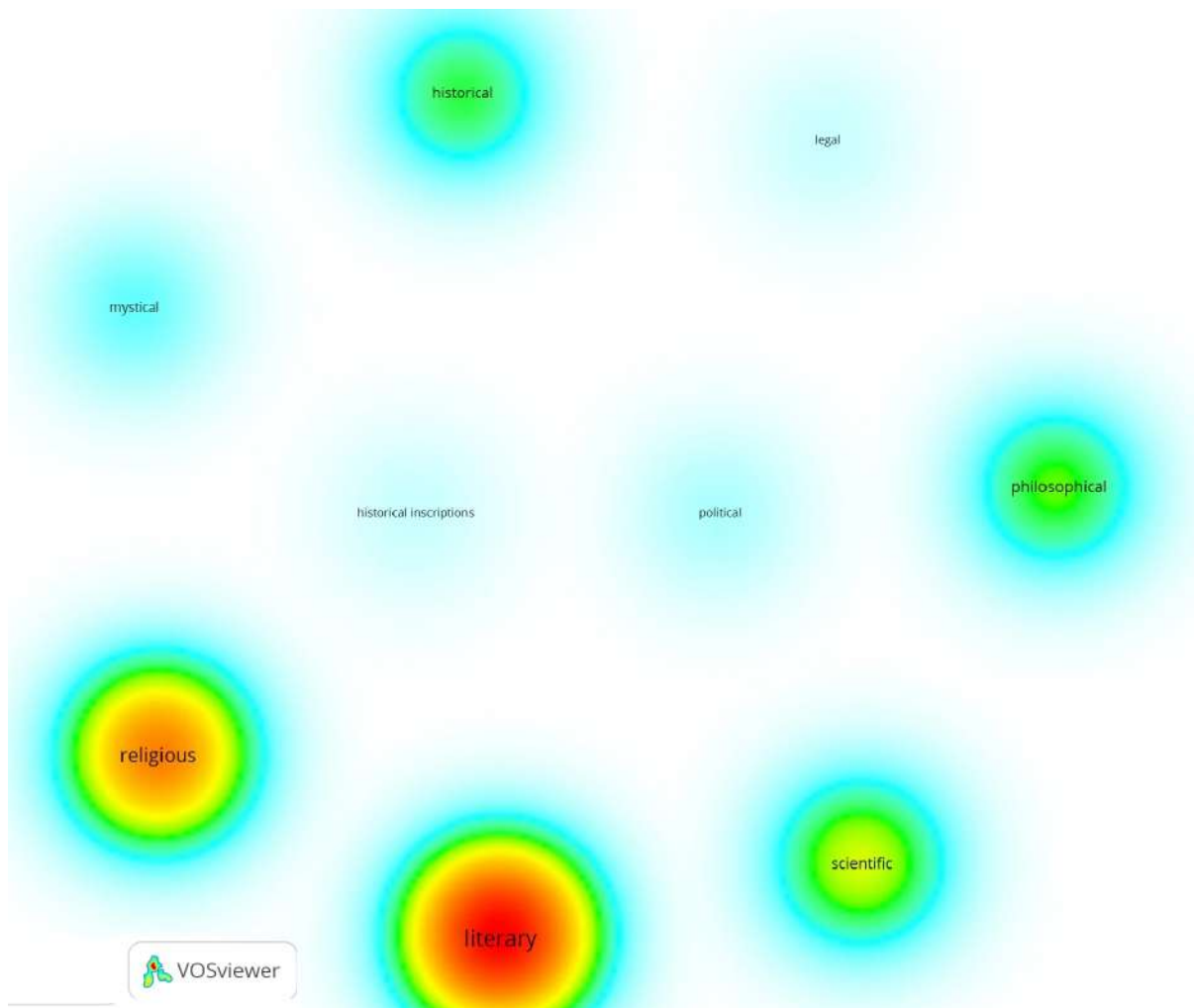
indicates a growing alignment with sociocultural and descriptive approaches in the study of translation history in Iran.

Text Genres

To address the research question, “Which textual genres are investigated in articles on the history of translation in Iran?”, all 370 articles were reviewed. Of these, 103 articles did not specify any particular textual genre, either due to their theoretical orientation or their broad historical focus. The remaining 267 articles included a clear focus on specific genres of source or target texts. These genres were manually extracted and systematically classified into nine distinct genre categories for analysis.

Figure 8

Density Visualization of Explored Genres



The genre classifications were then entered into VOSviewer to generate a density visualization, which is presented in Figure 8. As shown in the visualization, the most frequently examined genre is the literary genre, indicated by the densest red cluster.

This is followed by the religious genre, which also shows a significant degree of clustering. The predominance of literary texts in the data set reflects the enduring centrality of literature within Iranian cultural production and scholarly discourse. The long-standing prestige of literary translation, along with the increased accessibility of literary texts in recent decades, may account for this concentration.

The religious genre, likewise, features prominently in the corpus, a trend likely rooted in the pivotal role of Qur'anic translation in Iran's intellectual and religious traditions. As an Islamic country, Iran has produced extensive scholarship on the translation of sacred texts, particularly the Qur'an, which has contributed to the genre's visibility in historical translation studies.

The relatively lower frequency of other genres—such as scientific, philosophical, or legal texts—may reflect both the narrower scope of these domains and their limited accessibility to a wider research audience. These findings suggest that genre focus within historical translation research in Iran remains strongly anchored in literary and religious domains.

Conclusion

This scientometric study sought to map and analyze the evolution of research on the history of translation in Iran by examining 370 articles published between 1971 and 2021. Utilizing VOSviewer for data visualization, the study categorized the articles across eight key dimensions: journal titles, journal affiliations, publication chronology, publication geography, historical periods, thematic orientations, theoretical frameworks, and textual genres. The findings provide a structured overview of the intellectual output in this area and offer valuable insights into the knowledge production patterns that have shaped the field over the past five decades.

The data reveal a consistent upward trend in the volume of publications, particularly after 2010, which reflects both the general expansion of academic publishing in Iran and the increasing institutionalization of translation studies as a formal discipline. During this period, more articles were published as translation history gained greater attention and became more established as a serious area of study. This growth has been further supported by specialized journals that have provided targeted platforms for disseminating historical translation scholarship.

From an institutional perspective, the majority of articles were affiliated with a limited number of universities, with the University of Tehran and Ferdowsi University of Mashhad emerging as the most prolific centers. Journals managed privately or by academic institutions in Tehran and Mashhad accounted for the bulk of publications, pointing to a centralization of scholarly output. This spatial concentration is further evidenced by the publication place analysis, which identified Tehran, Mashhad, and Qom as dominant cities—each hosting major academic or religious institutions that support translation research.

The thematic analysis uncovered 56 recurring topics, with “linguistic features”, “bibliographical features”, and “translation movements” appearing most frequently. These findings suggest a prevailing focus on text-based and bibliographic approaches, potentially reflecting the disciplinary origins of many contributors from literature, linguistics, or Islamic studies. Although only 90 articles engaged with theoretical frameworks, those that did showed a preference for paradigms well-suited to historical analysis—most notably polysystem theory, discourse analysis, and the theory of norms—indicating the gradual integration of translation theory into historical research.

In sum, this scientometric assessment demonstrates that the study of translation history in Iran has progressed considerably, though it remains unevenly developed in terms of theoretical engagement and institutional diversity. The concentration of scholarly activity in a few academic hubs underscores the need for broader national participation and inter-institutional collaboration. Future research may benefit from methodological diversification, deeper theoretical anchoring, and more balanced geographic distribution—steps that will contribute to the maturity and international relevance of translation history research in Iran.

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