

Ethical dilemmas in T & I practice
First hand experience of interpreting in a situation
where human rights/lives could be compromised

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I was serving my two years duty during the Iran-Iraq war in the Iranian Army and I had been on the front line since the beginning of my service and precisely at the time that the two countries agreed to a ceasefire at the end of the eight-year war. The United Nations had sent peace observers to both countries and the observers had the mandate of maintaining the ceasefire until the two countries made arrangements to send their delegates overseas for negotiations. During the three days immediately after the acceptance of the ceasefire, there was still a chance that hostilities could reignite and that battles could take place in the long border between the two countries.

During those three crucial days, there were no individuals on the ground who could serve as interpreters for the Iranian Army and the international peace observers; therefore I volunteered to perform that role. I spent those decisive days liaising between Iranian Army officials and various peace keeping forces and this liaison resulted in saving the lives of thousands of Iranian troops and preventing them from falling hostage to the other side. I have always been astounded at the way this facilitation of communication resulted in such miraculous outcomes; and wondered what could happen if there was no one to perform that role.



Born in 1960, **Sharafoddin Dean SHARAFI** started translating from English to Persian when he was 16 years old. By 17, he had published translated articles in “Daneshmand” (“Scientist”); a prestigious monthly magazine in Iran. At the time, there was no established association for translators and interpreters in the country and he translated for more than two decades as a hobby, the result of which has been many published translated books and articles from English to Persian in literature, politics and science. It was after he migrated to Australia (in 1997) and only in 2008 that he was formally registered with NAATI as a Professional Translator, this time from Persian to English. Dean gained his accreditation as a Professional Translator from Dari to English in 2010.

Dean's formal education has been in the field of Physics, Electrical Engineering and Business Management. He has numerous published papers in Electrical Engineering and currently manages an engineering team in the electrical industry in Western Australia.