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## Anglo-American Teen Literature in Translation

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### ABSTRACT

Examples of popular Anglo-American teen literature are translated into many languages, reaching millions of children from different cultures. From a translators' perspective, this is a complex endeavor, since translations of popular Anglo-American literature for teens necessitates unique approaches and knowledge about readership, markets, intertextual, and intercultural mediation across languages, which translators have to take into account in the translation process. This article provides an example of this endeavor, with emphasis on the use of paratexts, the existence of intermedial rewriting, intertextuality, style, and culture, through a multidimensional study of the translations of Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson* series into Turkish.


### KEYWORDS

Anglo-American literature; children's literature; Percy Jackson pentalogy; popular fiction; teen literature

## Introduction

Mdallel (298–99) underlines that thanks to translation, the children's bookshelf comprises panoply of books from various cultural horizons. According to research, regulatory institutions and official instances are said to be fewer in translations of children's literature, making these translations a major segment in many countries (Heilbron 432). A comprehensive example of this wide dissemination is provided in the catalogue by Hallford and Zaghini about children's books in translation.

Followed by the boom in translated children's books and the rise in the quality of translations, children's literature, which is a relatively new area of study within translation studies,<sup>1</sup> has witnessed a significant growth in scholarly interest (Van Collie and Verschueren vi). Seminal work by Zohar Shavit, Riitta Oittinen ("No Innocent Act"; *Translating for Children*), volumes by Lathey (*The Translation of Children's Literature*; "The Translation of Literature for Children"; *The Role of Translators in Children's Literature*) and others also attest to this fact. This vast field of study entails different types and genres of literature.

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Color versions of one or more of the figures in the article can be found online at [www.tandfonline.com/rcil](http://www.tandfonline.com/rcil).

<sup>1</sup>See the following for a discussion of the rise of studies in translations of children's literature: O'Connell, E. "Translating for Children." In *The Translation of Children's Literature: A Reader*, edited by G. Lathey Toronto: Multilingual Matters, 2006, pp. 14–25. Print; Pinsent, P. (ed.). *No Child is an Island: The Case for Children's Literature in Translation*. UK: Pied Piper Publishing, 2006. Print).

Critics tend to define children's literature in different ways. Some define it in terms of the reader, rather than the authors' intention, or the texts themselves. In terms of readership capabilities children's literature could imply subcategories such as: books to be read to young children by adults, books for children who are learning to read, books for children who read themselves. From a multimodal perspective this category could include, books with illustrations to supplement the message; comics or picture books in which the message is provided simultaneously with pictures. From a pedagogical perspective books read for pleasure or high literature supported by institutions such as schools and libraries (the classics of children's literature) could be cited. There could be other categorizations and a single book would, in many cases, fall into several overlapping categories.

Literature for teens is usually included under the umbrella term "children's literature." Examples of world famous teen literature such as *Harry Potter*, *Percy Jackson*, and *The Hunger Games* series are primarily studied under this umbrella term. On the other hand, translations of different manifestations of literature for children may necessitate different approaches and perspectives. When dealing with any translation task translators need a specific outline of the realities regarding readership, markets, trends, examples from successful translations, information as to where to look for pointers, and what to use to guide the translation process. Thus, when dealing with the translation of teen literature or adolescent fiction these facts need to be researched thoroughly.

Literary critics today also argue that the genre of adolescent fiction is crossing the borderline between traditional concepts of children's and adult literature not only on the level of content and also at the level of style (Joosen 63); and this, along with the translators need for more reader oriented guidance, merits further discussion of how teen literature should be handled as a subcategory of children's literature in translation.

The following article entails a study of the translations of Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson* novels, examples of Anglo-American teen literature, into Turkish. The intention of the study is to underline that, the genre of adolescent literature may require specific approaches and knowledge about readership, markets, intertextual and intercultural mediation across languages, which translators have to be aware of in their translation process. In order to explain this idea, the current trends and realities in contemporary literature for teen need to be examined.

### **Contemporary literature for children and teens**

Previous researchers like Ingles (101) have pointed out that children's novelists have developed a set of conventions for their worlds and these are based on and are a natural extension of the elaborate and implicit

system of rules, which characterize the way any adult tells stories or simply talks at length to children. In this sense, contemporary teen literature is still governed by certain conventions; but, it may be argued that the way in which the adults are “telling a child a story” today is very different. For example, Ghesquiere (24), in exploring the subjects of children’s books points out that in the second half of the twentieth century, subjects that for a long time seemed only appropriate for mature audiences suddenly became suited to the young readers.

These changes can be attributed to the fact that childhood and adulthood are disappearing as separate issues, the difference between them growing more ambiguous and more indistinct with the influence of school and education (Postman). Today, young adult or adolescent novels can be seen as providing youth with what Asher refers to as words to explain themselves, words that can be used to create their own lives, to recognize their options and make their choices: “To separate as individuals and to reconnect as members of the human race” (82).

Today’s teen literature seems to challenge notions of fixity, absolutes; the texts themselves also challenge classifications of childhood and adulthood. The often-used binary logic of defining childhood in opposition to adulthood leaves adolescence and its designated literature in a different position than it was several decades ago. Teen fiction, in the way it is written, distributed, translated, and acknowledged today, seems to undercut fixed categories embraced thus far.

The task of the translator is not the neat classification of these novels. But, on the other hand, simplistic labelling such as children’s literature is ultimately reductionist in terms of the translation realities and choices facing the contemporary translator of teen literature. Teen fiction in translation may defy such easy categorization and the translation process may require more circumscription and definition of realities.

Although parents generally encourage children to read to what they like, popular fiction for teens is not something that is especially endorsed by schools or parents. Through the Internet, advertisements in bookstores, Facebook and all the multimedia at his disposal, the teen hears of this new “in” writer/character/novel and wants to read it. In the fast pace of the globalized new world of multiple information systems at the disposal of most of the middle and upper middle classes of a great number of nations around the world, children are fast becoming members of a communication culture, be it through online games on the Internet, access to TV channels airing foreign movies for children, the influence of Disney, advertisements, shopping malls abounding in toys stores and bookstores with ever growing children’s, teens sections, among others, which hitherto were unknown to their parents. Today’s youth have much more access, definitely many more choices, and more information in making these choices.

With this change, it becomes necessary for the translator translating for a teen audience, to situate the child as an active reader and thus the addressee. The translator has to grasp the extent of knowledge and experience that these readers actually have today, as opposed to what the adult translator, surrounded by different world realities, would have had in his time.

The question at this juncture from the translator's perspective would be: What do these multiple shifts in terms of subjects and language of the originals, shifts in audience expectations and realities, shifts in the way we are to view the teen reader, mean for the translation process? In order to provide answers to these questions the originals and the translations have to be studied comparatively. The following section entails a brief summary of the original Percy Jackson series, followed by a brief explanation of the study of their translations into Turkish.

### **Percy Jackson: The originals**

*Percy Jackson & the Olympians*, often shortened to *Percy Jackson*, is a pentology of fantasy-adventure novels based on Greek mythology, written by Rick Riordan.<sup>2</sup> Currently more than 45 million copies of the books have been sold in more than 35 countries. The series was on *The New York Times Best Seller list* for children's book series for 223 weeks.

Percy Jackson series, classified under literary epic fantasy, also known as heroic fantasy, high fantasy, or adventure fantasy, is a prominent example of one of the types of children's fiction. It has been inspired by traditional epics like *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* by Homer. The struggle is between the forces of good and evil and the dramatic battle scenes are staple (Russel 209). The six basic fantasy motifs are magic, other worlds, good versus evil, heroism, special character types, and fantastic objects (Tunnel et al. 123–25).

Fantasy fiction contains both "magic" and rules. The magic factor entails all that is supernatural and one must abandon all realistic concepts of how the world operates. However, this magic has certain rules; the authors in this case make the rules clear and stick to the rules (Russel 200–01).

Within popular children's books the borderlines between high and low and between innovative and imitation still remains unclear (Ghesquiere 29). Crabtree (61–62) refers to the rebirth of the classical hero in the high literature epic genre.

Lerer (306), in referring to characterization in contemporary literature for children, recognizes today's youth as being in the age of streetwise snarkiness, and in the twenty-first century child in books are no longer travelling seas and exploring continents, the recent children's literature

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<sup>2</sup>See <http://www.rickriordan.com/> for details of series and writer.

locates its boys and girls on the city streets, in apartments, riding in subways, and convertibles.

This genre of literature is widely translated and teens, in the case of Turkey (due to previous translations of examples from English, according to the translator Yiğit Kadir Us, who researched the issues), know the previously outlined “realities” of the genre very well.

### **Percy Jackson: The translations**

Yiğit Kadir Us, the Turkish translator of the series,<sup>3</sup> is an experienced translator of fantasy fiction. After a comparative analysis of the Percy Jackson series in Turkish and English, a telephone interview was conducted with the colleague in July of 2015.

Initially he pointed out, being asked to explain the conscious and unconscious, maybe even instinctive, choices he had made during the translation process would be difficult. In his own words, “theory and practice differ on so many accounts.” But, he was kind enough to verify some of the findings and comment on others, and also explain the reasoning behind the choices made during the translation process.

The comparative analysis yielded several important subjects of study in the translation of teen fiction. These were, the differences in the paratexts of the original and the translations; the differing strategies used in the cases where intertextuality in the form of Greek mythology appeared in the books; the reflection of the discursive style of youth as used by the original author; instances of explicitation, the use of more explicit and easily understood terms by the translator for cultural items referring to the American culture. Y. K. Us also answered questions regarding publishing house policies and how the fact that he knew of future intermedial translations of Percy Jackson into films, which would be shown in Turkey, colored his translation process. The findings of the comparative study and information provided by the translator are presented in the following sections.

#### ***Paratexts: Differing audiences- buyers***

The main text of published authors (the story, etc.) is often surrounded by other material supplied by editors, printers, and publishers, which is known as the paratext. Paratextual elements that define the book for the readership and also market the literature are of great importance and help to the translator. Today, everything from the back covers of books to the blurbs,

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<sup>3</sup>For Translations of Percy Jackson series into Turkish see official publishers website: <http://www.doganegmont.com.tr/kitap/percy-jackson-ve-olimposlular-simsek-hrsz>.

to the human size advertisements of new Anglo-American series in bookstores help define the book. This is very different from the world in which children of several decades ago bought books. In Turkey, for example, one or two decades ago, when children went with their parents to bookstores, parents or the bookseller would have to explain what type of a book *Oliver Twist* (Dickens) was and why the child or teen would like it. But today, the bookselling scene has changed drastically. For example, when *Percy Jackson* was marketed in Turkey, there were human-size stand-up advertisements in bookstores picturing the Olympian Gods, Percy himself, the book cover, and explanatory notes regarding the storyline. The teen readers knew exactly what they were getting, and if they were intrigued by the product they could go online to investigate what this was.

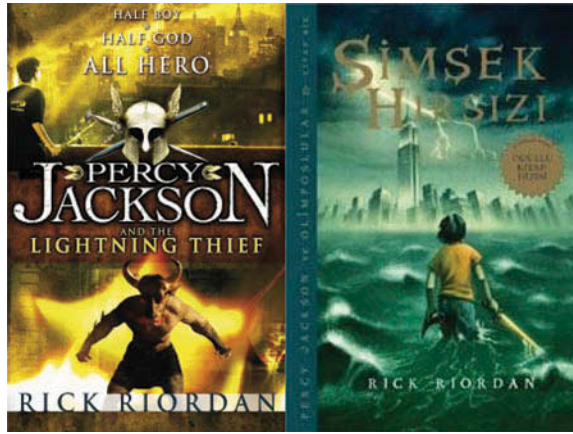
On the other hand, there are scholars who would argue that children are deemed to be the powerless recipients of what adults choose to write for them and de facto children's literature a subgenre of adult literature (Wilkie 131). In this vein, it must also be remembered that it is also the adults who buy the books for children and teens in many cases.

Pascua-Febles (111) refers to a variety of factors such as the parents who buy the books, the teachers who recommend them, publishers norms, and other systems that enter into the picture when translating for children. In referring to norms governing translations of children's books Desmidt (86–87) refers to not only general translational norms such as source-text related norms, literary aesthetic norms, and business norms, but also didactic norms (enhancing the emotional intellectual development of the child), pedagogical norms (adjustment according to the language skills and conceptual knowledge of the child), and last but not least technical norms such as paratexts, layouts, among others.

The paratexts used to market and explain Percy Jackson's translations into Turkish were designed/chosen by the publishing house to relate, what they believed, the buying public—parents and bookshops—wanted to see in Turkish versions.

K. Y. Us explained that the paratexts for the translations were chosen by the Turkish publishing house and he was informed of the process, but was not in any way involved as a decision maker. After an explanation of the findings of the study, he commented that the picture presented in the study fit in with how the publishing house and editors (as far as they had explained the process to the translator) wanted to market the books.

The covers of the Turkish versions are a version of the original covers. Later, in the English versions, there are examples of multicolor covers, with flashes of pink, yellow, red splashed across the cover and pictures from scenes from the film instead of illustrations. The Turkish versions were not initially marketed with these flashy covers. The Turkish versions are subdued and sombre in comparison to the more recent original covers (see Figures 1 and 2: covers of *Percy Jackson*).



**Figure 1.** Comparison of covers in English and Turkish.



**Figure 2.** Labeling of series on bindings and front covers in the Turkish versions.

Secondly, all the books were marked as being a part of a series in Turkey. Each book was labeled as book 1, book 2, and so forth, respectively.

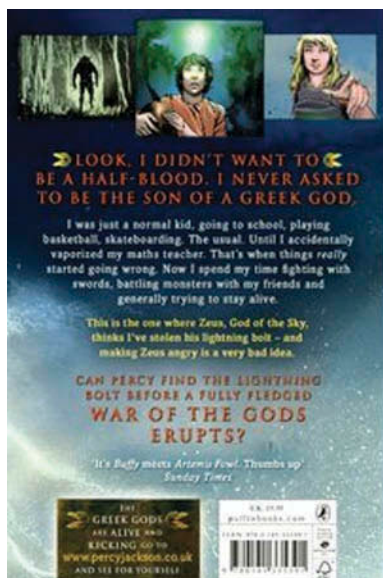
The publishing house was attempting to address both the teen reader and the parents who would buy the books when making choices regarding book covers and bindings. The multi-colored book covers associated with the comic book or light fiction in Turkey were not used as these would not appeal to parents. The color coding used was specifically selected to appeal to young male teens; sombre coloring with no “female connotations” of pinks, among others. The books were marked as being part of a series to encourage the buyer to purchase the whole series.

There are four separate texts of various different fonts and writing styles on the back cover of the originals. Initially there is a statement from Percy about the



predicament he is in (Book 1: *“Look I didn’t want to be a half-blood. I never asked to be the son of a Greek God.”*). Secondly, the protagonist Percy Jackson is addressing the reader in the first person and explaining the storyline of the book in his “youthful” discourse (Book 1: *“I was just a normal kid, going to school, playing basketball, skateboarding. The usual. Until I accidentally vaporized my maths teacher. . .”*). There is also a question posed by a fictitious narrator (Book 1: *“Can Percy find the lightning bolt before a fully-fledged war of the Gods erupts?”*). The pictures on the front cover are also reflected in the back cover (see [Figure 3](#): original back cover of *The Lightning Thief*).

In the Turkish versions, the writing on the back cover is written in a single font and color. The information given on the back cover consists of a summary of the series by a third person narrator asking questions that would allow the Turkish teen reader to identify with the character (Book 1: *“What would you do if someone told you one day that the Greek gods lived? Or if you learned that someone from your family was one of them? And realised you had extraordinary powers? . . . The New York Times number one bestseller Percy Jackson breaks sales records all over the world and receives many awards. And it is now in Turkish for the Turkish readers.”*[our translation]). This is followed by another third person narration about the storyline (Book 1: *And here is Percy Jackson. He is 12 years old, hyperactive, has problems reading and writing and he is always in trouble! . . .* [our translation]). At the bottom of the back cover there is a comprehensive list of all the awards the original won. There are no pictures or illustrations (see [Figure 4](#): back cover of Turkish version)



**Figure 3.** Original back cover: *The Lightning Thief*.



**Figure 4.** Back cover of Turkish version: *The Lightning Thief*.

The translator also concurs that in choosing the paratexts of the translations the Turkish publishing house walked a thin line in trying to address two different “buyers.” On the one hand, they were trying to appeal to adult buyers, convincing them that this was not just another American teen novel, but an example of world literature for teens through the use of sombre colours and muted covers, lists of awards won by the series, a third person narrative not reflective of the style in the book, and so forth. On the other hand, the publishing house was also trying to appeal to the teen reader who would be attracted to the cover illustration of a teenager, the questions posed by the third person narrator allowing readers to empathise with the character and so on.

In marketing this type of translated literature the Turkish publishers have to also consider the parents who buy the books. Sales managers and bookstores attest to the fact that adults pick out more books for their children than do the children and teens themselves in Turkey. The design of paratext by the publishing houses thus becomes necessary in appealing both to the teen who has probably heard of the book series and wants to read it and experience it, and the adults who ask booksellers questions such as is it interesting”; “is it just another light book for youngsters.”<sup>4</sup>

This is an interesting field of research, as many contemporary writers strive to attract and address the actual readers of the books (the children and teens), whereas in many countries parents still orient their children or are the actual buyers of the books. On the one hand, there are writers who

<sup>4</sup>The managers in charge of the children’s literature section at four major bookshops in Ankara, Turkey attested to the fact during informal interviews regarding the book buying public. These interviews were conducted as part of ongoing research for a forthcoming article on the use of paratexts in translations and buyer tendencies in Turkey.

are trying to address teens and their problems, as there seems to be a trend towards a better understanding in the young adolescent reader genre, since it now also deals with issues of topical relevancies for the adolescents life such as parental neglect, sexuality, and disability as standard fare for the problem novel (Cooley 26). However, in the case of Turkey, for example, adults also seem to be picking what children and teens read. Although an increasing number of writers seem to be capturing the imaginations of global youth in telling their stories set in the modern world and translators seem to be reflecting this in their translations, these are still presented to teens after they pass through the sieve of the adult buyer. This is a very relevant issue, especially in designing the paratexts to market teen literature in certain parts of the world.

### ***Intermedial rewriting: The book, the film, and the game***

One other issue of topical relevance when it comes to contemporary teen literature and its translation is that, very frequently there is intermedial rewriting. A story initially marketed as a book, if successful, is shot as a film and even made into a game. Desmidt (92) argues that children of the twenty-first century have a much broader view of translation and that they are familiar with intermedial rewriting. Examples of this are very familiar to them, even more so in some cases than traditional interlingual rewriting.

Teens are well aware that, once they have read the books, some of their favourite characters may also appear on screen. There are widely distributed examples of this such as various manga and anime, Marvel comics' films, Harry Potter series, and Percy Jackson series, and so on.

Two books from the Percy Jackson series have already been filmed: *Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Lightning Thief* and *Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Sea of Monsters* by 20th Century Fox. The films were released in 2010 and 2013, respectively, and have been shown in movie theaters, both in dubbed and subtitled versions in Turkey.

In another example of intermedial rewriting, a video game was marketed by Nintendo: *Percy Jackson & the Olympians*.<sup>5</sup> As a result, Percy Jackson found a place in the teen's world not only through the books and the films, but also the game.

Resch (as quoted in Thomson-Wolgemuth 9) argues that children learn and understand as long as they are motivated to do so and they should not be underestimated. Intermedial rewriting, being able to watch the characters they have read about and being able to play games is certainly good motivation for the teen reader.

<sup>5</sup>For details of the game see: [http://www.nintendo.com/whatsnew/detail/AyF8\\_d15Prh0yVDUiDdNir\\_uKrUOZmSN](http://www.nintendo.com/whatsnew/detail/AyF8_d15Prh0yVDUiDdNir_uKrUOZmSN).

For translation studies, the question would be, does the fact that when it comes to popular Anglo-American teen literature, there may be, and usually is, intermedial rewriting affect the translation process? In answer to this question, the translator Y. K. Us underlined several facts. The translator stated that the publishing house did not impose commercial concerns, but on the micro-linguistic level (i.e., translation of names for example) had the vision that these must be kept as close to the original as possible, thus making the intermedial rewritings more relevant in that the teen would hear the same name in the film and game. Secondly, he underlined that, he was asked to translate the first movie so he was able to continue to reflect his choices in this version as well.

Intermedial rewriting and translation which are becoming more and more frequent in children's and teen literature being made into films and games poses a further constraint for the translator. Adherence to the original becomes more central, as, if the translator chooses to change a character's discourse, name, image, and so forth, this would cause difficulties once the film is aired. Teens who have read the translation would know the character by the name used in the book, and if this name had been changed would react negatively if this change was not reflected in the dubbed version of the film. The subtitled version would pose even greater confusion as they would hear the original aural track with the character being referred to as one thing, and if this differed from what they were reading in the subtitles, there would be a discrepancy. Today, due to widely disseminated and read teen novels rewritten into film scripts and games, the translator of this genre of literature is facing a further constraint not inherently present for translators in previous decades. In devising the strategies on the micro-linguistic level, the translator has another set of concerns in our era of wide intermedial rewriting.

### ***Intertextuality: Greek myths and Turkish children***

Intertextuality, or in the case of the corpus of books studied the teen readers' previous knowledge of Greek mythology, is also a central concern for the translator in the translation process. The translator has to gauge the average Turkish teen readers' experience with Greek mythology and the knowledge the teen reader possesses to be able to align the translation with the target culture readers' capabilities. Some studies report that comparative analysis of source and target reveal a filtering consciousness when making linguistic choices such as aligning it with the models in the target culture (Shavit). In this vein, Puurtinen (83) also points out that the comprehension abilities, the reading abilities, and the experience of life and knowledge must be borne in mind when translating children's literature.

Bearing all these factors in mind, the translator has to make choices regarding either foreignizing the product (retaining as much of the foreign

aspect as possible) or domesticating it; or, deciding which features (references of the original) can be retained or what needs to be explained (changed, etc.). Today, more and more translators tend to opt for foreignization out of respect for the original and because they want the child reader to experience foreign cultures (Van Collie and Verschuereen viii). There are also scholars who do not belong to the domestication school of thought since it generally denaturalizes children's literature and makes it more pedagogical, as children should be able to tolerate the differences, the other and the foreign (Stolze 208–21). Metcalf (326), for example, refers to an experiment in which young translators opted for keeping the otherness of the foreign culture, thus allowing readers to experience differences and gain cultural knowledge.

Whatever strategy is chosen, it represents the adult translators' view of children and their capabilities and desires. In translating for children the translators "child image" (the image constructed by the translator in his mind as to who is going to read the translation) is very important, and thus the readers' will and abilities have to be taken into consideration. Translators need to attribute priority to the teen, as this is someone who actively participates in the reading. The teen is not the commissioner of the translation, but s/he is the addressee, rather the entity for whom it was commissioned.

Vermeer defines skopos and translational activity as: "Any form of translational action, including therefore translation itself, may be conceived as an action, as the name implies. Any action has an aim, a purpose... the word skopos then, is a technical term for the aim or purpose of a translation... The aim of any translational action, and the mode in which it is to be realised, are negotiated with the client who commissions the action" (173–74).

In negotiating this commission, so to speak, the translator has to use his knowledge of the original and balance what he is to present in the translation with the capabilities of the readership that is going to read the target text and, also, consider the other actors in between.

Centred on a mystical world of Greek gods and Western civilization, who the author states is the source of the gods, *Percy Jackson* books all contain both implicit and explicit references to myths and gods. Not only are the stories fashioned in the epic mythological genre, but the characters in the books are also from mythology. For example, in the first book the protagonist Percy Perseus Jackson is the son of Greek God Poseidon; his best friend Grover is a satyr; his teacher is the Chiron; his fellow campmates are the daughters and sons of Greek gods such as Hermes, Artemis, and Athens. He is living in a summer camp constructed in the antique Greek style; his studies include practicing archery and sword fighting reflective of the sports of the Greek Gods; and the side characters he meets in the real world include the Fates, his uncles Zeus and Hades, cousin Ares, and his fathers' ex-girlfriend Medusa, and so on. Although the story is set in the twenty-first century in

the United States, there is also a parallel universe of a contemporized version of Mount Olympus and all Greek myths.

Kristeva states that intertextuality is not simply a process of recognizing sources and influences, but much more; in that, any text is a mosaic of quotations, any text is the absorption and transformation of another. In this vein, Percy Jackson has “absorbed and transformed the world of Greek Gods and the stuff of legends into the 21st century USA (66). The writer uses explicit and implicit intertextual references and also a complex mixture of discourses to accentuate this.

American children (the addressees of the original) start learning mythology in the sixth grade, although there are various schools that do not advocate it. As underlined in the novel, there are references to mythology in their literature; there are also instances of architectural similarity between the structures the American teens see in their government buildings, and so on. Teens in the United States are much more “in the know” when it comes to mythology. In the case of Turkey, Greek mythology is not a must in the curriculum in middle or high school, although some schools may include it in other courses such as ethics, social studies, or history.

When asked how he handled the presence of the implicit multiple texts that governed the gap of intertextual understanding of the original in translation into Turkish where the teens would not have this intertextual accumulation, the translator Y.K. Us drew attention to previous examples of translations that had already provided the intellectual accumulation. He stated that examples, such as Disney’s *Hercules (Clements and Musker)*, translated and widely sold picture books about Greek mythology; multiple Internet sites for children explaining and exemplifying Greek mythology; games on the Internet about mythology; and other numerous products, had already allowed Turkish teens to acquaint themselves with mythology. He had researched these extensively. He had adhered strictly to the references of the original; and neither he nor the publishing house had received negative feedback from readers on this account. He explained that the original author also supplied certain explanations in the original and these were more than enough for the Turkish teens to bridge any existing knowledge gap.

The strategies he used for the translation of names in the books are clear examples of the results of this research. It is widely discussed that, in terms of literature for children, names in literary works are specific in that usually the author has an intention. Names can thus be vehicles of describing or revealing aspects (i.e., sex, age, personality, power, etc.) of a literary character. Names used as in the original highlight the cultural other, signalling to the reader that the text originated in another culture. In the case of the translations studied, names or rather anthroponym are either left in its original or small modifications in spelling such as transcription or diacritics are introduced, or they are translated with an acknowledged equivalent.

There are numerous studies on the translation of names in children's literature, and there are many approaches. For example, Van Collie in devising strategies for dealing with the translation of names in children's literature refers to several strategies such as non-translation-reproduction-copying, non-translation plus additional explanation, phonetic adaptation to the TL, replacement by a counterpart in the TL, replacement by a more widely known name from the source culture or internationally known name with the same function, replacement by another name from the TL, translation, and replacement by a name with another or additional connotation (Van Collie 123–25). In many of the instances, the proposed name in question needs to be either of referential or intertextual value to the text as a whole, or problematic (on the level of reading, negative connotations in the target language, etc.) to merit the use of domesticating strategies. In translating the names for the Turkish teen readers, Y.K. Us used several of these strategies.

Y.K. Us believed that, in general, the character names (the names of the Greek Gods) were familiar to the Turkish readers. He left these in the original versions in many cases: Examples from Book 1 include, *Zeus*, *Poseidon*, and *Hades*.

There were some cases where he knew the Turkish teen readers would have difficulty in reading the names correctly. For example, in Book 1, *Polydictes*, *Polydeuces*, which would be read phonetically as “poleydiytis, poleydewujes” in Turkish could be problematic. But, the translator still opted to leave these as in the originals due to the fact that Turkish teens were used to this in previous translations.

In cases where there were established transcribed equivalents from previous translations, such as (for example from Book 1) *Kheiron* for *Chiron*, *Apollon* for *Apollo*, *Minotor* for *Minotaur*, *satir* for *satyr*, *Olimpos Dağı* for *Mount Olympus*, *Jupiter* for *Jupiter*, *Venus* for *Venus*, *Dionisos* for *Dionysus*, *sentor* for *centaur*, and so on, he chose to use these versions. Although one cannot correctly assume that all the readers have read previous translations of works containing mythological characters, these versions would still be more widely known and accepted.

There were also cases where the character names expressed some sort of attribute for the character such as “Smelly Gabe,” who was Percy's stepfather who his mother married so his stench would make it more difficult for monsters to smell out Percy. Or, there is the example of Grover Underwood, Percy's best friend the satyr, who has to wear a wig to hide his horns; hence, the reference to his dreadlocks in his name. Y.K. Us opted to translate these with stylistic equivalents like “*kokarca Gabe*,” which translates into “*Gabe the Skunk*” and “*Kıvrıcık Çaldibi*,” which translates into “*Curly Bushpit*.” In doing so, he was able to tie in the names with the story, making these relevant for the teen readers. As the story unfolds, the fact that

Grover is a satyr and that Percy's mother married a terrible man for Percy's sake are explained in the originals.

In reference to the importance of cultural intertextuality in translating children's literature, Cascallana (96) states that a text should not be understood as a container of meaning, but an intertextual space in which elements are combined, absorbed, and transformed, and that this potentially vast array of cultural resonances assume that the reader is ultimately the one responsible for activating the meaning once the codes have been recognized. Y.K. Us underlined that due to wide dissemination of translations into Turkish and communication platforms for teens, the inherent references in this intertextuality would not be lost because of the translation strategies chosen.

In conclusion, in reference to translation of names with intertextual references that may be difficult for teen readers in a foreign culture, the translator's choices have to take into account several aspects before the most suitable translation strategy can be decided on. Primarily, the translator needs to research examples of similar intertextual reference in previous translations to gauge the readers level of knowledge. Secondly, the translator has to decide between transcription (which becomes the most preferred option due to intermedial rewriting of the source which may present examples of these instances to the consumer) or leaving the name in its original. The trend in contemporary Anglo-American teen literature translation for Turkish youth seems to be adhering to the source as much as possible in terms of transferring character names. In rare cases where character names are inherent to the storyline in the unfolding of the story, when something about the name gives clues as to the nature of the person to be told in further sections, it becomes essential for the translator to translate these with the correct reference and style in the target language.

E. O'Sullivan states that it is the implied author who is the agency that is to bridge the distance between adult and child, in our case the teen (199). What is essential is the adolescent readers identify the newly introduced elements. The translator, in turn, carries out the work as an informed individual in the know of the time and place of the culture in which the translation is to be received. The translator is further guided by the child image in mind and the implied reader based on his assumptions as to the interest and capabilities of readers at a certain stage in their development.

One feature that stands out in this part of the study is how the choices of the translator in translating literature for teens seems to hinge increasingly on what has been previously translated; thus, no translation is a closed entity, and in the case of intertextuality builds on the work of previous translators. Secondly, considerations regarding intermedial rewriting also figures heavily in translators choices in the modern age.



### **Style: Social markers and register markers in narrative and dialogue**

The Percy Jackson series is narrated by the teen Percy. Percy is the overt narrator as well as the protagonist in the narrative. R. Riordon's novels present examples of linguistic variation, the use of colloquialisms, and the diastratic aspect of the text (entailing the various social registers). There are also the different registers used by adolescents, their parents, and other adults.

Lesnik-Oberstein (26) refers to the domination of concentration on content and theme in children's books to the detriment of language, which tends to receive minimal explicit attention. On the other hand Pascua-Febles (113) refers to adolescent literature containing numerous linguistic challenges, such as the use of different registers, levels of formality, the linguistic variation on the speech of different characters, the presence of colloquialisms, and dialogue and the marked presence of spoken language in the text.

According to Garcia (as quoted in Pasqua-Febles 114), the translation of literary texts with a great deal of dialogue and distinct levels of formality reflecting different characters can be compared to the dubbing of audiovisual texts, and in the case of children's literature, these are read as if they were spoken, they may be "concocted," but are also realistic, believable, and natural.

In this vein, Y.K. Us, in his translations, found a voice for all the characters using a variety of different strategies for each individual case.

In the case of teens addressing adults or when there is a need to accentuate age difference, difference in social status or respect, Turkish provides the alternative of using the V (vous) form of polite address versus the familiar T (tu) form. The translator used this option in many cases to display a degree of formality in the dialogue:

- Ex 1: A teacher addressing a student: Use of T form to denote status difference. "Benden öğrendiklerin, " dedi, "hayati önemi olan şeyler. Böyleymiş gibi davranmanı istiyorum." (*Şimşek Hırsız*; Trans. of *The Lightning Thief* 7)
- Ex 2: A student addressing a teacher. Use of V form to denote respect. "Neden sırf ders vermek için Yancy Akademisi'ne geldiniz?" (*Şimşek Hırsız* 63)
- Ex 3: A shift in the discourse when the same student (Percy) learns that the teacher is a centaur and his mentor. Use of T form to denote familiarity as the 'teacher-centaur' is the only link the protagonist has to his former life and the mentor figure though not human. "Sen kimsin Kheiron?" (*Şimşek Hırsız* 70)
- Ex 4: A lesser being addressing a God. Use of V form to denote respect. In this case Chiron is addressing the Greek god Dionysus, "Bay D.",

diyerek sert bir sesle onu uyardı, “Kısıtlamaları hatırlayın.” (*Şimşek Hırsızı* 67)

There are various other examples in which the translator has made use of this strategy. Although he has not deleted the referring expression such as “sir, Mr., mam” of the original, he has also accentuated social status and formality and informality moving to the relevant form in Turkish to accentuate character relations and comparative age and status.

In the cases of the reflection of spoken teen language and especially the use of colloquialisms, Y. K. Us found equivalent versions of these in the Turkish teen discourse and also other translations of the same genre in Turkey.

Other examples are as follows: Y.K. Us found equivalents such as “*abicim*” (a transcription of the pronunciation of the word “*ağabeyim*” meaning older brother in Turkish used by male youth when talking to one another) for “man”; *herif* (slang used in a pejorative sense to denote “man”) for “guy”; “*hadi canım sen de*” (an informal and generally rude expression used by youth to imply that the addressee is not mentally sufficient) for “well duh!” Examples are provided in Table 1.

Y.K. Us, reflected the teen discourse in the originals with the teen discourse of Turkish youth, turning to examples from spoken discourse which he located by researching previous translations of the same phenomenon in literature and audiovisual products along with his knowledge of the discourse of Turkish teens.

### **American culture: Using more explicit equivalents in the translation**

The translation of cultural elements in fiction may at times hinge heavily on the power relations between the cultures, or rather whether the source or target culture literature is weaker or peripheral when compared with the source culture. The translations of literary works reflect the power relation between the source and the target culture. Instances of a weaker or peripheral culture being translated more for a stronger (hegemonic) culture are rare, but the opposite is in abundance. Arizpe (134);

**Table 1.** Use of slang and colloquialism in the translations.

Original	Turkish translation	Explanation
<i>Yeah.</i> You could say that (p. 1)	<i>Eh, öyle diyebilirsiniz</i> (p. 2)	<i>Yeah- eh</i> , use of teen discourse in both
...twenty eight <i>mental-case kids</i> ... (p. 2)	<i>kafadan kontak yirmi sekiz tane çocuk</i> (p. 2)	Use of slang in both cases
I wish I'd <i>decked</i> Nancy Bobfit (p. 3)	Oracıkta <i>yere yapıştırsaydım</i> diyorum (p. 4)	Use of colloquialism in both cases

underlines that there is a domination of foreign children's books markets by translations of Anglo-American children's books. There are instances of what Rudvin; labels as "translation of children's literature from a minor to a dominant culture" (199), but this occurrence is less widespread. It may be stated that any perfunctory perusal of a local bookstores teen literature section in many countries serves as conclusive evidence of this. Today teens are reading more and more from the globalized Anglo-American teen literature than probably ever before. Thus, they have become more familiar with American culture. On the other, the translator has to gauge the extent of their knowledge very well in ensuring that they can relate to or understand the translated book.

When asked about how he handled American culture features in translation Y.K. Us underlined that he used explicitation and domestication strategies for the translation of brand names and American culture. Finding natural and expressive ways to make the translated version credible and lifelike so the young reader can identify with the text and establish a necessary dialogue with it become a central concern for the process. He felt that the readers would not have problems associating with the fictional aspects of the books as Turkish teens were just as capable in filling in the referential vacuums should these arise in terms of the foreign elements related to the intertextuality at play. On the other hand, he also felt that an excessive presence of American culture would hinder the teen readers ability to associate with the character and setting. In his own words, "he soaped down" (used explicitation) when he felt the reference had no relevance for the story. Some examples of this are seen in Table 2.

There were also many instances where the references were meaningful for the Turkish teens due to availability of similar products or concepts; in translating these he retained the original. Some examples are: Cheetos, Pac-man, and Diet Coke.

Y.K. Us, in his translation in some cases, did not leave much to chance as he used in-text explanations regarding features he thought would be foreign to the Turkish teens due to cultural-educational differences. For example, his

**Table 2.** Translation of brand names.

Original	Translation	
<i>Enchilada</i> day in the cafeteria (p. 3)	Yemekhanede <i>börek</i> çıkınca (p. 3)	<i>Enchilada</i> is replaced with <i>börek</i> : minced pie or pastry in Turkish
Lunchables crackers (p. 8)	Kraker (p. 8)	Lunchables is not translated, only crackers have an equivalent, <i>kraker</i> .
Greyhound (p. 23)	Otobüs (p. 22)	Greyhound has <i>otobüs</i> , bus
Hot dogs and marshmallows (p. 38)	Sosisli sandviç ve şekerleme (p. 36)	Hot dogs are translated as <i>sandwiches with sausages</i> and marshmallows are translated as <i>sweets</i> .
Converse hi-top (p. 59)	Spor ayakkabısı (p. 57)	The brand Converse is labelled as <i>sports shoes</i>

explains dyslexia in the first instance it appears in the book with an addition to the original “*yani yazıları doğru dürüst okuyamıyordum*” (7) “I couldn’t read writing very well”; he explains friezes with an addition to the original “*yani duvar süsü*” (11) “decorative engravings for walls”; and he explains magic mushroom with explicitation such as “*uyuşturucu*” (13) “drugs.”

However, there were also instances where he chose to remain faithful to the original and he trusted that previous translations had taught Turkish teens the referred concepts. He also stated that he trusted that Turkish teens who are used to reading translations would be able to comprehend the relevant cultural feature in the context in which it appeared. For example, in retaining the originals references to D’s and F’s in the grading system in the United States (in the Turkish system children are graded numerically with 1 through 5, 5 being the highest score) or in transferring street names just as they appear in the original, he trusted his readers accumulation of knowledge regarding the source culture.

In short, the translator felt that there were some instances where he could support the teen readers with explicitation when the cultural feature was not central to the story, or explain in the translation to make the translated version more accessible. However, in his own words, he did not go to great lengths to neutralize the cultural presence of the original in his translation as he was aware that through wide dissemination of other translations from Anglo-American teen literature, the Turkish teens would know this culture quite well.

## Conclusion

According to Eysteinsson (23), the concept of world literature for children is ambiguous, since it does not only refer to the original, which the majority of readers around the world cannot read, but, on the other hand, it does not only refer to the translations as seen apart from the original. Either way, it has a crucial bearing on the borderline of the two and the very idea that the work merits the move across this linguistic and cultural border to reside in more than one language.

Teen novels by Anglo-American authors, marketed internationally and supplemented with intermedial rewritings such as films and games are prominent examples of this. These books that appeal to teenagers all over the world are different from older children’s literature examples in that are neither babysitter’s for older children nor are they actually full of pre-digested morality, but are books that allow readers to discover new realities in themselves and new realities about other cultures. Interestingly, these are mostly new epics by heroes set in the twenty-first century. It could be argued that these novels and other widely disseminated comics, films, and games

have formed a universal teen culture; the examples of which are omnipresent in a wide array of countries and languages even if the originals are in English.

In line with this, given the vast number of translations, the industrious English writers for children's literature, publishing house policies, the constraints of having to consider the fact that there might be intermedial translation of the text, among others, leads to the originals requiring less and less manipulation or appropriation to be a success in the target cultures. The omnipresence of American, Western, and overall English originals and the foreign elements that are retained, ignoring pragmatic and contextual considerations, leads to the transliteration or transfer of specific features.

As (Lathey) points out, adaptations of children's texts occur due to the assumption that children lack the knowledge and experience that adults have and that children have a limited capacity to assimilate the unfamiliar and the foreign. On the other hand, in recent decades, translators have demonstrated a greater faith in children's ability to accommodate differences. This is especially true for teens who as older children also have the ability to follow advertisements, use the Internet, chat with other cultures, follow what is "in" throughout the world.

Children, to a certain degree, and teens, especially, are fast consumers of knowledge when it comes to popular fiction and the things they like; hence the vast number of translations of teen literature and the sales of movies, commercial by-products, and so on. Authors, especially the Anglo-American writers, are aware that if they achieve success in their own countries their work will be translated. This global audience, the readers of popular teen literature, already know this "global teen culture headed by Anglo-American writers" much better than their adult translators. They live in these worlds, play in these worlds, wear t-shirts advertising these worlds, and have online chats with children across the globe regarding these worlds.

In these cases, the translator's primary aim is to stay close to the source author and allow the reader to enjoy the experience of a foreign text. There might be examples of where there are shifts to accommodate for the readers comprehension, but on the whole these types of translations are for the reader to make the most of cultural intertextuality.

It is interesting to note that translation helps to gain a deeper understanding of the adolescent and their culture. In translation studies, it is stressed that the skopos of a translation may be different from that of the original because the readers are different, they belong to different linguistic communities, and come from different cultures and they read in different ways. However, in this age of wide dissemination of translated teen literature, this "so-called gap" is not so large and translators have noticed. It is thanks to translation that children all over the world can enjoy the same pleasure in reading and appreciate similar ideals, aims, and hopes. There is of the need

for a better definition of “global teen culture” that the translator needs to be aware of when translating teen literature.

In view of this, translators may have to revise assumptions they make regarding teen readers. For example, Egging (as quoted in Thomson-Wolgemuth 31) outlines four different ways in which a culture can react to a translated text: The first of these occurs when the text in question and audience belong to the same time and culture; thus the reader can identify with the text (referred to as primary conculturality). The second occurs when expectations and aesthetic experience of the audience clash with the ideologies and aesthetic procedures of a text, alienation occurs. Hence, the book is rejected (referred to as disculturality). The third reaction happens in the case of differing ideologies between text and audience. The text is adapted to the audience’s expectations. This is common practice in literature (referred to as secondary conculturality). Or, finally a fourth option is that the audience perceives the text as aesthetic. However, due to historical or cultural distance, it no longer plays a role (this may result in secondary conculturality as previously explained).

Two trains of thought may be pursued in the case of teen literature translated into multiple languages: Is there an inherent common culture of Anglo-American teen literature across many languages and cultures? As there are only very rare instances of rejections of texts, is the teen reader more of a “universal child” than ever before? Is the common culture inherent in the texts established in the sense that the text is adapted to the target or is there a separate almost universal cultural context – the presence of teen readers with knowledge regarding Anglo-American teen fiction – within which this common culture is achieved long before the text itself is translated?

None of these questions can be answered conclusively in a single study, as only translations into a single language were studied, but this raises the question of what translation scholars should be studying regarding teen literature. Several topics of relevance such as research regarding reader capabilities and scope of knowledge, feedback on translations, research into teen literature paratexts and their effectiveness, research regarding multiple intermedial translations of popular Anglo-American teen literature, and many other avenues of research may be pursued.

Furthermore, researchers such as O’Connel (20) refer to lack of undergraduate or even graduate courses standardly offered allowing the student the chance to develop skills in translating children’s literature as either core or even optional courses. And, as far as is known to the researcher, there are no courses for translating teen literature, which is definitely a widely disseminated kind of literature in our day and age.

If more resources could be channelled into investigating the realities and challenges of the field, the results could be very interesting as translation of Anglo-American teen literature seems to be guided by its own set of rules devised

by the teen readers realities, capabilities, along with commercial endeavors such as intermedial rewriting, cooperation between domestic and international publishing houses, previous translations, and last but not least translators who are aware of the intricacies of translating for the specific profile of this age group.

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