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Research Article

The Bounds of Translatorial Perspective in the Turkish Translation of Rita Mae Brown's *Rubyfruit Jungle*

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ABSTRACT

Queer translation brings new possibilities for expanding the definitions of gender identities and sexual orientations in the contexts of language. By adding alternative meanings to sexual expressions outside the heterosexual matrix, this type of translation has the potential to deconstruct the given categories of gender and sexuality in patriarchal culture. This is further enhanced by the collective ventures of literary agents publishing literary texts with queering perspectives in defiance of the aggression, stigmatization, and discrimination against sexually marginalized identities in society. This study aims to find answers to the question of how translatorial decisions affect the outlook of queerness in Yakut Orman, Dılşa Ritsa Eşli's 2021 Turkish translation of Rita Mae Brown's (1973) *Rubyfruit Jungle*, which is considered a reference book for queer literature in the Western world. This study is comprised of three parts. The first part provides an outline of the queer translation approach as a novel critique of the reflections of heteronormativity within translation practices in the target language, literature, and culture system. The second part presents a brief analysis of the implicit and explicit references to queerness in *Rubyfruit Jungle*, while the third part focuses on how the notion of queerness has been recreated in its Turkish translation *Yakut Orman* within the context of Démont's (2018) conceptualization of queer translation. Ultimately, Eşli is revealed to have given accurate depictions of the queer identity in some areas, but Eşli's queering perspective failed to reach its full potential due to the intense use of Démont's misrecognizing translation with the implication of the hegemonic heterosexual and/or male gaze in the Turkish version, resulting in a limited representation of queerness in the target context.

Keywords: Queer translation, Rita Mae Brown, *Rubyfruit Jungle*, *Yakut Orman*, Umami Kitap

Introduction

Starting with the cultural turn and its extended critiques of the widely accepted dichotomies of author/translator, source text/translation, and source culture/target culture (Hermans, 1985; Bassnett & Lefevere, 1990), feminist translations have brought forward the secondary position of female agents in the literary system. The collective efforts of feminist translation researchers have triggered debates on the marginalized position of women in literary genres, translations included, and contributed to changes in the definition of translation from a solely linguistic transfer to an act of resistance against the hierarchical ways of meaning making as imposed by the processes of male-dominant discourse production through linguistic materials in the patriarchal system. For Godard (1984/2022), translators with feminist perspectives may realize this move by attempting to "found a new concrete language in which to convey the realities of the female body, to enter into the fiercely contested terrain of the genders of language" (p. 15). Thus, feminist translators can be asserted to directly engage with hegemonic language contexts and to represent women's issues more transparently by inventing a new language beyond the hegemonic gender binary that has kept women in a lower position in the public sphere.

Chamberlain (1988) attributed such radical changes to reinterpretation of the roles of metaphorics between gender and translation in the makings of the "power relations as they divide in terms of gender; of a persistent (though not always hegemonic) desire to equate language or language use with morality; of a quest for originality or unity, and a consequent intolerance of duplicity, of what cannot be decided" (p. 465) This has turned feminist translation into a new paradigm with unrelenting attempts of feminist agents in "at least two directions at once: at conventional language use *per se* and at traditional views of translation" (Flotow, 1991, p. 81). In this way, they potentialize certain changes in the hierarchy of the source text over translation in the literary scene, as well as the misogynist statements against women in the public sphere with new critical grounds for eliminating such discriminatory discourses that are deeply rooted in social life.

The resistance against systemic views toward linguistic production helps extend these critical remarks with more egalitarian reflections of the sexually marginalized "other" in translation theory. In that vein, the queering perspectives within translation studies point to an overarching translation approach that rejects the prevalent outlook

on the sharply defined and divided areas of gender identity and sexual orientation, and undermining the queering perspective within translation studies may be set forth by rejecting the prevalent outlook on the sharply defined areas of gender identity and sexual orientation, as well as the demand "that sexual minorities identify themselves through usages of language that are easily recognized as expressions of their sexual identities" (Keenaghan, 1998, p. 282). In this respect, translators with queering perspectives create new possibilities against strict categorizations in patriarchal culture. For Harvey (2000), this is largely embodied if "this presents the reader with explicit accounts of homosexual experience and struggle" (p. 159). By doing so, the queer translation approach brings deconstructed and reconstructed manifestations of gender and sexuality to the target readership. Spurlin (2014) refers to the potentialities of this resisting move as noted below:

> These forms of translation constitute the possibility of a queer echo, an iteration not resulting in unity, equivalence, or exact repetition, but remaining in an imperfect relationship to the original source, ensuring that the very gap of difference and otherness is not elided, but remains "without limitations and without abjection" in a reciprocal process of intertextual illumination. (p. 210)

Thus, implying queerness or involving queer aspects in a translation stands out as a better way of representing the queer identity in literary contexts. This study aims to seek answers to this question with examples from the English and Turkish versions of Brown's (1973) pioneering queer novel *Rubyfruit Jungle*, published in a timeframe almost fifty years apart in each language. The next section discusses the theoretical aspects of the queer translation approach with regards to its potential for exposing the range of the hegemonic heterosexual gaze in the target system.

Queer Translation as a Way to Resist the Hegemony of Heterosexuality

Queer translation is deemed to be a mode of translation that resists the schematic ways of thinking restricted to the internalized categories of gender and sexuality outside of heterosexuality. As Burton (2010) implied, it stands out for being "*antihomophobic* in motivation and practice, and *destabilising* and *historicising* of gender, sex, and sexuality norms" (p. 55). In this way, it alloys and dislocates the situated knowledge practices

prioritizing heterosexuality by further incorporating the actualities of LGBTQ+ identities into meaning-making processes. This critical function forms potent bases for "the creation of epistemological and discursive spaces to think and represent same-sex desire, but also, beyond it, the emerging recognition, advocacy, and discursive codification of homosexual identity" (Breen, 2012, p. 8). Here, queer translation is accommodated as a knowledge production process directed toward equally representing non-heterosexual identities with an urge to make them more visible and recognizable in the public sphere.

In this manner, the queer translation practice facilitates new spaces of contact and encounter that help literary agents "touch, caress, fondle, inhabit, but never possess fully, another textual body always already foreign to the translator's own" (Spurlin, 2014, p. 213). In return, the practice also carves out negotiation spaces in which the stigmatized nomenclatures relating to the heterosexual matrix are brought up for discussion. For Baer (2018), such spaces substantially carry the traces of collectivity, as queer translation is a "complex act of cultural negotiation, resistance, and world-making" (p. 54) in such uncanny contexts. By doing so, queer translation leads to an activist mode of rewriting that encompasses the resisting ventures of the literary agents engaged with it. By virtue of its activist side, queer translation paves the way for an oppositional stance that "exposes the true nature of notions unquestioningly accepted, demonstrating a mode of resistance against strict gender divisions" (Chan, 2018, p. 107). Therefore, including queering perspectives in translations has the potential to interrupt the flow of exclusionary concepts and alter the gendered nature of language contexts by blurring or fluidizing how gender is classified in the target culture.

Here, gender studies scholar Evren Savcı's (2020) question clearly embodies how translators' ordeals appear to their minds on the grueling path upon which they embark during a translation task: "[H]ow do we understand translation not as a flawless bridge or as total impossibility but as a mode of analysis that opens up ways of seeing the very conditions under which it unfolds?" (p. 59) The suggested answer to this question may be the restriction of the social sphere to gender identities and/or the non-conformance of sexual orientations to the idealized gender image perpetuated by heteronormativity, which limits the presence and representation of LGBTQ+ realities in the contexts of languages. As such, the fact that translators resort to self-categorizations by "adopting a lesbian identity, itself a work of translation, in a culture in which there is no word for 'lesbian'" (Gairola, 2017, p. 73) does not seem surprising. Even though

self-categorization is positioned as a seemingly contradictory notion for the stability, consistence, and permanence of a gendered self, it aids in constructing "new stories, produc[ing] new meanings and possibilities, and re-semantici[zing] global LGBT terminologies" (Bassi, 2017, p. 239). By approaching gender roles with wittiness and humor rather than solemnity, queering perspectives in translation make light of the firmly established and divided spheres of gender and sexuality by diminishing the distance between them (Chan, 2018). In this respect, queer translation helps explore alternating perspectives outside the binary gender regime with the will to deconstruct the political devices of power, morality, and intolerance in patriarchal culture.

These potentialities are also reflected in Marc Démont's (2018) conceptualization of queer translation. By presupposing the active participation of translators in meaning-making processes prevailing in the translation of queer texts, Démont refers to three different modes of translating: misrecognizing, minoritizing, and queering. For Démont, these modes operationalize as follows:

> Whereas the misrecognizing translation simply ignores queerness, the minoritizing translation congeals queerness's drifting nature by flattening its connotative power to a unidimensional and superficial game of denotative equivalences. In contrast to these two approaches, I argue that a specific "queering" stance can be developed in which queerness is, on the one hand, made salient thanks to a queer critique of existing translations, and on the other, is respected in its intangibility by developing techniques to preserve, using Kwame Anthony Appiah's expression, the thickness of queer literary texts. (p. 157)

In Démont's (2018) terms, misrecognizing translations refer to the exclusion of queer imagery from the translated version of the source text, while minoritizing translations substantiate the act of narrowing down and/or restricting the fluidity of gender and sexuality in the target language. However, the queering mode of translation highlights the queer outlook of the source text and may also include further queer aspects in the translated version.

By reflecting on a non-dichotomous understanding of meaning making in the translation process, this study utilizes Démont's (2018) conceptualization in the comparative analysis of examples from *Rubyfruit Jungle* and its Turkish translation,

Yakut Orman. The next section will briefly analyze the implicit and explicit references to queerness using reference to narrative elements from *Rubyfruit Jungle*.

Traces of "Queerness' in *Rubyfruit Jungle*

Rubyfruit Jungle, first published in 1973, is considered one of the reference books of queer literature in the Western world. The novel focuses on the life of Molly Bolt, from the discovery of her lesbianism in her early teenage years on into her adulthood. In the novel, Molly is depicted as a courageous character with an unyielding appetite for exploring sexuality, which she fearlessly shares with the people around her. Marginalized because of her frankness, and therefore at odds with her family, Molly gets a scholarship that allows her to depart her hometown and attend college in Florida. Although she manages to leave her town in a short time, school authorities force Molly to maintain so-called "decent" relations with her peers, which limits her freedom, much like in her family circle (Lorig, 2020). The aggression, stigmatization, and discrimination she faces in the school environment bring her to the edge of questioning her sexual orientation from time to time. By depicting Molly in such challenging situations in the novel, Brown largely answers the question of how the societal standards of heterosexuality shape what is considered normal by "demanding answers to questions heteronarratives neither highlight nor resolve" (Cooper, 2019, p. 5). In this way, Brown's novel turns into a statement against the repercussions of heteronormativity and the binary gender regime in literary narratives and storytelling.

Molly's relocation from Florida to New York to pursue a degree in film studies also changes her mentality regarding other LGBTQ+ people. She is taken aback each time she meets people who are rich and white but more closeted than her despite their privileges due to their race and social class. However, Molly becomes more and more self-contained, as she prefers "to dismantle social hierarchies rather than climb them, rejecting the discourses that construct her as 'queer' and as 'bastard'" (Saxey, 2005, p. 35). Molly's days in New York evoke in her the memories of her hometown and the struggles she has faced until the moment she returns to her hometown for a documentary project. This creates a tug-of-war between the pain of the past and the need to fit into a new and unfamiliar place in the present. Her journey back to her hometown to make a documentary movie about herself helps resolve this dilemma. In her family house, she gets the opportunity to prove "her resistance by refusing to knuckle under to the forces that constrain her, clinging to the goal of artistic achievement that she has set

herself" (Elliott, 2006, p. 106). These incidents form invisible bonds between Molly's past and present selves, which are notably reminiscent of the challenges the LGBTQ+ community faces in today's world.

Aside from the explicit queer themes surrounding Molly's experiences, the novel also has implicit references to non-heterosexual ways of meaning making. For instance, the term of rubyfruit in the title is based on a metaphor Molly uses while talking to her partner about the possible roots of her lesbianism. In the dialogue, Molly explains her attraction to women by drawing a comparison between rubyfruit and vaginas, because they "are thick and rich and full of hidden treasures and besides that, they taste good" (Brown, 1973, p. 178). Similarly, she resorts to saying "grapefruit freak" while describing the gayness of the person to whom her close friend Calvin is attracted. Molly uses the word "grapefruit" as an allusion to male genitalia to say that Ronnie Rapaport (the guy her best friend Calvin fancies) "gets his kicks out of being blasted with grapefruits" (Brown, 1973, p. 126) because he prefers having sex with men. In this sense, the identification of male and female genitalia with different exotic fruits is part of the queer politics prevailing in the choice of "fruit" being originally used to refer to a "gay man. Originally US or prison slang" in Polari [gay cant] (Baker, 2002, p. 30). By including gay females in the definition of 'fruit,' Brown openly queers the identificatory image underlying its semantics and expands the meaning of the word to include lesbianism, which encompasses the queering perspective of the author in the novel.

The implicit references in the novel are not limited to the identification of male and female genitalia with fruit. While describing the societal pressures on her sexuality, Molly asks "Why does everyone have to put you in a box and nail the lid on it?" (Brown, 1973, p. 95) and associates the obligation of concealing a sexual orientation with "being in the closet." In Molly's question, the word "box" relates to a coffin, and "lid' to a mortcloth, which parallels Baker's explanation of closet as "the status of a gay man or lesbian who is yet to declare their sexuality. Most likely from the American idiom *skeleton in the closet* meaning a secret, although the word has become widened to refer to other forms of secrecy" (Baker, 2002, p. 99). For Molly, being in the closet is equivalent to lying dead in a coffin, as clearly seen in her remonstration against the disregard for her sexuality in the public.

In the introduction of the 2015 reprint of *Rubyfruit Jungle*, Brown substantiates her initial claim for the queer outlook on the novel with her disbelief in binary categories as indicated below:

> There are no lower orders. There are no lesbians or transgender people or fill in the blank. There are only people, a wild mix of energy, different abilities, colors ranging from ebony to bleached white. We're everything and everybody. I don't even believe in male and female, it's a sliding scale and we are hag-ridden by a binary culture: male-female, black-white, straight-gay, rich-poor, and so it goes. The gradations are infinite and the silliest mistake of all is to define people by material possessions. It's even worse if people define themselves by money. (p. xiii)

These words summarize Brown's approach to sexuality and gender identity in society, which is supported by the queer potentialities of explicitly queer themes and implicit references to queerness in her novel. Thus, to assert that blurring the strict divisions among gender identities and sexual orientations accommodates a pioneering position to *Rubyfruit Jungle* in modern literature would not wrong. In this respect, seeing the publishing house *Umami Kitap* (henceforth Umami) disseminate the novel in the Turkish context due to the publishing house having been established to look "for togetherness, trying to bring the text before the reader without making it a *fait accompli*, from its voice to its temporality" (5Harfliler, 2021). As such, the decision to commission Dılşa Ritsa Eşli as a feminist lesbian translator (Ak & Çoban, 2022) seemingly fulfilled Umami's goals for creating more accurate depictions of queerness in the target system.

The next section will assess the question of how queering perspectives have been potentialized in the Turkish translation of *Rubyfruit Jungle*, translated *Yakut Orman*, with examples in light of Démont's (2018) conceptualization of queer translation strategies.

Translatorial Decisions in the Turkish Translation of *Rubyfruit Jungle*

The publication of the Turkish translation of Brown's *Rubyfruit Jungle* [*Yakut Orman*] has given rise to a wave of hope and solidarity among the LGBTQ+ community in Türkiye. Many supporting reviews were published on online news and book review platforms, giving a shoulder to Umami's brand-new publication, *Yakut Orman*. While the social media writer Esra Ece Kuleci (2022) defined the novel as a "book surrounded by such a great circle of love and solidarity by LGBTI+s and women" (2022) in *Aposto*, an online blog about art, culture, life, and literature, the LGBTQ+ activist and reporter Yıldız Tar (2021) perceived it as a "solid response to the heteronormative matrix with

the help of a circular wave of queerness" in *Kaos GL*, the pioneering LGBTQ+ journal in Türkiye. In this manner, the novel is framed as a "story of finding yourself, being yourself and coming of age" (Sebahat, 2022). The comments above imply the crucial role of literature and literary texts in establishing potent grounds of solidarity around the notion of queerness as a unifying motive of the movement for gender equality in an oppressive country such as Türkiye.

One can realize that the publisher Umami has also been critically acclaimed in the Turkish context, as seen from how its publishing activities have been received by the online culture and art platforms. The first interview with Umami's publishing team of Seçil Epik, Bike Su Öner, and Büşra Mutlu was conducted by *Bantmag*, a music, cinema and arts fanzine, just one month after the publication of the novel in Türkiye. In the interview, Umami is introduced as a daring publisher that "launched an exciting adventure to bring queer and feminist novels from the world literature into Turkish" (*Bantmag*, 2021). While referring to Umami as adventurous, *Bantmag* directly attracted attention to the taskof publishing the novel in the current political atmosphere and helped contextualize Umami as a pioneering agent of queer literature with such a bold move in the country. Furthermore, online feminist blog 5Harfliler's (2021) interview positioned Umami in a politicized context with its motive "that interrupts the publishing industry spinning around the wheel of market and patriarchy and invites the reader to join this action." In this way, the political agenda behind the founding of Umami is revealed, with an emphasis on its stance against the impact of the market economy and patriarchy in the Turkish publishing industry. In *Gazete Duvar*'s (2021) interview, art critic İlker Cihan Biner also discussed Umami in a politicized context with the implication of its status as "a network where literature, politics and social sciences come into contact in a queer and feminist perspective." Biner (2021) saw Umami's publishing activities as "not only as a fulfillment of moral responsibility for creating an alternating space for existence, actuality, and living, but also a breath of fresh air in the stifling political environment of the country." In this sense, a bond of communion was developed with Umami, bringing the possibility of perceiving it as an insider in the LGBTQ+ community in Türkiye.

Thus, the extensive use of implicit and/or explicit queer references in the source text and the positioning of its publisher, author, and translator as queer agents in the target system have created strong expectations for its Turkish translation to imply queerness, especially with the addition of positive comments from culture and art media in the target context. Therefore, making an in-depth analysis of Eşli's translatorial

decisions is a good idea for seeing whether these queer potentialities were actualized in the translation.

Queer footprints can be traced in *Yakut Orman*, the Turkish translation of *Rubyfruit Jungle*, that help build more egalitarian grounds for representing queerness among the target readers. The excerpt in Table 1 shows how the queering translation was operationalized in the context of *Yakut Orman*.

Table 1. Queering Translation in the Case of the Word "Fuck" in the Target Text	
Source Text	"I knew about fucking and getting stuck together like dogs and I didn't want to get stuck like that" (p. 45)
Target Text	*"Düzüşmeyi ve sokaktaki köpekler gibi birbirine geçmeyi biliyordum ama onlar gibi kilitlenip kalmak istemiyordum"* (p. 45)
Back Translation	"I knew how to screw and interlock like street dogs, but I didn't want to be locked up like them"

In Table 1, Eşli uses the word *düzüşme*[1] [screwing] in reply to "fucking" in the target text. While "to fuck" can be translated as *sikişmek*[2] [to dick], with *sik*[3] implying the male genitalia to be a "dick" in the target language, Eşli neutralized the word by interrupting the emphasis on the dominance of male genitalia in its context. With this decision, Eşli limited the impact area of hegemonic heterosexual gaze relating to the sexual intercourse context in the patriarchal culture and helped to imply the queerness of the target text. The next example of this mode of translation is the use of *Lubunca* [Turkish LGBT+ cant] words in the target text. As a common cant among the LGBTQ+ community in Türkiye, *Lubunca* "emerged as a coded language among the *köçek* [dancer boys] and *tellak* [bath attendants], people who were gay sex workers in the Ottoman Empire in the 16th century" (Erdem, 2019, p. 35). However, *Lubunca* became a jargon of resistance against public authorities by the trans sex workers who'd undergone violent persecutions in the 1980s (Kelavgil, 2021). In some parts of the target text, Eşli uses *Lubunca* terms and explains them with footnotes to bring the queer way of talking before the target readership. As such, footnoting turns the text into "an educational tool supported with scholarly research" (Flotow, 1991, p. 77) owing to its potentials to showcase how the LGBTQ+ community expresses themselves, making queerness more visible in return.

1 *Düzüşmek*. (2023, 6 April). *Sesli Sözlük*. Address: https://www.seslisozluk.net/d%C3%BCz%C3%BC% C5%9 Fmek-nedir-ne-demek/

2 *Sikişmek*. (2023, 6 April). *Sesli Sözlük*. Address: https://www.seslisozluk.net/siki%C5%9Fmek-nedir-ne-demek/

3 *Sik*. (2023, 6 April). *Sesli Sözlük*. Address: https://www.seslisozluk.net/sik-nedir-ne-demek/

In this respect, footnoting for *Lubunca* can be related to the mode of queering translation in Démont's (2018) model. The excerpt in Table 2 shows how this motive was potentialized in Eşli's translatorial decisions.

Table 2. Queering Translation in the Case of the Word "*Butchess*" in the Target Text	
ST	"Wonderful, I can be a butchess." (p. 104)
TT	"Harika, ben senin butch leydin olabilirim." (p. 102)
BT	"Wonderful, I can be your butch lady."

*I*n Table 2, Eşli uses the phrase *butch leydi* in exchange for "butchess" in the target text. With the addition of the feminine suffix "-ess", the word "butchess" derives from "butch,"[4] which means "aggressively masculine" (Baker, 2002, p. 91) in gay slang. In the footnote, Eşli explained it as "a reference to lesbians who tend to be masculine in terms of their external appearance. Even though it is a word related to lesbian culture historically, it is used by many people who position themselves in different parts of the spectrum of gender identity and sexual orientation" (Brown, 2021, p. 102). By adding *leydi* [lady] to the word, Eşli compensates for the suffix "-ess" and draws closer to the emphasis on "femininity' in the source text. In this way, Eşli surpasses its negative connotations and extends its meaning to lesbianism, which helps to position this decision in Démont's (2018) mode of queering translation.

Table 3. Queering Translation in the Case of the Phrase "*Pick Up*" in the Target Text	
ST	Lesbians don't pick each other up on the street (p. 125)
TT	*Lezbiyenler sokaktan koli yapmazlar* (p. 123)
BT	Lesbians don't make a trick on the street.

In Table 3, Eşli uses the word *koli* in exchange for "pick up" in the target text. While the term "pick up" refers to a trick ("a sexual pick up" [Baker, 2002, p. 206]) in gay slang, *koli* means "someone you have sex with" (Karaahmet, 2019) in Turkish *Lubunca*. Eşli explained this decision with a footnote, saying, "It refers to sex or someone you have sex with in *Lubunca*, a jargon used by the LGBTI+ in Türkiye" (Brown, 2021, p. 123). In this way, Eşli familiarizes the target readers with *Lubunca*, which serves to further reflect the queer way of life in the target text. Hence, this decision can also be included in the context of a queering translation.

4 Butch (2023, 6 April) *Dictionary.com*. Address: https://www.dictionary.com/browse/butch

Table 4. Queering Translation in the Case of the Word "*Hustle*" in the Target Text	
ST	Then I have to go out and hustle for a place to stay tonight (p. 129)
TT	*Sonra gece kalacak yer bulmak için çarka çıkarım* (p. 127)
BT	Then I gazoopy to find a place to stay overnight.

In Table 4, Eşli uses the phrase *çarka çıkmak* in exchange for "hustle" in the target text. The word "hustle" means "gazoopy" ("to perform sexually for money" [Baker, 2002, p. 131]) in gay slang. While *çarka çıkmak* is generally used as a connotation of prostitution in *Lubunca*, Eşli expanded its meaning, explaining it as "looking for sex with someone in *Lubunca*. It generally describes sex for money" (Brown, 2021, p. 127). Thus, Eşli eliminated the negative connotations in its definition and set fruitful grounds for eradicating the prejudice towards the context of *çarka çıkmak* in the target readership, which in return relates it with the queering translation.

Table 5. Queering Translation in the Case of the Phrase "*Chicken Queen*" in the Target Text	
ST	If you were a man, they'd call you a chicken queen (p. 146)
TT	*Eğer erkek olsaydın sana mantici derlerdi farkındasın değil mi*? (p. 144)
BT	Do you know they would call you as a chicken hawk if you were a man?

In Table 5, Eşli uses the term *mantici* for "chicken queen" in the target text. The phrase "chicken queen" is derived from "chicken hawk" ("one who prefers to have sex with young men" [Baker, 2002, p. 96]) in gay slang. Eşli's decision gives a feminine aspect to the term with the change of "queen" to "hawk" in the translation. Because *manti* means "young men who are 'not homosexual' but have sex with a homosexual man" (Karaahmet, 2019), Eşli positions *mantici* [*manti* maker] by saying "Chicken queen' refers to old gay men who prefer to have sex with young men in the English LGBTI+ jargon. In this text, the translation of *mantici* derives from *Lubunca*, as well. *Manti* refers to young man in *Lubunca*" (Brown, 2021, pp. 144–145). By actively operationalizing *Lubunca*, Eşli brings new possibilities for representing queerness in *Yakut Orman*, which is in line with the queering translation in Démont's (2018) model.

The second mode of translation in the context of *Yakut Orman* is the minoritizing translation. This mode of translation narrows down the conceptualization and representation of queerness in the target language, thus limiting the actualities of the queer identity within linguistic contexts. The excerpt in Table 6 indicates how this mode of translation was operationalized in *Yakut Orman*.

Table 6. Minoritizing Translation in the Case of the Word "*Queer*" in the Target Text	
ST	I'm very feminine, how can you call me a queer? (p. 94)
TT	*Baksana bana ne kadar feminenim, nasıl bana lezbiyen dersin*? (p. 92)
BT	See how feminine I am, how would you call me a lesbian?

In Table 6, Eşli uses the word *lezbiyen*[5] in reply to "queer" in the target text. While "queer" had become "a popular derogatory term for a homosexual by the early-mid twentieth century" (Baker, 2002, p. 183), its meaning has been extended to "[g]ay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, black, Latino, working-class or a combination of any or all of the above" (Baker, 2002, p. 183) thanks to theoretical expansions of queer theory. By reducing "queer" to "lesbian" in the target text, Eşli highlights lesbianism, excluding other sexualities from the scope of the translation. The main character of the text being lesbian contributes to the general outlook of the text before the target readership. However, this narrows down the context of queer as an umbrella term for all sexualities outside of heterosexuality. In this respect, this decision can be considered a part of the minoritizing translation in the target context.

Another example of this mode of translation is the lack of footnoting for words or phrases that may be difficult for the target readers to contextualize. This limits the representation of queer aspects of life and reduces the expansions of queerness before the target readership. The excerpt in Table 7 demonstrates how this decision was reflected in the context of *Yakut Orman*.

Table 7. Minoritizing Translation in the Case of the Phrase "*Golden Shower Queen*" in the Target Text	
ST	It hit rock bottom for me when she wanted to be told she was a golden shower queen. (p. 182)
TT	*Benim için seks hayatımızın dibe vurduğu nokta Polina'nın kendisine "altın duş kraliçesi" dememi istemesiydi.* (p. 178)
BT	The bottom of our sex life was when Polina asked me to call her as "golden shower queen.

In Table 7, Eşli uses the phrase *altın*[6] *duş*[7] *kraliçesi*[8] in reply to "golden shower queen" in the target text. The phrase "golden shower" refers to "the act of urinating on someone, for sexual gratification" (Baker, 2002, p. 137) in gay slang. Brown expands its meaning to

5 *Lezbiyen*. (2023, 6 April). *Sesli Sözlük*. Address: https://www.seslisozluk.net/lezbiyen-nedir-ne-demek/
6 *Altın*. (2023, 6 April). *Sesli Sözlük*. Address: https://www.seslisozluk.net/alt%C4%B1n-nedir-ne-demek/
7 *Duş*. (2023, 6 April). *Sesli Sözlük*. Address: https://www.seslisozluk.net/du%C5%9F-nedir-ne-demek/
8 *Kraliçe*. (2023, 6 April). *Sesli Sözlük*. Address: https://www.seslisozluk.net/krali%C3%A7e-nedir-ne-demek/

lesbianism by involving "queen," ("any gay man" [Baker, 2002, p. 182]) in this context. Based on its definition in the English-Turkish dictionary,[9] Eşli made a direct transfer of the phrase without explaining it with a footnote. In return, the target readers are challenged to recontextualize the word and relate it to the general outlook of queerness in the target language. Thus, this decision can be evaluated in the scope of a minoritizing translation.

The third mode of translation in the context of *Yakut Orman* is the misrecognizing translation. This mode of translation potentially maintains hegemonic ideas centered around the notion of heteronormativity and thus serves to endanger queer imagery within linguistic contexts. The excerpt in Table 8 indicates how this is reflected in the target text.

Table 8. Misrecognizing Translation in the Case of the Word "*Fuck*" in the Target Text	
ST	Well, I ain't fuckin' unless you take every stitch off. (p. 61)
TT	*"Her şeyi çıkarmazsan seninle sikişmem."* (p. 60)
BT	I won't dick you unless you take everything off.

In Table 8, Eşli uses the word *sikişmek* in exchange for "to fuck" in the target text. As mentioned before, the word *sikişmek* [to dick] is based on the word *sik* referring to the male genitalia as a "dick" in the target language. By implying the impact area of male genitalia [*sik*], *sikişmek* reduces the scope of sexual intercourse to men's superiority over women, and thus has the potential to maintain the hegemonic heterosexual male gaze in translation. Here, Eşli did not limit the impact area of male hegemony but rather allowed it to become more visible. Thus, this decision can be seen as part of the misrecognizing translation in the target context.

Eşli's choice regarding the word *ibne* for "queer" constitutes another example of this mode of translation. The excerpts in Table 9 exemplify how this was operationalized in the target text.

9 Golden shower. (2023, 6 April). *Sesli Sözlük*. Address: https://www.seslisozluk.net/golden%20shower-nedir-ne-demek/

Table 9. Misrecognizing Translation in the Case of the Word "*Queer*" in the Target Text	
ST	He don't look no queer to me (p. 58)
TT	*Bana sorarsan hiç ibne gibi değil* (p. 57)
BT	If you ask me, he isn't like a faggot at all.
ST	"Well, we're just All-American queers. (p. 126)
TT	*Yüzde yüz Amerikan ibneleriyiz desene* (p. 124)
BT	Say, we are 100% American faggots.

In Table 9, Eşli uses the word *ibne* in exchange for "queer" in the target text. While Eşli has an intention to break the negative meaning of the word *ibne* by identifying it with the umbrella term "queer"[10] for all sexualities outside of heterosexuality, *ibne* is positioned as "a slang word used by sexist heterosexuals to describe gays, transvestites, and transsexuals" (Karaahmet, 2019) much like "faggot" ("a gay man, usually derogatory" [Baker, 2002, p. 117]) in gay slang. For this reason, the queering impact has been prevented due to the derogatory aspects of the word in the target culture. The word *lubunya* would be a better choice since it has the chance to "refer to LGBTI as a whole, much as the word "'queer' in English" (Karaahmet, 2019). Therefore, Eşli's decision can be contextualized within the misrecognizing translation.

The next example of this mode of translation is related to Eşli's translatorial decisions that have the potential to evoke traces of hegemonic masculinity in the target text. The excerpt in Table 10 shows how this was operationalized in the translation:

Table 10. Misrecognizing Translation in the Case of the Phrase "*Soft Rich Kid*" in the Target Text	
ST	"You think I am a soft rich kid who's taking money from her lover instead of from doctor daddy" (p. 153)
TT	*"Doktor babası yerine sevgilisinin eline bakan zengin bir muhallebi çocuğu olduğumu düşünüyorsun değil mi?"* (p. 151)
BT	"Don't you think I am a mamma's boy who is relying on his lover's money instead of his doctor daddy's?"

In Table 10, Eşli uses the phrase *muhallebi çocuğu* for "soft rich kid" in the target text. The phrase *muhallebi çocuğu*,[11] a direct translation of mamma's boy, refers to "a boy or

10 Queer. (2023, 6 April). *Dictionary.com.* Address: https://www.dictionary.com/browse/queer

11 *Muhallebi çocuğu.* (2023, 6 April). *Sesli Sözlük*. Address: https://www.seslisozluk.net/muhallebi%20%C3%A7ocu%C4%9Fu-nedir-ne-demek/

man showing excessive attachment to or dependence on his mother"[12] in the source language. In the Turkish context, this phrase often points to boys who are seen as more fragile than their peers, and thus discriminated against for not being adequately masculine in the school environment (Göregenli, 2009). As is seen, Eşli's decision does not neutralize or queer the negative aspects of meaning underlying the phrase but potentializes the dissemination of the hegemonic masculine gaze among the target readers. In this sense, this decision can be counted as an example of a misrecognizing translation in Démont's (2018) model.

Additionally, Eşli's choice regarding the word *homoseksüel* for homosexual can be seen as another example of this mode of translation. The excerpt in Table 11 shows how this translatorial decision was contextualized in the target language.

Table 11. Misrecognizing Translation in the Case of the Word "*Homosexual*" in the Target Text	
ST	"I – are all homosexuals as perceptive as you?" (p. 175)
TT	"Sen… Bütün homoseksüeller senin kadar bilinçli mi?" (p. 172)
BT	"You… Are all homosexuals as conscious as you?

In Table 11, Eşli uses the word *homoseksüel* for "homosexual" in the target text. Whereas the word "homosexual" generally appears in disparaging and offensive contexts while referring to people who are "sexually attracted to people of one's own sex or gender; gay,"[13] *homoseksüel* is not very frequently used among the LGBTQ+ community due to "its potentially negative meaning as a medical term reminding of the time when being gay was seen as a disease" (Kaos GL, 2020) in the target context. In this respect, this decision has been evaluated within the scope of a misrecognizing translation.

The last example of this mode of translation applies to Eşli's choice regarding the word *milli olmak* for the phrase "piece of ass" in the source text. The excerpt in Table 12 indicates how this was operationalized in the translation.

Table 12. Misrecognizing Translation in the Case of the Phrase "*A Piece of Ass*" in the Target Text	
ST	"Carl got the syphilis the first time he had a piece of ass" (p. 208)
TT	"*Carl 1919 yılında milli olduğunda bel soğukluğu kapmış*" (p. 206)
BT	Carl caught the syphilis when he played for the national team in 1919.

12 Mama's boy. (2023, 6 April). *Dictionary.com*. Address: https://www.dictionary.com/browse/mama-s-boy

13 *Homosexual*. (2023, 6 April). *Dictionary.com.* Address: https://www.dictionary.com/browse/homosexual

In Table 12, Eşli uses the phrase *milli olmak* in exchange for "piece of ass" in the target text. The phrase "piece of ass" directly means "sexual intercourse"[14] in the source language. However, *milli olmak* refers to "the first sexual intercourse a man has with a woman"[15] in the target context, which generally allows for "talking about sexuality as a legitimacy area for men" (Mutluer, 2015). In this case, the word *milli*[16] [national] moves the female subject to a secondary position, because *milli olmak* [to be a national] corresponds to representing the country in a sexualized context, in which having a superior position is made into a quality of honor and pride for men. Here, Eşli's decision potentially reconstitutes the hegemonic masculinity discourse with an emphasis on male supremacy in the contextualization of *milli olmak* within the target text. In this sense, this decision can be associated with the misrecognizing translation in Démont's (2018) model.

Conclusion

With all its theoretical and practical aspects, queer translation brings multivocal and egalitarian bases of representation to the LGBTQ+ community in the literary scene. By dismantling the dichotomies of male/female and heterosexual/non-heterosexual in society, queer translation further reflects the assigned nature of gender by blurring the strictly constructed boundaries between gender identities and sexual orientations. As such, it contributes to the deconstruction of exclusionary concepts related to hegemonic heterosexuality in the contexts of language. To that effect, this study has tried to unveil the manifestations of the queer perspective in Dılşa Ritsa Eşli's (2021) *Yakut Orman*, Turkish translation and Umami Kitap publication of Brown's (1973) *Rubyfruit Jungle*.

Eşli's translation in general has received positive remarks from the digital fanzines, online news agencies, and book review websites for substantially engendering a strong reaction against the hegemony of heterosexuality and a narrative for self-acceptance, complemented by its publisher Umami's position as a solidarity network for bringing queer and feminist novels before Turkish readership. These remarks serve to contextualize the Turkish translation of *Rubyfruit Jungle* as a literary work that disseminates the image of queerness to the target language and culture system. The portrayal of the novel as such readily suggests that Eşli has brought queering perspectives to the entire translation process.

14 Piece of ass. (2023, 6 April). *Dictionary.com*. Address: https://www.dictionary.com/browse/piece--of--ass

15 Milli olmak. (2023, 6 April). *Sesli Sözlük*. Address: https://www.seslisozluk.net/milli%20olmak-nedir-ne-demek/

16 Milli. (2023, 6 April). Sesli sözlük. Address: https://www.seslisozluk.net/milli-nedir-ne-demek/

In light of Démont's (2018) model, however, the comparative analysis of the Turkish and English versions of *Rubyfruit Jungle* [*Yakut Orman*] has shown Eşli to have limitedly contributed to the formation of queer imagery and the reflection of queerness. While Eşli did apply minoritizing translations by narrowing down the umbrella concept of queer to *lezbiyen* [lesbian], and the direct transfer of the phrase "golden shower queen" as *altın duş kraliçesi* [golden shower queen] without footnoting in the target text, Eşli's decisions regarding queering translation increased the opportunities for representing the knowledge practices peculiar to queerness with the help of *Lubunca* [Turkish LGBTQ+ cant] terms such as *koli* [trick] for pick up, *çarka çıkmak* [gazoopy] for hustle, and *mantici* [chicken hawk] for chicken queen in the translation. Even so, Eşli's frequent use of the misrecognizing translation mode significantly constructed, reflected, and maintained the hegemonic heterosexual gaze due to the sexist connotations of *ibne* [faggot] for queer, *sikişmek* [to dick] for fuck, *homoseksüel* for homosexual, *milli olmak* [to be a national] for piece of ass, and *muhallebi çocuğu* [mama's boy] for soft rich kid within the Turkish context.

All in all, one should never judge a translation by its cover. This is because the surrounding context around a translation may limit researchers' insights by leading them to a false impression that it readily underlines queerness in its entirety, much like the case of *Yakut Orman* in the Turkish context. While Eşli had portrayed the potential of queer ways of life with accurate indications of queerness in some parts of the translation, queering potentialities in the novel were not sufficiently fulfilled, and this paved the way for the creation of limited queering perspectives in the target language.

Against all odds, queer translation practices more or less serve to enlarge the restricted sphere of gender perception with the motive of giving space to offbeat voices despite the sharp discrepancies among gender identities and sexual orientations that are not equally favored in the social arena. Such initiatives contribute to reducing the influence of moralistic judgements and stigmatizations against the LGBTQ+ community among the target readership, especially in a conservative Islamist country such as Türkiye.

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