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### Unmasking the pseudonyms of cultural mediators in Turkish children's literature

Türk çocuk edebiyatında kültürel araçların kullandığı müstear isimleri gün yüzüne çıkarmak



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#### Abstract

This article examines pseudonymous publications in the field of children's literature in Türkiye from the microhistorical perspective of translation studies. Drawing on the reflections on the (in)visibility of cultural mediators in translation studies, it sets out to use clandestine agents engaging with the pseudonymous publications in the field of children's literature as case studies. By doing so, this article charts the trajectory of pseudonymity as literary performances carried out by Yaşar Nabi Nayır, Tomris Uyar, Vartan İhmalyan, and Kadir Mısıroğlu in relation to cultural mediatorship in children's literature and explores the underpinnings of pseudonymous identities through contextual, paratextual, and textual evidence. The motives for adopting pseudonyms vary according to each cultural mediator's individual circumstances, ranging from the literary anxieties stemming from the genres and children's literature to sociopolitical and economic conditions. It is argued that a stratification of specific genres and types of children's books within the translated children's literature could account for the cultural practices of pseudonymity. Pseudonymous publications in children's literature provide a unique lens through which to crystallize the concepts of translation and children's literature within a given period and culture, while also discerning the ambivalent borders of the cultural mediators' translating/writing practices.

#### Öz

Bu çalışma, Türkiye'de çocuk edebiyatı alanındaki müstear isimli yayınları çeviri çalışmalarında uygulanan mikro-tarihsel bakış açısıyla incelemektedir. Çeviri çalışmalarında kültürel araçların görünmezliği/görünürlüğüne ilişkin gözlemlerden yola çıkarak, çocuk edebiyatı alanında müstear isimle yayın yapan gizli eyleyenlerin vaka çalışması olarak ele alınması amaçlanmaktadır. Böylece Yaşar Nabi Nayır, Tomris Uyar, Vartan İhmalyan ve Kadir Mısıroğlu'ndan oluşan kültürel araçların müstear isim kullanımının çocuk edebiyatında edebi bir performans olarak kültürel aracılıkla ilişkili yörüngesinin seyri izlenerek, bağlama, yan metinlere dayalı kanıtlar aracılığıyla müstear kimliklerin temelleri sorgulanacaktır. Müstear isim kullanma motivasyonları, her kültürel aracının bireysel koşullarına göre değişmekle birlikte, bu koşullar çocuk edebiyatından ve edebi türlerden doğan yazınsal kaygılardan sosyopolitik ve ekonomik koşullara kadar çeşitlilik gösterir. Çeviri çocuk edebiyatında belirli edebi türlerin ve çocuk kitapları çeşitlerinin katmanlaşmasının, müstear isim kullanımına ilişkin kültürel uygulamaları açıklayabileceği tartışılmaktadır. Çocuk edebiyatındaki müstear isimli yayınlar, belirli bir dönem ve kültür içinde çeviri ve çocuk edebiyatı kavramlarını billurlaştırmak için verimli bir bakış açısı sunarken, aynı zamanda kültürel araçların çeviri/yazma pratiklerinin muğlak sınırlarına ışık tutmaktadır.

#### Keywords

children's literature · cultural mediator · pseudonyms · translation · Türkiye


#### Anahtar Kelimeler

çeviri · çocuk edebiyatı · kültürel aracı · müstear isimler · Türkiye



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**Extended Summary**

Çeviri tarihyazımı, (ulusal) edebiyat tarihleri içinde çocuk edebiyatı tarihyazımıyla benzer bir kaderi paylaşır. Çevirinin bir uygulama ve ürün olarak ikincil bir konumda görülmesi, çocuk edebiyatının büyük ölçüde göz ardı edilmesi ve/veya yetişkin edebiyatının gölgesinde kalması gerçeğiyle örtüşmektedir. Bu durum, (ulusal) edebiyatların büyük anlatılarında hem çeviri hem de çocuk edebiyatının gölgede kalmasına neden olmuştur.

1980'ler ve 1990'lar boyunca toplumsal cinsiyet, postkolonyalizm, postmodernizm, kimlikler gibi çeşitli kültürel meselelerin yükselişi, tarih yazımında (White, 1987) ve edebiyat tarih yazımında (Greenblatt, 1990) araştırma konularının evrimleşen yönelimlerine yansımıştır. Diğer disiplinlerdeki büyük gelişmeler, çeviri çalışmalarının 1980'lerde yöneldiği yeni doğrultular üzerinde önemli etkiler yaratmıştır. Bu dönemde çeviri çalışmalarında dilsel yönlerden ziyade, çevirinin kültürel bağlamı ve tarihsel niteliğine özel bir vurgu yapılmıştır. Bu yeni eğilim, çeviri çalışmalarında "kültürel dönemeç" (cultural turn) olarak adlandırılmaktadır (Lefevere ve Bassnett, 1990, s. 4). Bu tarihsel dönüm noktası ile birlikte, bağımsız bir disiplin olarak çeviri çalışmaları, "çevirinin çeşitli formları (bir süreç, bir ürün, bir mecaz, bir kurum, bir teori vb.)" (D'Hulst, 2010, s. 397) ve çevirmenler (Pym, 1998; Chesterman, 2009) üzerindeki tarihsel araştırmalara büyük ilgi göstermiştir.

Çocuk edebiyatı çalışmalarına gelindiğinde, 1989 yılında Uluslararası Çocuk Edebiyatı Araştırma Topluluğunun (International Research Society for Children's Literature) iki yılda bir düzenlenen önemli konferansı, çocuk edebiyatı tarihine adanmıştır. Ancak, bu konferansta sunulan bildiriler, çeviriyi ulusal çocuk edebiyatının gelişim anlatıları içine asimile etme eğilimini ortaya koymuştur (Nikolajeva, 1995). Bununla birlikte, çocuk edebiyatı 1980'lerin sonlarından itibaren çeviri araştırmacıları için bir inceleme alanı haline gelmiştir. Özellikle son dönemde, edebiyat (Shavit, 1986), ideoloji (Thomson-Wohlgemuth, 2003; Pokorn, 2012) ve süreli yayınlar (Tahir Gürçağlar, 2014) gibi çok çeşitli perspektiflerden çeviri tarihyazımında gelişen bir araştırma alanı haline gelmiştir. Çocuk edebiyatına yetişkin edebiyatına kıyasla daha az saygınlık atfedilmesi ve çeviri olması nedeniyle çeviri çocuk edebiyatının tarihyazımında çifte görünmezliği, çeviri çocuk edebiyatını ve (ulusal) tarihler bağlamında çeviri çocuk edebiyatı eserlerinin üreticileri olan eyleyenlerin (aracılar, çevirmenler vb.) faaliyetleri incelenerek aşılabilir. Bu bağlamda, tarih boyunca çocuk edebiyatında anonim ve müstear isimli yayıncılık gibi kültürel uygulamalara, çeviri çocuk edebiyatındaki saklı kalmış öznellikleri açığa çıkarmak için özel bir dikkat gösterilebilir. Bu makale, 1970'ler Türkiye'sinde çeviri çocuk edebiyatındaki bu kültürel uygulamaları tarihsel bir bağlamda ve ilişkiyel bir anlayışla ele almayı amaçlamaktadır. Müstear isim kullanarak veya anonim olarak çocuk kitapları yayımlayan eyleyenlerin davranış kalıplarını özgün ve çeviri olarak yayımlanan eserler aracılığıyla takip ederek, çeşitli aktarım süreçlerindeki çeviri kavramının farklı biçimlerinin ve tanımlarının incelikli betimlenmesine katkıda bulunmayı umuyorum.

**Introduction**

Translation historiography shares a similar faith with the historiography of children's literature in the histories of (national) literature. The attributed secondary position of translation as a practice and product coincides with the fact that children's literature is largely overlooked and/or sidelined by that for adults in the histories of (national) literature. This has resulted in a shadowy existence of translation and children's literature alike in the grand narratives of (national) literature(s).

The rise of a broad range of cultural issues (gender, post-colonialism, postmodernism, identities, etc.) during the 1980s and 1990s was reflected in the evolving trajectories of research subjects in historiography (White, 1987) and the historiography of literature(s) (Greenblatt, 1990). The major development in other disciplines has significant repercussions for the new directions that translation studies embarked on during the 1980s, with a special emphasis on the cultural context of the translation and its historicity rather than its



linguistic aspects. This new trend is called the “cultural turn” in Translation Studies (Lefevere and Bassnett, 1990, p. 4). With this historical watershed, translation studies as an independent discipline have displayed great interest in the histories of “the multifarious forms of translation (a process, a product, a trope, an institution, a theory, etc.)” (D’Hulst, 2010, p. 397) and translators (Robinson, 1991; Pym, 1998). Further, a distinct research line called “translator studies” (Chesterman, 2009) has been initiated for humanizing the historiographies of translation by highlighting the agency as a key factor in the movements of translations as products, practices, acts, etc. (Pym, 2009).

As for children’s literature studies, a major biennial conference of the International Research Society for Children’s Literature in 1989 was devoted to the history of children’s literature. However, the papers presented at this conference revealed the tendency to assimilate translation within the narratives of the development of national children’s literature (Nikolajeva, 1995). However, children’s literature has become a site of inquiry for translation scholars since the late 1980s, which coincided unsurprisingly with the cultural turn in translation studies. Notably, it has recently turned out to be one of the flourishing research fields in translation historiography from a vast number of perspectives such as literature (Shavit, 1986), ideology (Thomson-Wohlgemuth, 2003; Pokorn, 2012), and periodical studies (Tahir Gürçağlar, 2014). Following the steps of the pioneering studies challenging the double invisibility of translated children’s literature in historiography, which has resulted from having a lesser degree of prominence than adult’s literature and its derivative nature, this paper might be an attempt to widen the path to the historiography of translated children’s literature by exploring the complex relationships between translated literature for children and human agents (producers of translated literature for children) under the cultural and socio-political conditions in which it was produced. To this end, the cultural practices of pseudonymous publication in translated children’s literature with a historicized approach deserve special attention to unravel the hidden human agencies in the so-called complex mediation processes of children’s literature. This article provides a relational and historically bound understanding of these cultural practices in translated children’s literature from different historical periods in Türkiye. By tracing the behavioral patterns of human agents using pseudonyms and publishing children’s books anonymously, guided by bibliographically oriented research in literary translation, I hope to better describe the diversified forms and configurations of translation in various transfer processes, as well as contribute to the historiography of translated children’s literature and cultural mediators in Türkiye.

### **(In)visible human agents<sup>1</sup> in the field of literary translation**

The notion of (in)visibility was brought up along with the proliferating debates on the culturally and historically sensitive aspects of translation and translators within contemporary translation studies during the 1990s. The main argument put forward by Lawrence Venuti in his seminal work (1995/2008, p. 1) was that contemporary Anglophone readers opting for reading “fluent” texts being presented as “original” texts in the English language paves the way for the translator to produce “homogenized” translations, which renders the translator “invisible”. Since then, this overarching claim has been repeatedly challenged by a great number of studies (Pym, 1996) and elaborated from a variety of different viewpoints (Baker, 2000; Koskinen, 2010; Coldiron, 2012; Erkul Yağcı, 2021; Takahashi, 2023), which culminated in exploring wider and distinct contexts extending beyond the Anglophone world and material literary field(s) in Britain and the US (Milton & Bandia, 2009; Akashi, 2018; Zeller, 2021; Summers, 2023; Freeth & Treviño, 2024).

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<sup>1</sup>In this paper, the notion of agency is used in its restricted sense in that it is equated with individuals and/or human agents, which are the main problematic trope of the study.

In the context of the Turkish literature, numerous studies display a relatively higher level of visibility for human translators on paratextual and peritextual elements (Tahir Gürçağlar, 2008). Among the emerging topics of discussion regarding the (in)visibility of human translators are the discourses on translation and literature (Paker, 2006), digital platforms (Akgün, 2024), and fictitious narratives (Arı, 2021; Erkul Yağcı & Tahir Gürçağlar, 2024). The vast body of studies in the Turkish context overwhelmingly maps out the (in)visibility issues pertaining to literary translators for the adult audience by overlooking the explicit links of the translator with the field of children's literature even if there might be as such (Yılmaz Kutlay, 2015). It is safe to remark that scant attention is devoted to human agents in the field of Turkish children's literature. A trailblazing study focusing on translators of children's literature in Türkiye presents the diachronic analysis of paratextual and peritextual elements of translated children's books published between 1923 and 2013, which clearly shows a gradual rise in the visibility of translators on front covers and textual levels, such as prefaces, notes, etc., on a periodic basis (Kansu Yetkiner, Duman and Avşaroğlu, 2018).

Another research line in translated children's literature is to describe translation strategies and translators' textual choices, which implicitly reveals some hints about the (in)visibility of translators in children's literature. Contrary to Venuti's (1995/2008) best-seller claim, a well-established standard of fluency and comprehension in translated children's literature does not necessarily lead to the translators' invisibility in the Turkish context. An analysis of the Turkish (re)translations of *Little Black Fish* by Samad Bahrangi and its Persian source text (Eren Soysal, 2021) shows that the translators achieved a certain degree of visibility throughout the translations, even though they used a wide range of domestication and foreignization strategies. However, the study does not elaborately discuss the issue of translators' (in)visibility, as it is not the primary focus. Problematizing the impact of censorship mechanisms in Turkish children's literature, Neslihan Kansu-Yetkiner (2016) draws attention to various forms of censorship as a constitutive element for the common habitus of translators in the field of children's literature, which requires conducting a comprehensive empirical investigation of the habitus of translators of children's literature.

Despite a relatively increasing number of studies on translators of children's literature (Lathey, 2006, 2010; Borodo, 2017; Oittinen, 2020; Fornalczyk-Lipska, 2021) and a limited range of reflections and/or comments of translators on translating for children (Hirano, 2006; Bell, 2006; Şoran, 2017), translators of children's literature through history and, particularly human agency, remain less studied and need to be explored and discussed thoroughly. Researching specifically on pseudonymous publications within contextual and textual environments can significantly enhance our understanding of concepts and diverse translational practices across various cultures and literatures (Bai, 2014). Therefore, this paper serves as a preliminary step toward highlighting an overlooked gap in the translation of children's literature into Turkish within its socio-historical context. It proposes to establish a dialogic relationship between the production of translated and indigenous children's books, using the practices of pseudonymity in the field of children's literature in Türkiye.

This paper discusses a key issue that requires subtle attention: mediatorship in the history of children's literature. In the literature on translators of children's literature through history, the concept of translators and their translation strategies has been sought after to shed light on the textual production processes within the cultural system. However, Gillian Lathey (2010, p. 5) employs the concept of "invisible storytellers" to examine the impact of translators and translation on the history of English children's literature, drawing on the key notion of invisibility (Venuti, 1995/2008). Although she does not problematize the translatorship in children's literature extending from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries in the UK, the wide range of translation-related tasks and the high degree of textual alterations in the translations for children imply that translation producers' practices transcend beyond translatorship, which is a traditionally conceived construct in the literary studies for adults, and thus needs to be problematized in diverse translational

practices in the field of children's literature through history. Due to all these analytical concerns of historicizing the translational practices in children's literature, the concept of cultural mediatorship is adopted in this paper as an umbrella term, which is attributed to people "active across linguistic, artistic, and geographical borders and carriers of cultural transfers incarnating complex and multidirectional mediating practices" (D'Hulst et al. 2014, p. 1259). It not only denotes translation proper but also covers diverse textual practices related to translation, rewriting, and other textual modifications that might be undertaken in texts for children to delineate the underpinnings of mediatorship, which is directly pertinent to translatorship, in children's literature.

### Pseudonymity in (children's) literature

"Pseudonymous" is a form of anonymity assuming various forms such as a nickname, the name of a fictional character, or a proper name that might transcend gender, national, political, or professional boundaries. All forms of pseudonymity and fictitious authorship in publications "do not give a reference to the legal name of the empirical writer" (Griffin, 1999, p. 880).

The cultural practices of pseudonymous publication in the literary field are a popular research subject and are overwhelmingly dealt with in (adult) literary studies (Griffin, 2007; Matkovic, 2015; Zeller, 2021). The dictionaries and studies on pen names, pseudonyms, and anonymous publications exclude a special reference to children's literature and/or translated works (Griffin, 2003; Kopley, 2016). A similar deficit is observed in literary studies focusing on pen names and pseudonyms used throughout history in Türkiye (Semih, 1993; Yıldırım, 2006; Çetin, 2012). The majority of studies on pseudonyms have been conducted in the field of old Turkish literature and Ottoman literature in which there is a strong traditional background of the use of pseudonyms stemming from the Ottoman–Persian literary conventions. Furthermore, the research on the pseudonymous publications in modern Turkish literature mostly overlooked female authors and/or authors of children's literature.

In children's literature studies, there is a general finding regarding the status of translators throughout history, which is deemed to move from anonymity to "public recognition as professionals in Anglophone literary market" (Lathey, 2010, p. 201). This overarching finding resonates with the findings of the major study in the Turkish context, even if it is based on a very limited corpus of children's books (Kansu Yetkiner, Duman and Aşaroğlu 2018). However, the diversity and prevalence of the cultural practices of anonymous and pseudonymous publications in children's literature throughout history (Yaman Topaç, 2020) call for a more differentiated look, which this study attempts to display via several cases from various decades in the context of Turkish children's literature.

### Methodological framework

In his seminal work entitled *Method in Translation History*, Pym (1998, p. 4) defines translation history "as a unified area for the humanistic study of human translators and their social actions, both within and beyond their material translations." Translation history is essentially an accumulation of actions and agents leading to translations (or non-translations), the effects of translations (p. 5), and discourses on translations, which are all causally related phenomena. Pym sketches three areas for translation history, namely, translation archeology, historical criticism, and explanation. These are the pillars on which this study is based. Drawing on the bibliographical studies on translations and translators through history in Türkiye (Anamur, 2016; Öncü, 2017; Türkçe Çevirmenler Sözlüğü<sup>2</sup>, n.d.; *Retranslation Turkey*, n.d.<sup>3</sup>; Yaman Topaç, 2020),

<sup>2</sup>[https://translex.ege.edu.tr/tr-6067/turkce\\_cevirmenler\\_sozlugu.html](https://translex.ege.edu.tr/tr-6067/turkce_cevirmenler_sozlugu.html)

<sup>3</sup><https://retranslation-turkey.bogazici.edu.tr/content/about-bibliography>



and autobiographies and biographies of the relevant human agencies, this study tries to tackle the actions of cultural mediators accompanied by the textual movements within the given socio-historic context in line with the causal model (Chesterman, 2000) to strengthen the explanatory power of the study. The fact that the causal model accommodates interpretive, descriptive, explanatory, and predictive hypotheses (ibid) provides a solid springboard for unifying the socio-cultural, situational, and behavioral levels to grasp a comprehensive understanding of the relations among conditions, agencies, translations, and effects.

Within the purview of pseudonymous publications in the field of children's literature in Türkiye, human agencies acting as cultural mediators are the focal point of this study. Although translation histories are inherently microscopic, prominent translators or famous translation institutions have not been investigated until the introduction of microhistory to translation studies (Adamo, 2006). Microhistorians assert that people are to be viewed as "individuals who must not be lost either within the historical processes or in anonymous crowds" (Iggers, 1997, p. 103). Taking this microscopic point of view to translation history, translation researchers call for shifting the focus on the translators who have been excluded from the translation histories (Atefmehr & Farahzad, 2021). Following the call for focusing on translators from the microscopic perspective, this study employs the social and professional trajectory concept to unravel the intricate relations between pseudonyms and mediatorship in children's literature.

### Pseudonymous mediatorship

As a response to the plea called by Sergio Adamo (2006) for focusing on conventionally disregarded dimensions of a known person or phenomena in microhistorical research, this section mainly comprises case studies on the use of pseudonyms in the transfer processes of children's books at a differing scale. First, it sets out to unravel three cultural mediators creating a distinct mediatorship persona under a completely distinct pen name, who still remain unknown territories in the historiography of translated children's literature, and problematize the motives for adopting pseudonyms in the field of children's literature by reconstructing their social and professional trajectories in relation to writing/translating and translation-related activities in the Turkish cultural field. Second, it presents several cultural mediators adopting kinship terms for their pseudonyms in the children's literature.

#### Muzaffer Reşit/Yaşar Nabi Nayır

Yaşar Nabi Nayır (1908–1981), a prominent literary figure in the cultural field in Türkiye, played an active role in the construction of the modern literary canon in Turkish by founding the literary journal *Varlık* in 1933 and then *Varlık Publications* in 1946 (Nayır, 2010), which is one of the highly esteemed agents in the literary field. Being a fervent representative of Kemalist values (Binyazar, 2010), he set his publishing agenda for the dissemination of the values and principles of Turkish "republicanism" (Kahraman, 2010, p. 19), which was also complemented by being a literary hub for the birth and development of different literary styles and tastes and exploring new authorial voices in the literary field (Yücel, 1982). Through launching a separate series for children in 1951, he attempted to transfer the symbolic power his publishing house held to the emerging field of children's literature.

The social trajectory of Nayır is primarily defined by the sociocultural and economic characteristics of the Turkish upper class in Ottoman Rumelia, which has strong repercussions on the formation process of his professional trajectory. His solid and prestigious educational background paved the way for molding a rich array of literary tastes and shaping a unique literary persona on his own. Before his encompassing publishing activities, he had already been known as a poet, which was dating back to the pre-republican period. In addition to his poems, he was actively involved in writing and/or translating plays, novels, biographies, anthologies, literary criticisms, and stories from the first years of the early republican period until the end

of his life. He is also known for his translations from Panait Istrati, which were the first to introduce Balkan literature to the Turkish audience (İsen, 2010). Furthermore, he fulfilled an institutional mediating role by being recruited as an “advisor” for the series of Western and Eastern classics run by the Translation Bureau under the auspices of the Turkish Ministry of Education (Nayır, 2010, p. 87). In 1979, his lifelong publication activities and being a highbrow intellectual and literary figure were consecrated with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism special award, which underlines the formal canonization of his publishing activities.

In the trajectory of publishing activities of Nayır for children, his pseudonym, Muzaffer Reşit, appeared in the works presented as translations and indigenous children's books. No matter how many cases his pseudonym was used in the literary works (poems, translations of novels, short stories etc.) for adult readership<sup>4</sup> during the Ottoman and the republican periods, the first books addressing children as well as young adults, in which his pseudonym appeared, are a compilation of jokes entitled *Dünyanın En Güzel Fıkraları* [The Most Beautiful Jokes of the World] (prepared by Reşit, 1949b) and *En Güzel Türk Fıkraları* [The Most Beautiful Turkish Jokes] (prepared by Reşit, 1949c), both of which seem identical in terms of content. Both titles are presented with a foreword by Yaşar Nabi, which is stated on the title page of the work. This contributes to the construction of two authorial voices as distinct figures in the titles. These titles were published in the general series of the publishing house, which implies that the titles were targeted for the general audience including children and young adults as well because the series of children's books was officially launched in 1951. The other title, which was presented as the indigenous work of Muzaffer Reşit, is a compilation of Turkish poems entitled *Seçilmiş Çocuk Şiirleri* [Selected Children's Poems] (Reşit, 1958) with the attribute of “derliyen” [compiled by].

The use of pseudonyms in books specifically for children was first observed in the title *Kahraman İzciler* [Brave Scouts] (Reşit, 1949a). The next editions were, respectively, printed in 1958, 1963 and 1969 in the children's book series. In all the editions, the author's name was only displayed as “yazan” [written by] on the title page of the book instead of the front cover. The title was presented as an indigenous book to the target audience, although it carried the main characteristics of the Robinsonade genre, which destabilizes the attribute of indigenous or original writing in terms of being written in imitation of Defoe's Robinson narrative.

Nayır continued to use his pseudonym in the following translations for children entitled *Pinokyo* (Collodi, 1953) and *Defne Adası* (Stevenson, 1956). Both translations were credited to Muzaffer Reşit with the expression of “çeviren” [translated by] on the title page of the book.

As for his real name in the books for children, it first appeared on the spine and title page of the translated children's book entitled *İsviçreli Robenson* (Wyss, 1946), which is the first title in a separate series called “works for children and young adults” by Varlık. The name of the translator appeared on the spine of the book with the author's name and the title of the book. Yaşar Nabi Nayır is credited with “dilimize çeviren” [translated into our language by] on the title page of the book (Wyss, 1946), while its second edition was credited to Yaşar Nabi as “çeviren” [translated by] on the title page of the book (Wyss, 1953). The front covers of both books did not include the author's name; rather, it only reflected the title. The author's name only appeared on the title page of the books. The second translation, in which Yaşar Nabi's real name was imprinted, is *Robinson Crusoe İssız Adada* (De Foe, 1957) with the attribute of “kısaltarak çeviren” [shortened and translated by]. Both titles were Western classics, which were regarded as a product of high literature in the formation process of the formal canon for the Turkish-speaking children audience during the republican

<sup>4</sup>The first issue of Varlık includes two articles under the names of Yaşar Nabi and Muzaffer Reşit. There are also several translations published under his pseudonym for the adult readership, such as *Can Pazarı* (Malaparte, 1950), *Cennet Çayırları* (The Pastures of Heaven) (Steinbeck, 1952) and *Gün Ortasında Karanlık* (Koestler, 1952) to name a few.

period, even if the position of children's books tended to be regarded and positioned as low literature within the larger universe of the literary field. The established value ascribed to Western classics for children was further validated by the official recommendations of the Ministry of National Education during the 1950s, as explicitly stated on the back cover of the title (Wyss, 1953).

A chronological look at the titles, including the pseudonym, suggests that he sought protection from any kind of association with a specific genre aiming to entertain the target audience. The relevant cases exemplify indigenous adventure stories and jokes for children in a period when "high" literary works were praised and recommended for them as reading for leisure was despised and not allowed for children (Cantek, 1996; Tunç, 2018). Thus, he published his translations, each of which was a constitutive part of the canonical literature and an appropriate reading material for children under his real name. His non-systematic use of the pseudonym in the general trajectory of his translations for adult and child readership might indicate his desire to create an illusion of having a more crowded group of translators as the successively published translations under the same name did not meet the requirements of being a highbrow literary publisher.

### Cüneyd Emiroğlu/Kadir Mısıroğlu

Kadir Mısıroğlu (1933–2019), an ardent supporter of neo-Ottomanism and a severe critic of republicanism, published his translations and indigenous titles for children under the pseudonym of Cüneyd Emiroğlu between 1972 and 1974.

The social trajectory of Mısıroğlu is shaped by the particularities of middle-class families moving from the village to the center of the rural town, Trabzon (Mısıroğlu, 2019). He learned the Arabic script as a child, which is a common practice among the children living in the rural towns across the country. After graduating from Trabzon High School, he started to study law at Istanbul University in 1954. He was involved in political affairs and was highly politicized as a university student by engaging discreetly or indiscreetly with a variety of ideological groups such as conservatives, nationalists, ultra-nationalists, and Islamists. He was also dealing with trade and other types of business such as running a tour company organizing Islamic pilgrimage tours to Saudi Arabia and managing university dormitories in Istanbul (Mısıroğlu, 1993). Building a larger network of different ideological groups and segments of society for his publication activities, he first founded Sebil Publishing House in 1964 and launched a series of children's books in 1972, when the publishing activities of children's literature were becoming popular and prevalent with the increasing number of publishers for children. In 1976, he started to publish the weekly periodical Sebil with a strong Islamist tendency.

The pseudonym of Cüneyd Emiroğlu appeared in three children's books, one of which is presented as an indigenous title (Seyfettin, 1972). The other two are presented to the target audience as translations (Kahun, 1972; Porter, 1972), yet they underwent diverging transfer processes as the attributes of the mediating role imply. Although the story entitled *And* by Ömer Seyfettin belongs to the Turkish literary system, the case in question reveals a certain type of mediation in accommodating the linguistic features of the indigenous work to the expectations of the newly designated readership and the linguistic norms of the period<sup>5</sup>, which is a prototypical example of intralingual translation (Jakobson, 2000). As such, the mediating role of Mısıroğlu is specified by the attribute of "sadeleştiren" [simplified by] on the title page of *And*, which is identical to the mediating role defined as "sadeleştiren" [simplified by] in the three volumes of *Gök Bayrak* by Leon Kahun. The latter case illustrates a translational chain roughly consisting of two phases. First, it was translated into Ottoman Turkish by Galib Bahtiyar, which was then simplified by Mısıroğlu. However, the process of implication involves the varying degrees of linguistic and cultural transfer from a different alphabet and

<sup>5</sup>It should be noted that the linguistic norms were not a subject of unanimity shared by all groups of people in Türkiye; rather, they stimulated vigorous debate and criticisms shaped by the deeply entrenched presuppositions of the ideological factions (Levend, 1960; Safa, 1970).



language for a completely distinct readership assigned with differing functions in the 1970s. The last title, the most reprinted and retranslated work of the 1970s in Turkish (Yaman Topaç, 2020), is a romance fiction targeted specifically for girls. Since it is an interlingual translation (Jakobson, 2000), the mediating role is subtly defined as “çeviren” [translated by] under the pseudonym.

As for the indigenous historical fictions, there are cases in which his pseudonym was employed (Emiroğlu, 1972a; 1972b), while his real name appeared in three indigenous historical fictions (Mısıroğlu, 1972a; 1972b; 1975) for children. The main difference between the two groups of titles credited with his pseudonym and his real name is the content and/or genre of the narratives. The titles in which his pseudonym appeared are *Dede Korkut*, a traditional folk tale, and *Perili Köşk*, a collection of short stories, while the titles credited with his real name include historical novels, which are not exclusively crafted for child readership; instead, they seem to address a wide audience in terms of their narrative and linguistic composition.

It is observed that Mısıroğlu preferred to launch the children's book series by publishing the titles under his pseudonym and, afterward, put his real name on the subsequent indigenous books for children. Although these indigenous titles were first published in the children's books series of Sebil, they have been continuously reprinted as historical fiction for adult readers since the 1990s, indicating that they have become an indispensable part of the complete anthology of Mısıroğlu for adult audiences. His publications for children were ideologically motivated and bore the aim of teaching children the glorified Islamic past of the Turks by reclaiming the Ottoman heritage. However, during the decade, his publishing house and publishing activities for children and adults were largely limited and he held a marginal position in the literary field in Turkey, yet for the next decades, he would thrive in various fields of culture. Therefore, during the period when children's literature witnessed the most vivid discussions regarding the literature and tensions among numerous ideological rivalries reaching its highest point, Mısıroğlu adopted the pseudonym as a tool of empowerment and extension of his authorial and/or translatorial identity, which created the illusion of having one more translator or writer at his publishing house. It also functioned as a detachment of his authorial identity for the adult readership from that for the child readership.

## R. Tomris/Tomris Uyar

Tomris Uyar (1941-2003), a renowned translator and writer in the Turkish literary field, is one of the cultural mediators adopting a pseudonym in her translations of children's books.

The social trajectory of Uyar has been marked by the characteristics of an upper-class family in Istanbul, which translates into having quality education at the most prestigious schools such as the British Girls' Secondary School and the Arnavutköy American Girls' College. Having started to translate some excerpts and passages from the literary works in textbooks as early as during her secondary school education (Uyar, 2016), she embarked on her career as a translator in high school. After holding a bachelor's degree, she began to engage in producing short stories, literary criticisms, and essays. She systematically employed her pseudonym, R. Tomris, in her writings in the distinguished literary magazine *Papirüs* and her translations for adult and/or young adult readership, such as poems (Apollinaire, 1965) and for children, such as tales (Tagore, 1967), until 1969 when she married Turgut Uyar, a well-known poet in the literary field. In both translations, there is the same attribution to the cultural mediator as such “çeviren” [translated by]. Her pseudonym appeared on the front cover of the poem for adults, while her pseudonym was available on the title page of the children's book. Moreover, the short story entitled *Küçük Prenses* (The Little Prince) was credited with her pseudonym on the front cover and the title page (Saint-Exupery, 1965); however, it should be noted that the book was published by Bilgi, one of the most respected publishers in the field of (adult) literature, even if it was published as a part of the series called *Büyükler Küçükler Masalları* [Fairy Tales for Adults and Minors], which was short-lived. After the marriage, her pseudonym appeared as R. Tomris Uyar in

her translation of a short story for adults on the front cover and the title page of the book (Fitzgerald, 1968). Starting from 1969 onwards, which marked the establishment of her authorial identity, her translations (Poe, 1969; Carroll, 1976; Gaines, 1980) and indigenous works (Uyar, 1971; 1973) were credited with her real name in the field of literature for adult and child readers. The short story entitled *Altın Böcek* by Poe is credited for Uyar as “çeviren” [translated by], which reflected her real name on the title page of the children's book. The children's novel *Alis in short* (Carroll, 1976) and the children's story entitled *Gök Nasıl Da Karardı* (The Sky is Gray) are attributed to Uyar as “Türkçesi” [translated into Turkish by] on the title page of the books.

For Uyar, the translation activities primarily fulfilled both “personal and professional purposes”, as such to develop her mother tongue and become a writer (İlgin, 2019, p. 30), and was “a source of additional income” for her (İlgin, 2019, p. 46). Therefore, the systematic use of the pseudonym in her translations and writings before proving her conspicuous authorial identity functioned as an economic and literary tool for mastering her literary skills with a shield to protect her developing authorial identity from harsh criticisms and/or prejudices.

### İhmal Uncle/Vartan İhmalyan

Vartan İhmalyan (1913-1987), a translator and author in the field of Turkish children's literature, is the sole individual among the four cases who exclusively employs only the pseudonym in all his works regardless of being a translation and indigenous title.

The social trajectory of İhmalyan has its own particularities due to his non-Muslim identity in the Ottoman and republican periods. His family was among the wealthiest townspeople in a rural town, Konya; yet, in 1919, when they had to move to Istanbul, their properties were confiscated by the national forces (İhmalyan, 2012) even if these assets and properties were called as “abandoned” and/or “left behind” by the non-Muslim groups (Gözel Durmaz, 2015). Therefore, they had to survive living in poverty in Istanbul. Despite all the derogatory living conditions, İhmalyan managed to get a quality education by attending several schools of Catholics and Armenians, and finally, Robert College. He became a member of the Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) and had close relations with the leftist literary figures in Türkiye. His poems and essays were published in an Armenian newspaper entitled *Nor or* [New Day] in the 1940s. Due to his involvement with political activities, he was detained several times and left the country for good in 1948 (İhmalyan, 2012). Living in various countries such as France, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, China and Soviet Russia, he continued to work closely with the literary circles in Türkiye, which is exemplified by his works for Turkish-speaking children published by *Arkadaş Kitaplar*, the children's book section of Cem Publishing House.

All the indigenous works and translations of İhmalyan for children were credited for “İhmal Amca” [İhmal Uncle], which functions as the pseudonym of İhmalyan. The suffix *-yan* [tułu in Armenian], meaning belonging to a particular class, group, family, etc. (Nişanyan, 2016), was omitted in the pseudonym, by which it was transformed into a Turkish word and, by doing this, it raises a substantial degree of curiosity among the target audience since it literally means negligence in English. This omission might be functioning as a tool to refrain from any kind of literary and political embargo on the title due to İhmalyan's political stance. It could also be better understood with the practice that Armenian citizens of Türkiye encountered upon the adoption of the Surname Law in 1934, who were coercively forced to take up Turkified surnames by the state (Türköz, 2017) and, in return, accepted to take up those surnames to partly hide their ethnic identity because of the ultranationalist state policies and their grave repercussions especially for the non-Muslim citizens of Türkiye from the late 1930s onwards (Çagaptay, 2004).

İhmalyan wrote fairy tales for children in Turkish, which are chronologically entitled *Şeytan Uçurtması* (1975), *Güneşe Vurgun Çocuk* (1978), *Boyalı Kırlangıç* (1980a) and *Eşek Eşekken* (1980b) under his pseudonym

İhmal Uncle, which was visible on the front covers and the title pages of the books. It is noteworthy that his first indigenous title was accompanied by a foreword by the author under his real name. He also translated a collection of short stories (*Danko'nun Yüreği*) by Maxim Gorky (Gorki, 1978) from Russian into Turkish for children. It was credited with İhmalyan as “Ruşçadan çeviren” [translated from Russian by] on the title page of the title, while the front cover reflected only the author's name and the title of the book.

Adopting kinship terms (uncle, grandpa, and grandma etc.) as pseudonyms in the complex transfer process of fairy tales, fables, and short stories for younger children was found to be prevalent during different decades in the field of Turkish children's literature. This attitude was taken up by some authors and translators in the fairy tales, fables, and short stories for pre-school and/or school-aged children (number of pages ranging from 16 to 32). Mehmet Faruk Gürtunca (1904-1982), a teacher and children's book publisher, adopted several pseudonyms such as *Gürtunca Dede* [Gürtunca Grandpa] and *Büyük Anne* [Grandma] in his chapbooks with 16, 32 or 42 pages for children (Gürtunca Dede, 1974; Büyük Anne, 1973). During the 1940s, the fairy tales and folk tales collected and/or written by Eflatun Cem Güney (1896-1981), a distinguished folklorist in Türkiye, were published for children under the pseudonym of *Masalıcı Baba* [Storyteller Dad] by Ahmet Halit Book House (Masalıcı Baba, 1946). Naki Tezel's fairy tales and folk tales were published for children under the pseudonym of *Tezel Amca* [Tezel Uncle] by Varlık (Tezel Amca, 1967). The pseudonyms including kinship terms might reflect the repercussions of oral culture, which had a stronger background than written culture in Anatolia, on the authorship of modern (illustrated) books for preschool and/or school-aged children. They might also portray a child-friendly attitude to ease the interaction of the children with the books by resorting to familiar nicknames in the books, which represents a distinct aspect of cultural mediatorship in the complex transfer mechanisms of children's books.

## Discussion

Pseudonyms act as a lens that deserves special attention not only in elaborating on the (in)visibility of human agents but also in grasping a better understanding of the actions of cultural mediators.

The four cases, which were randomly selected based on the variance of social background from different periods, were examined with the microhistorical perspective in that the interaction of social and professional trajectories of cultural mediators was analyzed in relation to the use of pseudonyms in children's books. Each case possesses unique characteristics that are shaped by its unique sociocultural, literary, and economic conditions, which influence the motivations behind the preference for pseudonyms in children's literature. Depending on the subjectivities of the human agents (personal histories, sociohistorical circumstances and constraints, and the conception of translation and children's literature), the motives for using pseudonyms in children's translations vary. The case of Nayır implies that pseudonymous publications for children took place because of the need to create a separate authorial identity first for the indigenous books for children and then to sustain the pseudonymous identity in the translated children's books. This attitude undermines the established hierarchy between translation and original in children's literature, suggesting that the literary and non-literary aspects of value creation significantly influence the decision to use a pseudonym or real name in translations and indigenous works for children. Moreover, it is noteworthy that Nayır exclusively used his real name in his translations of Western canonical literary works, which were recommended for all state and private schools by the Ministry of National Education. Thus, it marks a subtle distinction between the high and low literary values assigned to children's books, based on their genres and/or contents. The case of İhmalyan using a pseudonym revealed the sociopolitical constraints he confronted before and during the 1970s, while the case of Mısıroğlu indicated that the pseudonym might function as a tool to refrain from any association with specific texts —exclusively translated children's books — by opting for crediting his indigenous works with his real name. The case of Uyar, a conscious translator

contemplating her translation activities and merging her identities as a translator and an author, exemplified her adoption of a pseudonym as a means to cultivate her authorial/translatorial identity, hone her language skills, and satisfy her financial requirements, irrespective of the established hierarchy between translated and indigenous children's books.

Placing the pseudonyms on the front covers or title pages of the children's books has varied according to the editorial and book design strategies of the publishing houses. The overwhelming tendency in all the cases was to put the pseudonyms of cultural mediators on the title pages, while the front covers featured the title of the books and, to some extent, the author's name. In the children's books mediated by Nayır, only the title and the name of the series appeared on the front covers, while the names of the authors and cultural mediators were available on the title page. The first title for children and youth before launching the separate children's book series by Varlık reflected the real name of the cultural mediator, Nayır, on the spine of the book, which was exceptional in the corpus mediated by Nayır. After launching the children's book series in 1951, the cover design and layout were standardized in a strict way, which reflected only the title of the books and the name of the series. Therefore, there was no marked differentiation between the pseudonyms and real names in terms of the location where they appeared in the children's books. The case of Mısıroğlu displays that his pseudonym was only put on the title pages of the translated works, whereas his real name appeared on the front covers, all of which were presented as original works. Moreover, his pseudonym appeared on the front cover of the original work, which confirms the traditional dichotomy between the original and translation in terms of the cultural value. This is further exemplified by the intralingual translations (the works by Ömer Seyfettin and Leon Kahun), which reflect the name of the cultural mediator only on the title page. The case of Uyar presents some complexities to a certain degree in terms of the place in which her name appeared in the children's books since all titles mediated by Uyar were published by several publishing houses following distinct editorial policies. The children's book publishers tended to put the name of the cultural mediator on the title page of the books rather than the front cover regardless of her pseudonym and/or real name. This is further confirmed by the case of İhmalyan, which was visible on the title page of the translation. There is a temporal shift from the fact that the authorial identity was not visible on the front cover of the translated and indigenous children's books published by Varlık to the visible presence of the authorial identity in the translated and indigenous children's books of other publishers, such as Sebil and Cem. The visibility of authorial identity is accompanied by the partial visibility of cultural mediators, which is slightly different from the identification of the partial visibility and/or secondary position of translators in the field of popular literature between 1923 and 1960 in Türkiye (Tahir Gürçağlar, 2008), since they appeared only on the title page of the books rather than the front covers. It is noteworthy that the (partial) visibility of cultural mediators has a strong correlation with the target age group of the children's books and the genre, which translates into the fact that cultural mediators and their textual practices become invisible and/or blurry in the books for younger children.

The descriptions used for the textual actions of cultural mediators reveal a great variety of text production practices, blurring the fine line between the traditional conception of translation (Jakobson, 2000) and indigenous and/or original work, which is assumed not to be derived from any other source in its entirety. Two tropes, the cluster concepts of "translation" and "told/narrated by," define pseudonymous mediatorship. Thus, pseudonymous storytellers and/or narrators manage to shape their own hybrid intercultural activities and identities in relation to linguistic, cultural, and political history—developing a variety of institutional mediating roles, blurring the boundaries between writing and translating in favor of the writerly role, and obscuring the relations between original and derivative products in favor of the former.

The pseudonyms in translated children's books were addressed through translators and/or mediators stated on the cover or title page of the books. It is worth noting that the pseudonyms as a social practice in

the field of children's literature were adopted by the authors without on a specific period and/or literature through history. The variance in placing the pseudonyms on the covers or title pages of the children's books implies the weak construction of authorial identity in the field of translated children's literature. As for the cultural mediators using pseudonyms, which varied from initials and kinship titles to full names, it can be ascertained that their preference for using pseudonyms was not markedly determined by the translated and/or indigenous literary works for children. It is evident that the pseudonyms explicitly signify a substantial degree of stratification among genres and types of children's books based on the target audience age due to two factors. One is that the pseudonyms, including kinship terms such as uncle, grandma, and grandpa, were overwhelmingly adopted in fairy tales and illustrated stories for preschool and school-aged children. Contrary to western classics for children, there is a tendency to use pseudonyms in works that are considered less literary. This culminates in a practice that is considered less legitimate and is limited to a minor genre, catering to a less legitimate readership.

### Concluding remarks

This study was conducted with the aim of examining the pseudonymous publications and their repercussions on the concept of cultural mediatorship in the field of children's literature. This study attempts to illuminate the (re)humanizing aspect of translation studies in an under-explored domain by examining the pseudonyms used by cultural mediators in translated and indigenous children's literature in Türkiye, with an emphasis on their motives. It also seeks to enhance the nuanced understanding of cultural mediator roles across a spectrum of interconnected textual practices and and/or tasks in the form of translation, compilation, simplification, etc.

The pseudonymous publications in the field of literature have the potential to shed light on the dynamic relations between the time- and culture-bound concepts of translation and original, which contributes to a better understanding of human agency, the socio-political constraints under which cultural mediators worked, how translated and original works were presented, and the blurred text-production practices that transgress and intersect the assumed borders of translation and original in a given socio-historic context.



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