Classification of the Primary Sources of Children's Literature in Greek in the Decade 1995–2005, with the Assistance of Data Analysis Methods

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This paper attempts to chart the landscape in literature for children and young people by examining data such as subject matter, first-person and third-person narration, characters (gender, age), year of initial publication, re-issues, gender of author, age of author at initial publication, place of issue, illustration, originality and parody (adaptations). Based on the data collected, this paper proposes a classification for the body of Greek literature for children and young people that is being investigated.

Introduction

The torrent of books published for children and adolescents in Greece during the decade 1995–2005, in conjunction with the fact that after 1995 these books have not been listed (those listed up to 1995 can be found at www.cc.uoa.gr/ptde), led us to create a database and to study it on the basis of Multidimensional Statistical Analysis.

The aims of our research, part of which we are presenting here based on the data available to date, are:

- To list the books regarded as literature for children and adolescents that were published in Greece for the first time between 1995 and 2005 or that were re-issued during this decade.

- To seek and investigate the internal and external features that characterise these literary books (subjects, narrator, gender and age of literary character, illustration, publisher, gender and age of author, age of narratee and others).

- To make a comparative study of the above parameters.

- To draw conclusions that will make it possible to chart the landscape of children's and adolescent literature in Greece as fully as possible.

We initially created a database of the books included in the survey, which are examined in terms of twenty variables. This database was created either by reading the texts, having recourse to other bibliographical sources, or through book presentations. Next we codified the variables and processed the data. And finally, based on the criteria resulting from the data processing, we classified them. The method we used was Data Analysis and in particular Correspondence Analysis and Cluster Analysis.

Findings

We listed 2,645 books for children that were published for the first time or re-issued in Greece between 1995 and 2005. Of them, 1,826 were written by Greeks and 835 were translations into Greek of books by foreign authors. The processing of the material provided the following data:

Table 1: *Subject matter*

No.	Subject matter	Frequency	Percentage
1	Fantasy	272	10.28%
2	Adventure	212	8.01%
3	Miscellaneous	176	6.65%
4	Ecology	107	4.04%
5	No data	95	3.59%
6	Seasonal	92	3.48%
7	Daily life, Neighbourhood	91	3.44%
8	Mystery	91	3.44%
9	History	82	3.10%
10	Love, Human relations	65	2.46%
11	Family	63	2.38%
12	Human and social relations	62	2.34%
13	Folk culture – Tradition	58	2.19%
14	Science fiction	56	2.12%
15	Animals	51	1.93%

Table 2: *Literary genre*

No.	Literary genre	Frequency	Percentage
1	Novel	1,450	55.15%
2	Folktale, Fable	224	8.52%

3	Tale	209	7.95%
4	Myth	141	5.36%
5	Literary book + Informational book	125	4.75%
6	Short story	100	3.80%
7	Poetry	84	3.20%
8	Play	41	1.56%

It should be pointed out that the heading "Literary book + Informational book" refers to books that convey information and are written in a literary style, not a literary work that contains information. The predominance of the novel over other genres is due to the fact that many of the books in our survey were translated novels for adolescents. Also, the fact that most texts are addressed to young people favours the larger numbers of traditional novels revolving around character or plot (character oriented or plot oriented). Folktales, fables and tales are also present in significant overall numbers. They are addressed to younger children (preschool and early school years) and aim to entertain as well as to transmit values and ideological messages in the humorous manner of a story or a fairy tale that is more fun for children of this age to read. The presence of poetry is low, owing to the more general trend of children not reading poetry. Significantly reduced is the number of plays published; these are usually written to be played in children's theatres or in schools, in which case they are usually of a festive or holiday nature.

Using the criterion of "originality", the field of children's books is seen as follows:

Table 3: *Originality of books*

No.	Originality	Frequency	Percentage
1	Original	1,597	60.90%
2	Adaptation	190	7.25%
3	Translation	835	31.85%

In accordance with Table 3, most books for children and adolescents are written by Greeks, although there are also a fairly large number of translations into Greek of books in this decade. The chronological evolution of the translation field can be charted as follows:

Table 4: *Translations*

No.	Year of Translation	Frequency	Percentage of the whole	Percentage of translations
1	Before 1995[1]	195	7.37%	23.40%
2	1995	36	1.36%	4.32%

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[1] Referring to the two or three years immediately prior to 1995.

No.	Year of Translation	Frequency	Percentage of the whole	Percentage of translations
3	1996	57	2.15%	6.84%
4	1997	31	1.17%	3.72%
5	1998	52	1.97%	6.24%
6	1999	54	2.04%	6.48%
7	2000	60	2.27%	7.20%
8	2001	65	2.46%	7.80%
9	2002	34	1.28%	4.08%
10	2003	106	4.01%	12.73%
11	2004	128	4.84%	15.37%
12	2005	15	0.57%	1.80%

Translations in the years 2003–2004 presented an upward trend. We do not as yet have all the figures for 2005.

Table 5: *Source language of translated books*

No.	Source language	Frequency	Percentage of total books	Percentage of total translations
1	English	537	20.29%	64.93%
2	French	135	5.10%	16.32%
3	German	46	1.74%	5.56%
4	Spanish	20	0.76%	2.42%
5	Italian	13	0.49%	1.57%
6	Russian	6	0.23%	0.72%
7	Norwegian	1	0.04%	0.12%
8	Other languages	14	0.53%	1.69%

Table 5 shows that the texts translated are mainly from the so-called dominant languages.

Table 6: *Age group being addressed*

No.	Age group being addressed	Frequency	Percentage
1	Preschool (0–5)	82	3.10%
2	Early elementary school (6–7)	862	32.60%
3	Elementary school (8–12)	824	31.16%
4	Adolescent (13–18)	562	21.26%
5	No data	314	11.88%

Table 6 shows the interest of Greek parents in orienting their children towards reading literary texts from preschool age. We note that the largest percentage of books listed is addressed to children of school age generally, with a minor decrease

for adolescents, most probably because the latter are starting to think about their studies for a career. Significantly fewer than the books in other categories are those addressed to preschool children, which means that there is a need for texts appropriate to this age.

Table 7 below reveals that most of the books for children and young people that have been published in Greece have many pages, and a significant number of books range between 80 and 200 pages. However, authors also write books with fewer pages, so that readers and their parents have many alternatives to choose from:

Table 7: *Number of pages*

No.	Number of pages	Frequency	Percentage
1	1–16	12	0.45%
2	17–32	169	6.40%
3	33–48	243	9.21%
4	49–79	298	11.29%
5	81–120	296	11.22%
6	121–160	283	10.72%
7	161–200	161	6.10%
8	>200	347	13.15%
9	Without page numbers	149	5.65%

In terms of illustration, children's literature is full of pictures, irrespective of their extent, quantity or quality, all of which depend on the age group to which the book is addressed. The younger the age group, the more extensive, rich and qualitatively better are the illustrations. Many literary tales by known authors or adaptations of literary texts from the nineteenth century (Papadiamantis, Vizyenos, Karkavitsas) are accompanied by lavish, high quality illustrations:

Table 8: *Illustrations*

No.	Illustration	Frequency	Percentage
1	YES	1,796	68.73%
2	NO	536	20.51%

Table 9: *Gender of author*

No.	Gender of author/poet	Frequency	Percentage
1	Female	1,508	57.44%
2	Male	941	35.83%
3	Male + Female	72	2.74%
4	Male + Male	26	0.99%
5	Female + Female	17	0.65%

In Table 9, it can be seen that most books are written by women. This may perhaps be due to the fact that women are regarded as more demonstrative and sensitive to children's needs. At the same time, feminist theory that women have a dynamic role to play as writers is confirmed.

As regards the gender of the protagonist, our data lead to the following conclusions:

Table 10: *Gender of hero*

No.	Gender of hero	Frequency	Percentage
1	Human male	433	16.36%
2	Human female	219	8.28%
3	Four-legged animal	173	6.54%
4	Child (of either sex)	117	4.42%
5	Inanimate objects	115	4.35%
6	Human male + Human female	105	3.97%
7	Birds	54	2.04%
8	Creatures (in general)	52	1.97%
9	Nature + Elements of nature	37	1.40%
10	Plants	30	1.13%
11	Fish and Marine creatures	27	1.02%
12	Insects	20	0.76%
13	Reptiles	16	0.60%
14	No data	1,248	47.17%

According to feminist criticism, these data indicate the patriarchal character of Greek and translated children's literature. The significant presence of non-human beings (nature and creatures of nature) supports the view that animal realism and the attribution of anthropomorphic qualities to animals play an important role as narrative content, as actants and as narratees.

Table 11: *Age of literary protagonist*

No.	Age of literary protagonist	Frequency	Percentage
1	Non-human	476	18.02%
2	Elementary school age	337	12.76%
3	Adult	258	9.77%
4	Adolescent	147	5.56%
5	Elementary school age + Adult	78	2.95%
6	Adolescent + Adult	37	1.40%
7	Small child	27	1.02%
8	Elementary school age + Adolescent	5	1.19%

9	Small child + Elementary school age	4	0.15%
10	Embryo	3	0.11%
11	Human without age	3	0.11%
12	No data	1,267	47.96%

This table shows that authors prefer a main hero, primarily a child of elementary school age and secondarily, an adult. The significant number of adult protagonists, however, indicates that in a text for children or adolescents, it is not necessary for the hero to be a child or young person. It is characteristic that the leading role is played by children, adults or adolescents alone, in order of preference, and that combinations of these age groups do not appear frequently.

The heading "No data" in the last two tables is due to the fact that the parameter in question has not yet been recorded for many translations and for a number of Greek books as well.

Collating the data we have as regards subject matter and genre of literature, the following picture emerges:

Table 12: *Subject – Literary genre*

Literary genre	Subject						
	Family	Fantasy	Science Fiction	Ecology	Adventure	History	Mystery
Folktale-Fable	4	35	2	15	4	3	0
Myth	2	20	6	15	13	0	0
Short story	1	5	0	3	0	4	0
Novel	41	114	45	31	156	56	91
Poetry	2	3	0	6	0	0	0
Play	0	2	2	2	1	1	0
Literature Book + Informational Book	4	2	1	20	3	8	1
Biography	0	0	0	2	0	5	1
Tale	7	34	0	10	18	2	0

Table 12 gives us an opportunity to ascertain which literary genre is preferred for a particular subject. We selected seven of our twelve categories for detailed discussion, and found that the novel is the preferred genre: family 41; fantasy 114; science fiction 45; ecology 31; adventure 156; history 56 and mystery 91. Wherever it is possible for the theme to be developed in other literary genres, such as tales, authors use them too. Science fiction and mysteries, as subjects, cannot be developed in a short tale or a poem, which is why they do not appear in these genres. On the contrary, myths, folktales, fables and tales are appropriate for many subjects, such

as family, fiction and ecology. The short story, owing to its difficult technique, is not usually selected for the subjects we are investigating, while poetry is not particularly suitable for the wide variety of subject matter in children's books. Thus the correlation that governs the parameters of subject and literary genre can be found in particular in the novel, which allows a topic to be developed comfortably, and then folktales and fables and tales.

Table 13: *Subject – Gender of author*

No	Theme	Written by	
		Man	Woman
1	Family	17	40
2	Antiquity	3	33
3	Sport	13	12
4	Fantasy	141	124
5	Ecology	29	75
6	Adventure	105	70
7	Science fiction	24	27
8	Historical	30	49
9	Mystery	20	68

Table 13 investigates the correlation between subject matter and gender of the author and shows that more men than women write fiction and adventure books. By contrast, women writers are more likely than men to take up ecological or family subjects and to write mystery stories.

Table 14: *Literary genre – Gender of author*

No	Literary genre	Written by	
		Man	Woman
1	Folktale + Fable	68	149
2	Myth	18	120
3	Short story	49	37
4	Novel	554	787
5	Poetry	26	26
6	Play	19	19
7	Tales	58	113

The literary genre that prevails in Greece is the novel, written by 554 men and 787 women. In addition, 68 folk tales or fables were written by men and 149 by women. More women than men are systematically involved in writing myths and tales.

On the other hand, the short story draws the attention of men more than women. Indeed, it is the only literary genre in which men are more active, possibly because of their traditional reputation for being more taciturn.

Table 15: *Gender of author – Gender of hero*

Gender of hero	Written by				
	Man	Woman	Man + Woman	Man + Man	Woman + Woman
Man	152	264	4	10	2
Woman	46	168	0	3	1
Child (of either sex)	26	80	10	0	1
Man + Woman	35	62	6	0	1
Nature–elements of nature	11	25	0	1	0
Birds	12	39	0	0	0
Insects	4	14	1	0	0
Four-legged animals	50	113	4	0	2
Reptiles	4	12	0	0	0
Plants	10	19	1	0	0
Fish + Marine creatures	11	16	0	0	0
Inanimate objects	21	92	2	0	0
Imaginary creatures	20	32	0	0	0

Table 15 indicates the gender of heroes preferred by authors according to the writer's gender. Interesting data emerged only in terms of the human race. We shall not comment on the rest, despite the interesting identity of some heroes, for the present. It is interesting that both men and women as writers of literary texts choose male heroes. In 152 texts by male authors, the protagonist is male, while in 264 texts by women, the main hero is likewise a male.

The woman as protagonist is of particular interest. Only 46 literary texts written by men have a female protagonist while in 168 literary texts written by women the protagonist is female. However, in the texts written by two authors, regardless of their gender, the male protagonist seems to hold the leading role. In 20 texts recorded in this category only in 4 of them is the protagonist a female.

These findings lead to the general conclusion that the protagonist is mostly male (432 texts with a male protagonist in contrast to 218 where the protagonist is female), which proves that despite some feminist views distinguishing certain authors, mainly women, the texts are written under patriarchal perceptions, which give priority to the male protagonist.

Table 16: *Gender of author – Age of hero*

Age of hero	Written by	
	Man	Woman
Embryo	1	2
Baby	4	23
Elementary school age	102	220
Adolescent	45	101
Elementary school age + Adolescent	0	5
Adult	88	152
Elementary school age + Adult	15	61
Adolescent + Adult	9	27
Baby + Elementary school age	1	3
Non-human	122	34
Human of unspecified age	0	3
No data	552	575

The correlation between gender of author and age of hero is considered significant in investigating the age of the heroes preferred by men and women writers. When the author is a man, he appears to prefer as a literary character in order of preference: non-humans, children of elementary school age, and an adult; while the woman writer prefers to create a hero of elementary school age, an adult and an adolescent, in that order. The correlation that governs the sex of the author and the age of the literary hero is not simple. It is influenced by the gender and nature of the author, and for this reason they are differentiated in terms of both age and protagonist.

Table 17: *Gender of author – Age of reader being addressed*

Age of reader being addressed	Written by	
	Man	Woman
Preschool	22	58
Early school years	255	530
School age	258	518
Adolescent	260	254

In Table 17, we can see the relationship between gender of author and age of target reader. The figures here show only a marginal difference in the preference of male writers for addressing readers of early school age, school age and adolescents. By contrast, women writers have a widely differing distribution regarding the age of

their target readers, and there is no correspondence with male writers. Women prefer to write for children of early school age (530 texts) and school age (518 texts). This preference may be attributed to maternal tenderness and sensitivity, which is found more in women than men, according to conditions in Greek society. The difference in the number of books addressed to other ages is significant. Just 264 books by female writers are addressed to adolescents, and significantly fewer to preschool children. The other data cannot be assessed at the present time.

Results of the Correspondence Analysis

Correspondence Analysis leads mainly to two factors. Factor 1 differentiates books with many pages, novels addressed to adolescents translated comparatively recently (2002–2004), the original language being English, French or German, in order of frequency, and on subjects that include mysteries, adventures and police fiction, in order of preference, written by a man, from original books written in Greek, in a third-person narrative, in which the hero is a non-human, and addressed to early elementary school age children. In terms of the literary genre, tales are preferred, followed by folktales with a male human as hero or four-legged animals, addressed to younger children. The writer is a woman.

According to factor 1, a contrast is revealed between the language of the original addressed to young children and the translated literary text addressed to adolescents. That is, purely Greek literary texts are addressed to younger children, while the translations are addressed to adolescents.

Factor 2 distinguishes the translated texts from books written in Greek. More specifically, the translated texts are published in Athens and addressed to young children. The hero is not a human (mainly four-legged animals), they are illustrated, with unnumbered pages, and as regards the literary genre, are myths. The original language is either English or French, and they are mainly about ecology and fantasy. By contrast, the literary texts written in Greek concentrate mainly on history, migration, world wars, the Nazi Occupation, the Resistance, drugs and divorce. These latter books are addressed to adolescents and their heroes are mainly adolescents or adults. They are not illustrated, and, in terms of number of pages, have an average of 121–160 pages and more.

These two factors show that language and subject are polysemous concepts. There is a contrast between internal and external features. As regards the subject, the foreign original records subjects related to ecology and fantasy, whereas the Greek original records subjects that are of concern to Greek society such as war, the Nazi Occupation, the Resistance, social pathogeny. As regards the external features, the translated texts have illustrations, are of relatively few pages and no page numbering. By contrast, the Greek texts are not illustrated and have many pages.

Cluster Analysis reveals the formation of six clusters of books with common features and these are represented by the chart below:

CHART
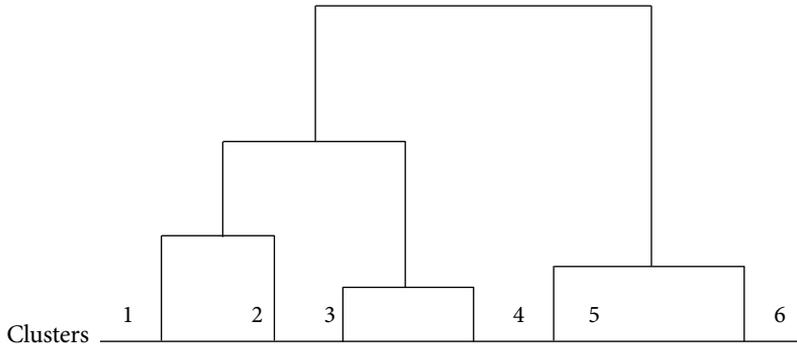
The main features of cluster 1, which consists of 932 books, are "Greek language" and "originality". The same features are encountered in cluster 2 (53 books). Their common points lie in the language (Greek), in the age of the hero (adult, adolescent and young child, in order of preference), in the age to which they are addressed (early elementary school age), in the narration (third person) and in the number of pages (few). Clusters 1 and 2 are differentiated in terms of the gender of the hero (cluster 1: woman + man, man; cluster 2: man, woman, child of either sex), the narration (cluster 1 does not have first-person narration), the number of editions (cluster 1: one edition; cluster 2: more than one edition), the number of pages (cluster 1 up to 32 pages: cluster 2: more than 80 pages), the age to which it is addressed (cluster 1: children of early elementary school age; cluster 2: children of later elementary school age), illustration (cluster 1: with illustration; cluster 2: without illustration), gender of author (cluster 1: man; cluster 2: woman), literary genre (cluster 1: short story; cluster 2: novel), subject matter (cluster 1: miscellaneous; cluster 2: historical or family) and finally the type of publication, some texts in cluster 1 having been first published in magazines or collective volumes or anthologies, in contrast with the texts in cluster 2 which were published for the first time as books.

The main features of cluster 3, which consists of 200 books, are "Greek language" and "originality", exactly the same as those of cluster 4 (639 books). The common features of clusters 3 and 4 are the gender of the hero (in order of preference: non-human, four-legged animals, inanimate objects, birds), narration (third person), age group being addressed (early school age) and gender of the author (woman). Clusters 3 and 4 differ in terms of the hero's age (cluster 3: young school child; cluster 4: non-human), illustration (cluster 3: with illustration; cluster 4: without), subject (cluster 3: fiction, family, love of art; cluster 4: miscellaneous), literary genre (cluster 3 includes myths, tales and folktales; while in cluster 4 there are books with poems or short stories) and finally place of publication (the books in cluster 3 were published in Athens, those in cluster 4 in Thessaloniki).

Clusters 1 and 2 (985 books) are differentiated from clusters 3 and 4 (839 books) in terms of their originality (clusters 1 and 2 also include adaptations, in contrast

to clusters 3 and 4), the gender of the hero (clusters 1 and 2: woman, child of unspecified gender; clusters 3 and 4: non-human, four-legged animal, inanimate objects, birds), number of pages (clusters 1 and 2 have many pages; clusters 3 and 4 have few pages), the age to which they are addressed (clusters 1 and 2, school age; clusters 3 and 4 to preschoolers or to unspecified ages), date of initial publication (clusters 1 and 2: before 1995 with a re-printing after 1995; clusters 3 and 4: initial publication: 1995–2005), and subjects (the books in clusters 1 and 2 are historical or refer to the family; those in clusters 3 and 4 have miscellaneous content, refer to tradition, to folk culture, to fiction and to love of art). As regards the literary genre, clusters 1 and 2 contain mainly novels and short stories; in clusters 3 and 4 there are books of poetry, myths, tales, folktales and fables. As regards initial publication, texts in clusters 1 and 2 were often published first in a magazine or collective volume, while those in clusters 3 and 4 were not.

The main feature of cluster 5 (85 books) is that the books in it are not original but have been translated, as have those of cluster 6 (738 books). The main elements that the classification regards as common to clusters 5 and 6 are the language of the original book (English), the literary genre (novel) and the absence of illustration. The features that differentiate the two clusters are many more, both external and internal. The books in cluster 5, written by a woman, mainly about a mystery, have no illustrations and are addressed to children of school age, while those of cluster 6, written by a man or by a man and woman, on adventure or seasonal themes, have illustrations, are addressed to adolescents and were translated mainly after 2001.

Comparing these clusters with the four previous ones, we ascertain that they differ in terms of the language of the original. The books in clusters 5 and 6 have many pages and have been translated usually from English (followed by French and German), were published recently (2001–2004) and are either mystery or adventure stories written mainly by men. By contrast, clusters 1 and 4 contain books with stories and folktales with male human heroes or animals, written in Greek with third-person narration, are addressed to elementary school pupils and were mainly written by women authors.

Conclusions

The results of our statistical analysis lead to the following conclusions:

- The literary genre that predominates in the children's book field is the novel with more than 200 pages. This is followed by folktales and myths.

- The main themes are fiction and adventure.

- The field of children's and adolescents' books translated into Greek is dominated by books translated from an English original.

- Most children's and adolescents' books are illustrated.

- Regarding gender, the author is usually a woman; by contrast, the literary character is usually a male.

- On most subjects, the writer of the text is usually a woman. However, male authors have a strong presence with texts on subjects related to fantasy, adventure, sport, science fiction and biography.

- The author of short stories and plays is usually a man.

- Women and men writers alike prefer heroes who are male.

- Women and men alike write texts for 6–12 year-old children, while mainly male authors write for adolescents.

- The main distinction between these books has to do with the language of the original. In addition, Greek originals are differentiated as to whether they are a novel, short story, poetry collection or book with a non-human literary character. By contrast, the translated text differs in terms of the number of pages, the age group to which it is addressed (elementary school, adolescent) and in terms of the subject matter (mystery, adventure, human relations and Christmas themes).

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