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A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Horoscope Themes in English, German and Turkish Women's Magazines

İngilizce, Almanca ve Türkçe Kadın Dergilerinde Burç Temalarının Kültürlerarası Analizi

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ABSTRACT
Since astrology has become an essential feature of mass media, horoscopes can be found in newspapers and magazines worldwide. While horoscopes contain information about love, identity, health and the like, they also comprise discourses grounded on cultural conventions of societies. This indicates a need to comprehend the cultural variations available to the societies. By concentrating on horoscopes in women's magazines written in three different cultural contexts (English, German and Turkish), this study is an attempt to identify and compare the themes of horoscopes in women's magazines. The study data were gathered from 2023 yearly horoscopes published in online women's magazines in English, German and Turkish. The thematic analysis was conducted through CATMA 6, which enabled the derivation of 11 themes expressed differently in these languages. Three overarching themes emerged from all datasets: fortune, love and identity. This study aims to contribute to the literature on future linguistic and cultural research related to horoscopes. Additionally, it can be replicated in different cultural contexts and genres.

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Introduction

The Oxford English Dictionary (2021) defines a horoscope as a diagram displaying the positions of planets and celestial bodies at a specific time, often a person's birth, used in astrology to forecast aspects of that person's future. The term horoscope comes from the Greek words "hōroskopos," which means "observer of the hour." Sachs (1952) explains that the ancient Babylonians are believed to be the first civilization to develop astrology around the 4th century BCE. By observing and recording the movements of planets and stars, the Babylonians developed the zodiac, a system dividing the sky into twelve sections corresponding to the twelve signs The ancient Egyptians also practiced astrology and believed that the gods controlled the movements of the celestial bodies. Over time, horoscopes and the practice of astrology spread throughout the world and took on many different forms, such as Western astrology, Chinese astrology and Indian astrology.

In the modern era, horoscopes have become a popular form of entertainment available in mass media, such as newspapers, magazines and online sources. Specifically, women's magazines serve as an important source of horoscopes for millions of women all over the world. As Gupta et al. (2008) state, there is a growing body of literature that examines women's magazines in many

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aspects such as the messages conveyed, the images of women, and the advertisements in these magazines. For example, Tandoc and Ferrucci (2014) analyzed three women's magazines, and found love, money and work as the dominant themes. Analyzing The Los Angeles Times, Adorno (1994) observed three features of horoscopes: feeding narcissism, suggestions for getting away from threats, and enhancing social conformity. Conducting a content analysis of the Australian newspaper *The Brisbane Sun*, Svensen and White (1995) reported different themes from the ones proposed by Adorno (1994), which might be due to the cultural differences between the United States and Australia. Comparing the astrological advice in magazines targeting the working and middle-class women, Evans (1996) found three common themes in both magazines: nurturing others, being patient and cooperative, and avoiding confrontations. Later, Gupta et al. (2008) investigated the horoscopes in Cosmopolitan over one year and found a consistent theme of "women responsible for changing themselves and men."

Several researchers in the Turkish context have investigated horoscopes. To illustrate, examining 144 horoscopes in a Turkish magazine for girls, Özdemir (2022) identified four linguistic tactics, among which the common theme was that girls should not display extreme emotions or expectations. Orçin (2021) concentrated on the construal of happiness theme in the astrology columns of four online Turkish newspapers. Using content analysis, Pınarbaşı (2021) examined 542 horoscope messages on Facebook and found that they had surface meanings conveyed through mediatic language. With a different focus Yıldız (2014) specifically investigated identity construction in daily horoscopes and noted a strong influence of Western and Greek astrology on the narratives in Turkish horoscopes. Through critical discourse analysis of horoscopes in women's magazines across three languages- English, German and Turkish- Bilginer and Yuvayapan (2023) revealed gendered ideologies at the macro level. At the micro level they identified language-specific patterns, such as the frequent use of dislocation in German horoscopes and variations in pronoun use and reader address strategies across the three languages. The current study moved beyond this study by revealing the main themes in horoscopes in the three cultures.

In the German context, one of the earliest empirical examinations of German horoscope manuscripts was in 1978 by Sandig who set a framework for characterizing the stylistic characteristics of horoscope writings through analyzing horoscope examples from a German newspaper and magazine. Furthmann (2006) compiled a corpus of horoscopes from German newspapers, examining not only their linguistic features, but also their functions, such as providing entertainment, generating revenue, and fostering a sense of community among readers.

In the light of the literature mentioned above, previous research on horoscopes in women's magazines has mainly utilized content analysis to identify consistent and shared themes. However, horoscopes are culturally specific, with some themes being more relevant in certain cultures than others. Since these themes can differ across cultural contexts, it is essential for researchers to consider the cultural norms influencing their portrayal. This study, examining annual horoscopes from online women's magazines in English, German and Turkish, provides an initial comparison of the themes found in horoscopes across these three cultural settings. Analyzing themes across these cultures can help uncover notable differences shaped by the language and cultural background in which the horoscopes are written. Hence, the following research questions were asked:

RQ1: What themes are present in the horoscope entries in online women's magazines written in English, German and Turkish?

RQ2. How similar or different are the themes present in the horoscope entries in women's magazines written in English, German and Turkish?

Methodology

Taking a cultural studies approach, this study intends to investigate the themes in the horoscope entries found in online women's magazines written in English, German and Turkish. Cultural studies pave the way for interpreting culture critically without prejudices towards a particular text type. Textual analysis is one of the most common methods employed in cultural studies (Fiske, 1990, Fairclough, 1995). It involves close textual readings of the texts to investigate various forms of discourses as well as explore specific ideologies reflected through cultural meanings. At this point, the themes emerged from the textual analysis allowed the researchers to present specific ideologies. Hence, the present study employed textual analysis to uncover the themes represented through the horoscopes in three cultures.

The data reported here were obtained from 2023 annual horoscopes published in online women's magazines in English, German and Turkish. The reason for selecting women's magazines was that astrology columns were more common in women's magazines than those in men's magazines. The sample was limited to the horoscopes related to the year 2023 in order to examine current themes relevant to that period. Another underlying reason for choosing one particular year was the availability of the online data. Before 2023, some magazines did not offer free versions of the published magazine's issues. The data collection followed several specific steps. Initially, it was aimed to identify the women's magazines that featured astrology columns and offered free online issues in the three cultures. Secondly, a homogeneous demographic of women was maintained excluding race and age through the selection of the women's magazines. For instance, women's magazines which tended to appeal for teenagers or a certain age or theme were not included in the data.

To ensure the validity, the data were compiled from multicultural magazines published in various countries and local magazines published only in Germany, the UK and Türkiye. By doing so, cultural and intercultural themes in the magazines were identified. To avoid the repetition of the themes, some precautions were taken. Firstly, in the magazines written in Turkish and German the astrology columns that were directly translated from English were explicitly stated. Therefore such translated horoscope content was not included in the data. Secondly, the magazines in which astrology columns were written by different writers were chosen. This precautions enabled the researcher to avoid the repetition of the possible themes.

Using these criteria, six magazines for each group of data were decided. In each data, four magazines were intercultural magazines while two of them were local magazines. All the magazines include topics such as lifestyle, fashion, beauty, family and home. 2023 annual horoscope columns and compiled three groups of data extracting the pictures were chosen. Table 1 displays the magazines selected to compile the data of the present study.

Table 1. Selected women's magazines

German Horoscopes	English Horoscopes	Turkish Horoscopes
Cosmopolitan	Allure	Elle
Vogue	Women's Health	Elele
Harper's bazaar	Glamour	Marie-Claire
Bunte	In-Style	In-Style
Brigitte	Marie-Claire	Alem
Glamour	Women & Home	All

The intercultural women's magazines included in the data showed some variations due to the unavailability of the free online versions of the same magazine in the three languages. Cosmopolitan (2022) is an American monthly women's magazine first published in 1886. Today it has 64 international editions including the UK and Germany and is printed in 35 different languages. Having 26 international editions today, Vogue is an intercultural women's magazine targeting 20-44 age female readers (Twigg, 2010). Harper's Bazaar is an American monthly women's magazine published in 37 countries. Founded in 1939 in the USA, Glamour targets women readers in 16 countries. Allure (2022) is an American monthly magazine founded in 1991. Published in 16 counties, In-Style (2022) is a monthly American international women's magazine. Marie-Claire (2022) is a French monthly women's magazine that publishes editions in 35 countries. Having 33 online editions globally, Elle (2023) is another monthly French women's magazine.

Each data include two local women's magazines. Bunte and Brigitte are weekly German women's magazines. Launched in 1976, El Ele (2022) is one of the oldest monthly women's magazines in Türkiye while Alem (2021) is a weekly Turkish magazine launched in 1993. Women & Home and Women's Health are England-based women's magazines.

To uncover themes in the horoscopes in women's magazines and the codes related to them, a computer-assisted textual analysis was done. As Burrows (2004) claims this approach enables researchers to resolve some questions or open up new ones. CATMA 6 (Computer Assisted Text Markup and Analysis version 6), which is available at https://catma.de, was used for analysis. The software is a free web-based open-source tool developed at the University of Hamburg in 2008 for text analysis and annotation. An additional feature that CATMA 6 offers is the ability for team-based and collaborative work in the context of more complex and large texts. This allows multiple users to work on the same text, making annotations and creating category systems together.

Three sets of data consisting of 2023 yearly horoscopes in women's magazines in English, German and Turkish were gathered. Each data set was uploaded to CATMA 6. The themes were not decided in advance. The researcher worked with an outside researcher to create the codes and the themes for each data set and tagged them in the data. This collaboration allowed them to find the exact codes and to organize them into themes in such big data including a large number of texts across three languages as well as ensuring the trustworthiness of the analysis.

After labeling the codes and themes for each data, descriptive statistics were conducted to find frequencies and percentages of each code and theme for each data set, which enabled to compare the themes in the horoscope columns in the three cultures. After explaining the frequencies and the percentages of the themes in tables for each data set, some extracts were introduced to illustrate them. In the Turkish and German data sets, the English translation of the extracts were given. To compare the themes in the three cultures, the percentages of the themes were presented in a table. The possible explanations for the differences in the themes among the three cultures were provided.

Findings

The ultimate aim of the present study was to compare the themes in the horoscope entries found in online women's magazines written in German, English and Turkish. To make this comparison, first the themes that were present in the horoscope entries in online women's magazines written in German, English and Turkish identified and then comparisons of the themes in the three contexts were provided.

Themes in the Horoscope Entries in Online Women's Magazines Written in English German and Turkish

Themes in the Horoscope Entries in Online Women's Magazines Written in Turkish

As displayed in Table 2, 11 themes with a total of frequency counts of 1872 emerged from the analysis of horoscope entries in Turkish women's magazines. Fortune theme got the top rank on the list, which was followed by finance with a percentage of 15 %. Love (13%) and career (12%) nearly shared the same percentages. Constituting 9 % of the themes, family/friends category was another common theme in Turkish horoscopes. Identity and health themes had 7 %, followed by social life (6%). Spiritual beliefs (4%), advice (4%) and beauty (2%) complied with the rest of the themes in this data set.

Table 2. Themes in the horoscopes written in Turkish

Themes	***f***	**%**
Fortune	371	21
Finance	292	15
Love	247	13
Career	233	12
Family/friends	161	9
Identity	145	7
Health	131	7
Social life	118	6
Spiritual beliefs	68	4
Advice	77	4
Beauty	29	2
Total	1872	100

A more detailed account of these themes would provide a better understanding of horoscope entries in the Turkish data. Fortune was noticeably the most frequent theme in this data. Two main codes pertinent to fortune emerged from the analysis: good fortune and bad fortune, both of which covered the comments about the past and predictions about the future. In the data, both of the codes almost shared the same percentages. Good fortune (11%) and bad fortune (10%) as shown in the extracts derived from the data. In (1), the fortune was about good events that will happen while in (2) a bad fortune about the past is given below. In sentence (2) the fortune refers to negative experiences from the past. The clause "while you were fighting these battles" indicates that the person has already gone through a difficult period, and the phrase "things didn't turn out the way you wanted" expresses disappointment or failure. Unlike example (1), which predicts positive future change ("your luck will turn again"), this one focuses on past misfortune and struggle. It does not promise improvement; rather, it reflects on previous hardships and unmet expectations. Thus, example (2) can be interpreted as a retrospective bad fortune, emphasizing the person's earlier efforts that did not lead to success.

(1) Uzunca zamandır hayatınız değiştiren ve alışamadığınız konular hakkında şansınız tekrar dönecek. (Your luck will turn again about topics that have changed your life for a long time and that you are not used to.)

(2) Bu mücadeleleri verirken maalesef işler istediğiniz gibi olmadı. (Unfortunately, things didn't turn out the way you wanted while you were fighting these battles.)

Regarding the finance theme, advice and predictions about income and enterprise issues were covered in the Turkish data set. The enterprise code as displayed below was mostly concerned with advice and predictions about buying a house, land and a car. Under the code of income that

was more frequent than the enterprise code; many issues like insurance and credit debt, heritage, alimony, salary increase and consumption were seen here, as can be displayed in extract (3).

(3) Krediler, borçlar, tazminat, nafakalar, miraslar sizler için önemli olacak. (Loans, debts, compensation, alimony, legacies will be important to you.)

The representation of love is mostly limited to marriage, divorce, new love and ex-love as seen in Sexual life code was also added under this theme. In Turkish horoscopes, sexual life was conceived as having a child, as illustrated in the Extract 4.

(4) Bu süreçte kötü giden evlilikler biter, yeni aşklar, evlilikler gelir. (In this process, bad marriages end, new loves and marriages come.)

Career was another common theme found in the Turkish horoscope entries. The entries mostly advised about career life and encouraged readers to start a new career or a project. The opportunities of working abroad were emphasized in the horoscopes.

The family/friends theme was mostly associated with the advice and precautions about relationships between family members and friends. A striking finding about this theme was that readers were sometimes warned against their enemies in their private and work life, as shown below.

(5) İkizler burçları son bir buçuk yıldır deneyimledikleri kim dost kim düşman konularında son kararlarını verecek. (Gemini will make their final decision on who is friend or foe, which they have experienced in the last year and a half.)

Under the theme of identity, three codes were added: self-development (6), strength (7) and weaknesses of women (8).

(6) Hayatı tartıp biçtiniz, hayat görüşünüzü değiştirdiniz. (You weighed your life, you changed your view of life.)

(7) Kendinizi sevmenin yeni yollarını bulacaksınız. (You will find new ways to love yourself.)

(8) Artık sınırda olduğunuzu hissediyorsunuz. (Now you feel like you're on the edge.)

In the health theme advice and warnings about women's health were observed.

The social life theme was mostly concerned with moving abroad, going on a journey, the feeling of isolation, and becoming a member of an association. In (9), the experience of isolation was emphasized.

(9) Bu dönemde bir izolasyon döneminden geçiyor olabilirsiniz. (You may be going through a period of isolation during this period.)

Spiritual beliefs constituted 4% of the entries in the Turkish data set. The two extracts below provided religious expressions. In (10) the bold word "helalleşmek" is a religious expression of Islam, which means to forgive each other any injury or hurt done intentionally or unintentionally. In (11), "divine support" is a religious expression that cannot be limited to a specific religion. It can be concluded that spirituality was reflected by both Islamic practices and alternative spiritual beliefs.

(10) Retro zamanları helalleşme zamanlarıdır. Bu insanlarla yollarınızı güzelce ayırın. (Retro times are times of goodbye. Part ways with these people.)

(11) Hayatınıza dair ikinci şansları size sunacak olan bu tutulmayla birlikte ilahi anlamda bir kere destek alacaksınız (With this eclipse, which will offer you second chances in your life, you will receive divine support once.)

It was observed that women were advised on two issues (life philosophy and personality) in the Turkish horoscope entries. Therefore, these two issues were labeled as codes under the theme of advice. Extract (12) is an example of advice on personality. The majority of advice on personality was usually about the things that should be avoided during communication with others. In (13), the astrologer gave life advice.

(12) Bu süreç içerisinde hızlı ve fevri kararlar almayın, insanlarla iletişim kurarken alaycı bir üslup takınmayın. (Do not make quick and impulsive decisions during this process, and do not be sarcastic when communicating with people.)

(13) … mutluluk arayarak bulabileceğimiz bişey değil, içimizdedir. (Happiness is not something we can find by seeking it, it is within us.)

A striking result was that, despite the horoscope entries being examined in women's magazines, beauty emerged as one of the least frequent themes in the Turkish data set. Under this theme, plastic surgeries were an identical topic as shown in extract (14). Topics, like not putting on weight and starting a diet, were also emphasized. In a way, beauty was encoded as getting plastic surgery and being slim.

(14) Bazılarınız ise dış görüntüsüyle alakalı özgüvensizlikler yaşadı ve daha iyi hissettiği bir görüntü için sıkı bir diyet, spor ve belki de estetik operasyonlara yöneldi. (Some of you experienced insecurities about their appearance and turned to a strict diet, sports and maybe plastic surgery to look better.)

Themes in the Horoscope Entries in Online Women's Magazines Written in German

Table 3 shows that 10 themes could be derived from the examination of German horoscope texts. The total number of occurrences of these themes were 1713. The German list was ranked highest by the theme of identity with 22%, followed by the themes of fortune and love, each with 18%. These were accompanied by advice (10%), health (9%) and career (9%), sharing almost the same percentages. Finance-related issues were represented with 5%, whereas the least-stated themes in the German horoscope data set were spiritual beliefs (4%), family/friends (3%) and social life (2%). The theme of beauty appeared 4 times, which corresponds to 0%.

Table 3. Themes in the horoscopes written in German

Themes	***f***	**%**
Identity	368	22
Fortune	309	18
Love	308	18
Advice	168	10
Health	162	9
Career	148	9
Finance	87	5
Spiritual beliefs	69	4
Family/friends	48	3
Social life	42	2
Beauty	4	0
Total	**1713**	**100**

Describing the findings of the German horoscope data in more detail, identity, with its codes of self-development, strength and weakness, emerged as the most dominant theme. Especially, the code of self-development (15) emerged. The concept of the self was reinforced with phrases such as self-image, self-empowerment, self-worth, self-love and self-awareness.

(15) Ein ganz neues Selbstbewusstsein etabliert sich, Krebs traut sich, Nein zu sagen, um das Ja all jenen zu schenken, die in echte Resonanz gehen. (A whole new self-confidence is established, cancer dares to say no in order to give the yes to all those who really resonate.)

The codes of good fortune and bad fortune were one of the most mentioned themes, fortune. Good fortune code appeared more frequently than the code of bad fortune. Another noteworthy pattern was, that bad fortune predictions were mostly followed by good ones (16).

(16) Mars bringt ganz schön viel Tumult in Ihr Leben. Aber auch heiße Abenteuer und lehrreiche Erfahrungen. (Mars brings quite a bit of turmoil into your life. But also hot adventures and instructive experiences.)

Alongside identity and fortune, the theme of love also played a significant role in the analysis. An example extract (17), which might also be used as a definition of love, clearly shows a cultural attitude. Marriage is viewed as a more traditional and conservative mindset whereas love, in general, is considered as something temporary or an adventure, so to speak a more modern way of life. Sex life (18) was handled explicitly while issues like marriage and getting married were only stated six times.

(17) Dabei lässt sich die Liebe nicht rational erklären und nicht berechnen. Liebe ist keine Wissenschaft, sondern von Gefühlen bestimmt. (Love cannot be explained rationally and cannot be calculated. Love is not a science, but determined by feelings.)

(18) Ihr werdet sexuellen Praktiken frönen, von denen du bis jetzt noch nicht mal gehört hast (aber keine Sorge, wird gut). (You'll indulge in sexual practices you haven't even heard of until now (but don't worry, it'll be fine).)

The advice theme with 10% was another frequent theme; mostly general advice on life philosophy (19) was proposed to German horoscope readers. This theme was quite often related to the identity theme and its codes of self-development, strength and weakness (20).

(19) Genieße das Leben in vollen Zügen. Weg mit allem, was nicht mehr dienlich ist! (Enjoy life to the fullest. Away with everything that is no longer useful!)

(20) An der Basis, dem inneren und äußeren Zuhause zu arbeiten, ist immer eine gute Idee. (Working on the base, the inner and outer home is always a good idea.)

The other two themes in our German horoscope data were health and career, both occurring with 9%. The health theme was coded with health issues (21) and sports/fitness. It is noteworthy that sicknesses/diseases quite often were specifically and directly referenced with medical terms, such as Migraine, Tinnitus and Hypochondria.

(21) Es ist sicher keine schlechte Idee, das Jahr mit einem Check-up beim Arzt zu beginnen und danach weiterhin auf die Gesundheit zuachten. (It's certainly not a bad idea to start the year with a check-up at the doctor's and then continue to take care of your health.)

Issues concerning the career theme contained identical topics to the ones in the Turkish horoscopes such as starting a new job/ project, getting promoted, and problems with colleagues or bosses. Regarding this theme, it is significant to note that most of the German horoscope texts assume that the readers are employees rather than employers (22). Being self-employed or being the own boss was only mentioned in two horoscope entries

(22) Ab April erhältst du von deinem:deiner Chef:in deutlich mehr Verantwortung. (From April you will receive significantly more responsibility from your boss.)

With a percentage of five, finance was one of the themes in the German horoscope data that was the least represented. This theme was coded with income and enterprise. While the code income

was stated more frequently with a prediction about the increase in money and salary (23), the code enterprise, which advised to invest in real estate or renovate the house was mentioned less.

(23) Im Frühjahr verdienst du deutlich mehr als erwartet – dank eines neuen Jobs, einer Gehaltserhöhung oder eines Bonus. (In spring you earn significantly more than expected - thanks to a new job, a salary increase or a bonus.)

Another attention-grabbing but less common theme was spiritual beliefs (4%), which included many expressions from Eastern philosophies and belief systems, for example, karma and mantras. Spiritual meditation techniques such as *shiatsu, Hatha, kundalini, qigong* and *jin shin jyutsu* were recommended for physical as well as mental health (24).

(24) Übrigens: Heilung ist eine der karmischen Skorpion-Aufgaben – und beginnt immer beim Selbst. Zum Beispiel mithilfe der buddhistischen "Liebevolle Güte Meditation", mit Tibetischer Klangschalen-Massage oder Qigong. (By the way: Healing is one of the karmic tasks of Scorpio - and it always starts with the self. For example, with the help of the Buddhist "Loving Kindness Meditation", with Tibetan singing bowl massage or Qigong.)

When it comes to the family/friends theme (3%), it is noticeable that the term "family of origin" was frequently mentioned instead of the classical family concept (25). Even the phrase "community into which one was born" was used to describe family. (26). The chosen family concept comes from Weston (1997) who brings a new dimension to the conventional family concept within the LGBTQ+ community. People may not be related biologically but still, consider each other family.

(25) Der Austausch innerhalb der Ursprungsfamilie könnte sich stolperig gestalten – auch weil so manch Unausgesprochenes heftig arbeitet. (The exchange within the family of origin could be stumbling - also because some unspoken things work hard.)

(26) Gemeinschaft, die gewählte und die, in die er hineingeboren wurde, hat für Stier einen hohen Stellenwert. (Community, the chosen one and the one into which s/he was born, ranks highly for Taurus.)

The theme social life (2%) could be observed in advice such as going out, travelling, partying, and trying a new hobby. The beauty theme seems to be a taboo theme in the horoscope data of German women's magazines. There are only four entries; the frequency is 0%, whereby two entries point to the concept of keeping the body in top shape.

Themes in the Horoscope Entries in Online Women's Magazines Written in English

A glance at Table 4 that shows the distribution of themes in the English data, revealed three themes fortune (21%), love (13%) and identity (13%). With a percentage of 10, career was the fourth most frequent theme in this data set. Three themes, advice, family/friends and social life had the same percentages (7%), which was followed by health theme (6%). Spiritual beliefs (4%) and beauty (3%) took place at the bottom of table. In total, the themes included 1359 frequency counts.

Table 4. Themes in the horoscopes written in English

Themes	***f***	***%***
Fortune	283	21
Love	180	13
Identity	171	13
Finance	132	10
Career	118	9
Advice	102	7
Family/friends	98	7
Social life	96	7

Health	88	6
Spiritual beliefs	50	4
Beauty	41	3
Total	**1359**	**100**

A persistent code in the English horoscopes was the reflection of good fortune illustrated in the below example which was two times more frequent than bad fortune displayed in the second extract drawn from the English data set.

(27) Capricorn season focuses in on your good times fifth house bringing all the lucky breaks, flirtatious messages and positive attention your way this month.

(28) 2023 will be a year that gets you out of your comfort zone…

The English horoscopes secondarily addressed the theme of love. Traditional concepts such as marriage and divorce were not mentioned in English horoscopes. The dynamics of partnership like initiating and breaking up of relationships, leveling up in an affair and romantic times were more abundant, as illustrated in (29). Explicit suggestions and comments about sex life and sexual activities people desire and engage in, as seen in the example (30), were delivered consistently in English horoscope entries. From the extract (31), it might be understood that in English culture, the creation and maintenance of a satisfying couple relationship and sex life is a prominent factor in promoting the identity of women.

(29) During this autumn, you see fresh starts in your love life …

(30) Tuesday, August 1, brings blessings to your sex life and is a great night to enjoy a kink or fantasy.

(31) However, our culture tends to put too much pressure on our love and sex life.

Like love, the theme of identity was a recurrent theme in English horoscopes. Self- development (32) and strength (33) were more concentrated rather than weakness of women. English horoscopes probably projected a strong model of women's identity, in line with German horoscopes.

(32) You care deeply about large progress.

(33) … you feel more philosophical than usual and may take a new approach to problem-solving or embark on adventures.

Although finance represented a percentage of 10, the messages were mostly given implicitly. Explanations about financial matters like the extract (34) were given through the data set. Clearly, in the English culture, astrologers tend to avoid making suggestions about financial matters as indicated in the extract (35).

(34) One thing's for sure, how you make, spend and grow money is a major focus for you. Pay attention to everyday expenses because small outgoings add up.

(35) …while astrologers can't promise money, some days are more abundant in the stars than others.

In capturing the career issues, the English horoscope entries were concerned with the right times in career development or professional connections, relations with colleagues, and suggestions like having a rest, as seen in the below example.

(36) All of this mixed together will put a real emphasis on your career and where you are going in life, meaning this is a good time to sit down and reflect on your goals.

Contrary, to the German data, this data set most heavily invested on advice on personality (37) rather than advice on life philosophy. Readers were given mostly given positive advice on their personalities.

(37) Set aside self-doubt and adopt an attitude of "if it's meant to be, it will be."

The English horoscopes were mostly concerned with the "chosen family", which was similar to the ideas in the German horoscopes. Rather than holding a traditional concept of the family with whom we are bounded with blood connections, chosen family concept pertinent to the LGBTQ+ community was frequently mentioned in the data set, as it can be seen can in (38). Friends were represented as a member of the chosen family with whom you can spend time and trust (39).

(38) Your chosen family are the ones who will be there for you in thick and thin, through breakups, financial hardships, and whatever else life throws your way.

(39) … you can trust your friends to have your back and be down for a good time as the holidays lead into 2024 and another new year.

Social life was linked to taking up a new hobby, moving around the country, attending invitations, et cetera. It can be understood that English astrologers avoided commenting on health problems as evidenced in the sample extract below (40). Given the role that astrologers could not diagnose any illnesses, the English astrologers did not identify any illnesses in their astrological comments. Regarding health issues, the horoscopes were more focused on beauty (41) which was entitled with a theme in the present study and wellness.

(40) When astrologers talk about health, the topic encompasses wellness routines such as beauty (it's best to leave diagnosing to medical doctors).

(41) You only want to have drama in one area of your life, and that's beauty routines. Just don't make any drastic changes to your appearance while Venus is retrograde.

Spiritual beliefs were portrayed by alternative beliefs, as displayed in (42). The representation of spiritual beliefs underpinned the diversity of beliefs embedded in people's daily lives.

(42) This sees a deepening in your spiritual practice, whether that's more meditation and tarot cards, going to church, or connecting with ancestors. Of course, this transit doesn't mean that you need to be religious.

Cultural Comparison of the Themes in Horoscopes in Turkish, German and English

Cultural comparison of the themes in horoscopes in Turkish, German and English culture was the main concern of the present study. Table 5 compares the themes that emerged from horoscope entries in online women's magazines in Turkish, German and English. What stands out in Table 5 is that fortune was the most common in Turkish and English horoscope entries while identity got the top rank in the German data. Although finance was the second most frequented theme in Turkish data, it had lower percentages in the German and English data. Love and identity were the second most applied themes in the English data whereas love and fortune shared the same percentages as the second most repeated themes in the German data. Career was more emphasized in the Turkish horoscopes compared to those of English and German entries. Family/friends and social life themes were more frequent in Turkish and English horoscope entries; however, it was rarely mentioned in the German ones. The health theme was more observed in the German data than in the Turkish and English entries. Spiritual beliefs allocated the same percentage and beauty was the least frequented theme in the three data sets.

Table 5. Comparison of the themes in the three horoscopes

Themes	Turkish	German	English
Fortune	21	18	21
Finance	15	5	10
Love	13	18	13
Career	12	9	9
Family/friends	9	3	7
Identity	7	22	13
Health	7	9	6
Social life	6	2	7
Spiritual beliefs	4	4	4
Advice	4	10	7
Beauty	2	0	3
Total (%)	**100**	**100**	**100**

The cultural variations among the three cultures are presented in Table 5. The most common themes in the three horoscope entries were fortune, love and identity themes. Fortune theme was examined under two codes: bad fortune and good fortune which was more frequent than the first one in the three cultures. Adorno (1994) explains that horoscopes combine both rationality and irrationality, which is kept implicit. What is rational is the existence of both positives and negatives. Hence, horoscope entries include both of them to be more realistic. Positive ideas are introduced after the bad ones so that hopes and solutions are given to readers.

Discussion

In this study, German and English horoscope entries seemed to manifest a balance of positive and negative events. However, a handful of bad fortune predictions in Turkish horoscopes were observed. Kaya (2022) states that Türkiye was found to be the most pessimistic country in the world in a survey. It is likely that economic situations like high inflation and unemployment force Turkish people to be gloomy about life.

Regarding the construction of identity, three codes in all cultures: self-development, weakness and strength were observed. Contrary to Tandoc and Ferrucci (2014) who found that the ideal woman obeyed the rules in her work and home lives, in this study it was detected that women were responsible for their self-development by being aware of their strengths and weaknesses in the three cultures. In German and English contexts, identity theme was among the most three frequent themes and was ostensibly governed by self-development but in Turkish horoscopes, it had a smaller percentage, which indicated that Turkish culture mostly based on the dominance of men affected the representation of women identity in Turkish horoscopes. However, there wasn't seen a socially-constructed identity of women in Turkish horoscopes different from English and German horoscope entries.

Cultural variations in love styles were examined across the three cultures. A more conservative reflection of love that was basically about marriage was revealed in Turkish horoscopes whereas in German and English cultures love theme was handled by a combination of partnership and sex life. Studies on romantic relationships in Türkiye (e.g., Sanrı & Goodwin, 2013) indicate that attitudes toward dating and premarital relationships vary considerably between urban and rural areas. This cultural heterogeneity may lead to the relatively conservative portrayal of love in Turkish horoscope texts. Moreover, in Turkish dating culture, sexuality is not a topic that is openly discussed, which may have further influenced the representation of love in Turkish horoscopes. The variations in the concept of love in the three cultures might also be explained by the differences in the individualist and collectivist cultures. Sanrı and Goodwin (2013) state that love

life is connected to early family and sociocultural interactions. They further distinguish individualism and collectivism. In individualist cultures, love is shaped by personal goals rather than families. Therefore, more erotic love styles are emphasized in such cultures. On the other hand, in collectivist cultures, there is more emphasis on duty and obligation so individuals are expected to be pragmatic lovers rather than erotic lovers.

The finance theme was also handled in different ways in English, German and Turkish contexts. Turkish horoscope entries explicitly equated finance with issues like buying a house or a car, insurance and credit debt, heritage, alimony, salary increase and consumption. In this context, astrology seemed to play the role of a financial advisor who directs individuals on the premise of a capitalist view of the world. In German horoscope entries, the orientations of finance theme included the predictions about the increase in income and salary not in the enterprise. In the English context, there were many disclaimers that astrologers cannot make suggestions about financial matters so financial issues were covered implicitly.

Concerning the career theme, Turkish and German horoscopes were full of advice about career life, initiating a new career, or a project. The opportunities of working abroad were another common topic in Turkish horoscopes. Advice about professional development and connections and relations with colleagues were mostly discussed in English horoscopes. Accordingly, they reinforced an underlying value that success in a career is sometimes taking a rest from work life.

It seems that the depiction of relationships between family members and friends was not identical in the three horoscope entries. In Turkish culture, family is an important concept shaping individuals' lives. The importance of family rather than friends was reflected in the horoscope entries in this context contrary to the German and English horoscope entries that showed how important friendship is in these cultures. Another point is that Türkiye is a country where same-gender sexual identities and acts are not become legalized by the law. Hence, the family theme was quite conventional in Turkish horoscopes. On the contrary, it frequently came up with the concept of "the chosen family" in the German and English data sets. Kim and Feyissa (2021, p. 2) state that in Christian and Muslim cultures, individuals who identify themselves as LGBTQ+ may experience family disownment, leading "LGBTQ+ people to seek "alternative families" or "families of choice" that offer them "the love and security that they did not receive from their biological families".

In all the horoscope entries, two codes emerged regarding advice: advice on life philosophy and advice on personality, which was more frequent in the three data sets. The advice tended to prioritize women's strength and self-development to create more powerful women's identities. At this point, it would not be wrong to state that the English, German and Turkish horoscope entries concentered more on the portrayal of women's self.

Spiritual belief is a construct that varies from culture to culture, which was clearly seen in the analysis findings of this current study. As Adorno (1994) points out, astrology is associated with theology, not religion. The concept of fate is projected upon the stars rather than the will of the individuals. To survive, they need to accept the verdict of the stars. In the present study, spiritual beliefs were portrayed by alternative beliefs that are a part of people's daily lives in English and German horoscopes. However, in Turkish horoscope entries spiritual beliefs mostly rested on religious beliefs which were sometimes bound to the stars.

In the three horoscope entries, the social life theme was maintained with suggestions like moving abroad, going on a journey, becoming a member of an association, and attending invitations. Turkish horoscope entries encouraged the idea of isolation, which was not even mentioned in the other two entries.

Health and beauty were the last two themes derived from the present study. Turkish horoscopes

seemed to be more sensitive to the health issues of women and their families. In line with Polonijo and Carpiano (2008) who found that women's magazines influenced the medicalization of the female body, plastic surgeries occupied the greatest proportion of this theme in Turkish horoscopes. The majority of the health content in this data set was concerned with the probable illnesses that readers may suffer. A similar tendency was observed in the German horoscopes but in this data set sports/fitness activities were also driven by health motivators. On the other hand, English horoscopes were not a medium for the diagnosis of health problems of their readers. They were mostly interested in beauty and wellness issues to cover health. Regarding beauty, suggestions about make-up and hairstyles rather than plastic surgeries were identified.

Conclusion

Originating around the 4th century BCE by the ancient Babylonians, horoscopes have long been a staple of mass media. There is no doubt that women's magazines deliver a larger female audience than other mediums of mass media. Horoscope entries are an important part of these magazines. They convey messages about several issues such as relationships, fortune, health, identity and so on. These messages have been investigated by several researchers. While there is no doubt that horoscopes are read by a majority of women all over the world and there exists a great number of global and local magazines, they still reflect the cultural norms of the particular societies, which are an under-researched area in the literature. To fill this gap in the literature, the present study compared the themes available in women's magazines in English, German and Turkish. The data of the study were gathered from the yearly horoscopes published in online women's magazines in English, German and Turkish. To be able to identify the current themes that existed in the magazines, the sample was obtained from 2023 annual horoscopes published in 18 magazines (local and global) in English, German and Turkish. Codes and themes reflected in each of the horoscopes in the selected women's magazines were analyzed using CATMA 6, a computer-assisted textual analysis program. After that, these themes were compared by providing possible reasons for the cultural variations.

There were three overarching themes in the three data sets fortune, love and identity. Finance and career were also frequent themes in the Turkish horoscopes although they were not observed as frequently in the German and English data as in the Turkish data. In the three data sets, astrologers offered advice on personality rather than advice on life philosophy. The German and English horoscopes reached their readers from the LGBTQ+ community by focusing on the relationships between individuals in chosen families. In Turkish horoscopes, the conceptualization of family was quite traditional and conservative. Similarly, health was another theme in which cultural variations were clearly seen. It was associated with beauty and wellness in English horoscopes, and sports activities in German entries. In Turkish horoscopes, even the health of a family member with specific illnesses was mentioned. Beauty was not paid attention to in English and German horoscopes while the discussion of beauty was limited to having plastic surgeries in Turkish horoscopes. Taken together, these results suggest that cultural differences influenced the themes covered in horoscopes in women's magazines. The findings from the present study are limited to the selected women's magazines; therefore, generalization to other popular magazines would not be prudent. While the sample was limited to a certain year, the study offered a replicable model for further research across different genres, years, and countries. By integrating computer-assisted text analysis (CATMA 6) with cultural studies and gender theory, the study establishes a systematic approach that can be applied to other datasets and languages in comparative media research. For this reason, further studies could assess the variations of themes in horoscopes in local and global women's magazines.

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