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J. D. SALINGER'S *THE CATCHER IN THE RYE* A COMPARATIVE, GRAMMATICAL, SEMANTIC AND STYLISTIC STUDY OF THE ROMANIAN AND THE FRENCH VERSIONS

Abstract *: J. D. Salinger is one of the most important and influential postwar American writers of the twentieth century. The main focus of this short study is on the controversial language of his top-classified postwar novel, The Catcher in the Rye, on the language which has created so many negative reviews, many critics considering it immoral, offensive, obscene and coarse at the time of its publication. The novel became available in many countries and by 1970 it was translated into thirty languages. The parellel, the comparison between the original and the two versions (for the Romanian one: De Veghe în Lanul de Secară – Catinca Ralea and Lucian Bratu; for the French one: L'attrape-coeurs – Jean Baptiste Rossi) tries to analyze how, and mostly how well, the novel was translated or rendered into the two languages. This semantic, stylistic, grammatical and comparative study tries to show whether the translators managed to overcome the most important difficulties or not.*

All the meanings (more or less hidden), themes and symbols of the novel arise from Salinger's choice of the language, which is very important to him. That is why the task of translating the distinctive idiom of the novel was not an easy one for the translators – some of them having problems and thus having little success in arriving at literary equivalents. As the study will show, the two translators in question were not an exception to the rule and they had to face some difficulties while translating.

The study mostly deals with different idioms (most of them already identified, classified, pointed out and analyzed by the critic Donald Costello), with the use of italics (needed for the oral style) and with the analysis of randomly chosen excerpts which can stand as a good example for the whole novel in order to emplify the quality and the differences of the two versions. At times possible synonyms and interpretations are given in the view of a possible range of choice or replacement equivalents. It also deals with common problems, processes, laws, "gains" and "losses" a translation always undergoes – most of them captured in the traditional adage "Traduttore – Traditore." A possible solution to many of these problems is that, while a text is "final," "irreversible," a translation could or should be renewed from time to time.

Key-words*:translation, comparative study, idioms, equivalence*

This short study will focus on a connection between a few general translation theories and the Romanian and the French versions of the novel. All the meanings (more or less hidden), themes and symbols of the novel arise from Salinger's use and choice of the language. W. French said, in *J. D. Salinger*[1], that although the novel's "idiom and situations are characteristically American, *The Catcher* has by no means been confined to an American audience. In an age of nuclear terror, adolescents everywhere – despite cultural difference – are perpled by the same problems."

The task of translating the distinctive idiom of the novel was not an easy one for the translators – some of them even having problems and thus having little success in arriving at literary equivalents – but the book was rapidly translated in over twenty countries, especially in northern Europe. Among the many translations of the book, we are going to

[1] French, W., *J. D. Salinger*, Twayne Publishers, Inc., New York, 1963, p.124

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quote a few referring to the translation of the title as described by W. French[1] in 1963: the Italian translation was *Vida da Uomo (A Man's Life),* the Japanese one, *Kikenna Nenrei (Dangerous Time of Life),* the Norwegian one, *Every Man for Himself and the Devil Take the Hindmost*, in Sweden, *The Rescuer in Time of Need*, in Denmark, *Outcast Youth*, in France, *L' Attrape-coeurs (The Catcher of Hearts),* in Germany, *Der Mann im Roggen (The Man in the Rye),* in Israel, *Myself, New York, and All the Rest,* and in Russia as Above the Cliff in the Rye Field. In Romania, the translation did not appear as fast as in the above-mentioned countries, but this does not mean that it did not have the same success as the original, a translation by Catinca Ralea and Lucian Bratu, with the title *De Veghe în Lanul de Secară.*

Professor L. Levțchi[2] says that to translate means to paraphrase, to reproduce something using other words, to convey an idea from the source language into the target language so that the transposition can produce the same effect on the receiver as the original text; and the translation should not seem a translation. The translators usually adopt the "intermediary position," as G. Mounin calls it. It has scientifically been proved that it may, and often does happen, that not all the elements of the original can be rendered exactly the same way in the target language as in the source language. This may make us think about the idea of "gains" and "losses" in a translation. But this is not necessarily a loss, and thus there is the possibility of finding poetic equivalents in the source language, which have an aesthetic value as close to the original text as possible. Any translation tends towards perfection, but unfortunately not all of them become perfect. The Romanian and the French ones to which the study refers, and at the same time, are not exceptions to this tendency. As we will see further on, there are some cases of inadequacy in the two versions of *The Catcher*. It is possible that the translators put themselves, and thus implicitly Holden, in the corresponding Romanian and French periods of the writing of the novel, the 1950's. This fact raises an often argued and discussed problem connected with translations – the one of becoming obsolete. It is a process connected with the translator's responsibility concerning the original text. Some other critics consider that a translation can indeed become obsolete just because the translator, being profoundly dedicated to the text and to the respective culture, generally translates only for a couple of generations. It seems that this is the reason why every epoch needs its own translations.

While a literary text is "final," "irreversible," a translation has to be renewed from time to time. It is also said and believed that the translation of an original text is made with the linguistic and stylistic means of the target language, means that are specific to a certain historical moment. After very long periods of time have passed, these means become obsolete, they are no longer "fashionable," and the reason why this phenomenon occurs is because each generation has a specific vocabulary, with its own linguistic "sensibility" or "particular aesthetics," and also its own requirements regarding a translation. And this is all the more important and obvious in *The Catcher*, as Holden's language is the teenage language.

The language of the novel is down-to-earth and flows easily, exactly as if the reader were sitting and listening to Holden instead of the psychiatrist. The style is oral; Holden speaks in a normal tone of voice. When first reading the novel, the reader notes Salinger's vividness of description. Salinger's attentiveness to detail is supplemented by attentiveness to the rhythm of speech. Whenever a character is placing the syllable on a different beat or

[1] French, W., *J. D. Salinger*, Twayne Publishers, Inc., New York, 1963, p.124
[2] Levițchi, L., *Limba Engleză – Manualul Traducătorului*, Teora, București, 2000

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even emphasizing a certain syllable, the dialogue reflects the accent via italics. The italics play a very important role as they render the orality of style and language (which otherwise is very difficult to render). But this comparative study reveals a very important difference between the two versions: the French translator chose not to use the italics in his translation although they are considerably important for the orality of Salinger's style, a fact which can easily be considered a „loss." The Romanian translators, on the other hand, saw their importance for the text and thus used the italics as often as possible and adapted them to the Romanian rhythm of speech when necessary, for example:

- " 'I'm the one that's flunking out of the goddam place, and you're asking me to write a goddam composition,' I said."[1] (24) – "Când te gândeşti că pe mine m-au dat afară din şcoala asta blestemată, i-am spus, şi tu vrei să-ţi scriu o blestemată de compunere?"[2] (37), " 'Je suis celui qu'on font dehors et tu me demandes de te faire une saleté de devoir ?' dis-je." (53)[3]

Additionally, the rhythm of speech is mirrored by the rhythm of thought; the paragraphs are broken not merely by subject matter but also by emphasis on thought. Shorter paragraphs get implicitly more emphasis in the reader's mind and Salinger uses this fact to his credit. Holden's jargon is consistent and very enlightening. For example, Holden's use of qualifiers such as "if you want to know the truth," "I know what I'm talking about," or "I'm not kidding," serve to emphasize how unsure Holden is of what he is saying sometimes or how well he will be received. Holden also has a tendency to use the undefined second person pronoun**,** "you." This ungrammatical usage emphasizes the disillusionment Holden feels because almost no one sees the world like he does – he constantly has to reassure himself that the others would do the same thing of feel the same way. Finally, Holden senses sometimes that the words he is using are not quite right, the language fails him: "I don't know exactly what I mean by that, but I mean it." (72-3) – he says a few times in the novel. This admission of the difficulties of speaking, of expressing sometimes, only adds to the realism of the book. The Romanian and the French translations keep this realism of the novel and render it in their versions: „Nu pot să vă explic exact de ce, dar asta e." (100), „Je ne sais pas exactement ce que je veux dire par là, mais c'est poutrant ce que je veux dire." (147)

Donald P. Costello published, first in 1959, a very interesting essay, often quoted by many critics, based on the study of the language Salinger used in *The Catcher in the Rye*. His study is important not only for literary interest but also for the linguistic significance. Costello suggested that in the years following his study, the novel would be studied not only as a literary work, but also as an example of teenage vernacular in the 1950's, a significant historical linguistic record of a type of speech "made available in permanent form."[4] The language of the novel has often been considered blasphemous and obscene because of Holden's way of talking and excessive use of swearing and slang words, but also because of the „F" word. The language may appear crude and obscene but only in isolation:

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[1] Salinger, J. D., *The Catcher in the Rye*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, 1994, p. 24

[2] Ralea, C., Bratu, L., *De Veghe în Lanul de Secară,* Polirom, Iaşi, 2001, p. 37

[3] Rossi, J.-B., *L'attrape – cœurs*, Le Livre de Poche. Robert Laffont, Paris, 1953, p. 53

[4] Costello, D. P., *The Language of 'The Catcher in the Rye,'* in *Studies in J. D. Salinger: Reviews, Essays, and Critiques of 'The Catcher in the Rye' and Other Fiction*, The Odyssey Press, 1963, p. 92

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•"Someboby'd written 'Fuck you' on the wall. It drove me damn near crazy." (181) – "Cineva scrisese o porcărie pe zid. Am înnebunit de furie." (243), "Quelqu'un avait écrit: « Enculé » sur le mur. Ça me rendit presque fou." (361), or "… and I saw another 'Fuck you' on the wall." (182) – "şi din nou am văzut o porcărie pe zid." (244), "et je vis un autre « Enculé » sur le mur." (363) The translation of the „F" word denotes an obvious difference between the two versions: the French translator uses a closer equivalent, namely „enculé " – which is a vulgar word, just as the English one, while the Romanian translators use the euphemistic word „porcărie" – which does not render the same idea, only suggest it, moreover, being thus very far from the realistic atmosphere of the novel.

• "Someboby'd written 'Fuck you' on the wall. It drove me damn near crazy." (181) – "Cineva scrisese o porcărie pe zid. Am înnebunit de furie." (243), "Quelqu'un avait écrit: « Enculé » sur le mur. Ça me rendit presque fou." (361), or "… and I saw another 'Fuck you' on the wall." (182) – "şi din nou am văzut o porcărie pe zid." (244), "et je vis un autre « Enculé » sur le mur." (363) Dictionaries provide a wide variety of synonyms for this word and thus it should not be too difficult to choose a closer equivalent for the English "F" word. Moreover, it would be difficult to argue that such language is unfamiliar to young people or that it is rougher than the language they are accustomed to hear in the streets or among their friends; or, in some cases, even the language they use themselves. At the same time it is also true that this kind of expressions seen in print are more shocking than the ones spoken, especially in the after-war period. But if we look at the language and its relationship to the overall effect of the novel, we come to the conclusion that "given the kind of character that figures as the hero, no other language was possible. The integrity of the novel demanded such language."[1]

Holden has two major speech habits, which are his own, which he repeats endlessly throughout the novel and which are typical enough of the teenage way of talking and make him both typical and individual in his use of them. It was and it still is definitely common for teenagers to end their thoughts with "and all," – "şi toate celelalte" (8), "et tout" (10) – or to add an insistent "I really did," "It really was" (33) – "Zău că era" (49), "Ya pas d'erreur" (70). But Holden overuses these phrases to such a powerful degree that they become a clear part of "the flavor of the book;" moreover they become a part of Holden himself and help thus to characterize him. But these repetitions also have a purpose beyond simple realism. J. Lundquist thinks that Holden repeats them to establish the fact that he is not a phony. "He repeats 'and all' because of his eventual mystic ability to find the all in one as he moves toward his final vision."[2]

D. Costello says that Holden's "and all," (10) – "şi toate celelalte" (8), "et tout" (10) – "or something," (10) – "sau mai ştiu eu ce" (17), "ou je ne sais quoi" (23) – "or anything," (9) – "sau alte prostii d-astea" (5), "ni rien" (5) – serve no real, consistent linguistic function. "They simply give a sense of looseness of expression and looseness of thought."[3] These phrases often emphasize the fact that Holden knows there is more that could be said about a certain issue, but he is not going to bother to go into it. On the first page of the novel we can find a few good examples in point:

• "…how my parents were occupied and all before they had me." (1) – "cu ce s-au ocupat părinţii înainte de naşterea mea." (5), "ce que faisaient mes parents et tout avant de m'avoir." (5);

[1] Corbett, Edward P. J., *Raise High the Barriers, Censors*, in *America*, vol. CIV, No. 14, 1961, p. 441
[2] Lundquist, J., *J. D. Salinger*, Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1979, p. 57
[3] Costello, D. P., id., p. 94

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• “And I didn’t know anybody there that was splendid and clear-thinking and all.” (2) – “Eu unul n-am avut parte să cunosc acolo pe nimeni care să fie sănătos şi cu mintea clară.” (7), “Et je n’ai jamais vu personne, là-bas, qui ait été splendide et lucide et tout.” (7)

Another obvious difference between the two translations is that the French one respects more closely the original, or, in other words, it is more a word-for-word translation, while the Romanian one sometimes skips certain short passages or expressions in order to adapt them more to the Romanian style. But, as Costello himself has said, some phrases serve no real purpose, no real linguistic function, and thus maybe the translators thought that there was no real loss if a language did not translate all of them, especially if some of these phrases did not really fit the patterns of the language.

Costello has catalogued over a hundred slang terms (in widespread use) used by Holden. He also considers that, although Holden’s slang is rich and colorful, it often fails at precise communication, just because it is slang. Thus the word “crap” is used in seven different ways, meaning either foolishness, as in “all that David Copperfield kind of crap,” (1) – “şi alte rahaturi d-astea gen David Copperfield,” (5), “enfin toute cette salade à la David Copperfield,” (5); or messy matter, as in “I spilled some crap all over my gray flannel.” (22) – “Pe a mea, aia de flanelă gri, am pătat-o. Am vărsat nu ştiu ce pe ea.” (35), “J’ai renversé je ne sais quel machin sur la mienne, en flanelle grise.” (48); merely miscellaneous matter, as in: “While I was putting on my galoshes and crap.” (31) – “în timp ce-mi puneam galoşii şi alte rahaturi d-astea.” (47), “et tandis que j’enfilais mes galoches et tout le bataclan.” (66); or animal excreta, as in “and there didn’t look like there was anything in the park except dog crap and globs of spit and cigar butts from old men.” (106) – “şi pe jos nu se vedea altceva decât murdărie de câine, scuipat şi trabucuri aruncate de bătrâni.” (145), “Dans le parc, il ne semblait y avoir rien d’autre que des crottes de chiens, des crachats et des mégots de vieillards.” (214); and it can be used as an adjective meaning anything generally unfavorable, as in “I had to sit there and listen to that crap. It certainly was a dirty trick.” (10) – “Şi eu eram obligat să stau şi s-ascult toate tâmpeniile astea! Zău că era urât din partea lui.” (17), “Il me fallait rester assis là et écouter cette salade. C’était réellement un coup de vache.” (24); “It was on the crappy side, though.” (113) – “Totuşi, dacă stai bine să te gândeşti, era o porcărie.” (154), “C’était du genre merdeux pourtant.” (228).

Holden also uses the phrases “to be a lot of crap,” “to shoot the crap” and “to chuck the crap,” which mean “to be untrue,” but he also uses “to shoot the crap” to mean simply “to chat,” with no connotation of falseness, as in:

• “My mother always knows me. She’s a psychic. But I certainly wouldn’t have minded shooting the crap with old Phoebe for a while.” (60) – “Mama ştie întotdeauna când sunt eu. Are un al şaselea simţ. Dar tare mi-ar fi plăcut să stau puţin de vorbă cu Phoebe.” (83), “Ma mère comprend toujours que c’est moi. Elle est sorcière. Mais vrai, ça m’aurait plu de discuter le coup un moment avec vieille Phœbé.” (122);

• “I’m lucky, though. I mean I could shoot the old bull to old Spencer,” (11) – “Totuşi am noroc. Vreau să spun c-am noroc să-i pot trage bărbi bătrânului Spencer,” (19), “Je suis veinard, quand même. Je pouvais faire tout le baratin habituel à Vieux Spencer,” (26), etc.

In all the above mentioned examples one cannot fail to notice the dialectal Romanian phrasal verb “a-i trage nişte bărbi,” which does not seem very fit in this context, especially when the Romanian language has so many more synonyms for it – “a vorbi,” “a discuta,” “a bârfi,” “a sta de vorbă,” “a sta la taclale,” etc., and especially in the context in which Salinger himself does not use a dialectal speech, on the contrary, Holden is a New Yorker and so he could not use any dialects. Salinger himself also uses other synonymous phrases

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for "to shoot the crap," such as: "and chewed the rag with him." (23) – "şi am stat cu el de vorbă." (36), "et discutai le coup avec lui." (50); "But we chewed the fat for a while." (96) – "Dar am continuat să stăm de vorbă." (131), "Mais nous discutâmes le coup un moment." (193); "and I shot the breeze for a while." (181) – "am stat puțin de vorbă." (244), "Nous discutâmes le coup un moment." (363) The two translations are not very generous in giving synonyms for these phrases, although both languages have a quite wide variety of equivalents for them.

The same thing is true for the slang word "crazy." Sometimes, for example in "That's something that drives me crazy…" (9) – "Tare mă înfurie când …" (17), "Voilà une chose qui me rend maboule…" (22) – it means that Holden really dislikes something, or, for example in "to be crazy about" it can mean the opposite. Similarly Holden uses "to be killed," either favorably, as in: "That story just about killed me." (1) – "Mă prăpădesc după povestea asta." (6), "Ça m'a tué." (6) – or unfavorably, as in: "Then she turned her back on me again. It nearly killed me, but I didn't say anything." (186) – "Apoi s-a întors cu spatele la mine. Îmi venea să mor de râs, dar n-am spus nimic." (250), "Puis, à nouveau, elle me tourna le dos. Ça faillit me tuer, mais je ne dis rien." (373) This word is also one of Holden's favorite slang expressions:

- "I can't stand that stuff. It drives me crazy. It makes me so depressed I go crazy." (12) – "Nu pot să sufăr lucrurile astea! Mă scot din sărite. Mă întristează până la disperare." (21), "Je ne peux pas encaisser ce genre de truc. Ça me rend maboule. Ça me donne un tel cafard que j'en deviens maboule." (28);

Next, the careful reader cannot fail to notice that almost every person's name, real or fictional, is referred to by Holden with the help of the adjective "old", from "old Stradlater" or "old Phoebe" to even "old Jesus," as in "I said old Jesus probably would've puked if He could see it – all those fancy costumes and all." (124) – "Şi eu i-am spus că dacă Isus ar fi văzut toate astea – costumele de mascaradă şi tot restul –, probabil că I s-ar fi făcut greață." (169), "Je lui avais dit que Vieux Jésus sourirait probablement s'Il pouvait voir ça – tous ces costumes de carnaval et tout." (250) – usually after he has previously mentioned the character. This is a particularly ingenious device of Salinger's, which reminds us that Holden is not living out the narrative, but retelling it. In the telling, everyone has become a distant, old memory. A worth mentioning aspect of the novel's translations is that the French translator always uses the same adjective, "old," as in "Vieux Stradlater," "Vieille Phœbé," or "Vieux Jésus," while the Romanian translators almost never do the same, using just the proper names.

Nevertheless, Holden's choice of adjectives and verbs is quite narrow, with a constant repetition of his few favorite words: "lousy," "pretty," "crumby," "terrific," "quite," "old," "stupid."

- "and what my lousy childhood was like." (1) – "cum mi-am petrecut copilăria amărâtă." (5), "ce que fut mon enfance pourrie." (5);
- "Well, you could see he really felt pretty lousy about flunking me." (11) – "Se vedea bine: îi părea rău că mă trântise." (19), "Ben, vous parlez, il n'était vraiment pas fier de m'avoir sabré." (25) – here the Romanian choice of the verb "a trânti" for the English "to flunk" does not seem at all the happiest one. It sounds like a very dialectal verb, not widely used in Romanian and that is why it should not probably be used in a translation. A more appropriate verb in this case could be "a pica," which is very often used in the Romanian slang;
- "with his crumby old razor." (26) – "cu aparatul lui cel împuțit." (40), "Avec son vieux rasoir pourri." (57).

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Holden uses the word "madman" commonly as an adjective and in a variety of ways ranging from "snow […] was still coming down like a madman." (31) – "şi continua să ningă în continuare." (46), "et ça continuait de tomber comme les mannes du Seigneur." (66) – in this example one can easily notice that the French translation uses a very interesting and colorful expression, perfectly adapted to the French language, whereas the Romanian translation is very neutral and impersonal – to "I went right on smoking like a madman." (37) – "Am continuat să fumez ca turbat." (54), "Je continuai à fumer comme un pompier." (78) The difference in translation is very interesting in this case, as we can see that each language has adapted the translation of the word "madman" to its own patterns, the French comparison being more interesting, more unexpected and colorful, and it also contains the idea of smoke, suggested by the word "pompier" – "fireman."

"Repetitious and trite as Holden's vocabulary may be, it can, nevertheless, become highly effective. For example, when Holden piles one trite adjective upon another, a strong power of invective is often the result."[1] A few examples in point are the following:

- "… and the reason he didn't care was because he was a goddam stupid moron." (38) – "şi că nu-i păsa pentru că era un idiot şi un cretin." (56), "et que s'il s'en moquait c'est qu'il n'était qu'un putain de gigolo." (81);
- "but damn near. *Damn* near." (44) – " – dar, în orice caz, puţin i-a lipsit. *Foarte* puţin." (63), "mais il en était sacrément près. Sacrément près." (91), and so forth. But, at times, the repetition of certain linguistic structures does not render the comic effect as we have just shown, on the contrary, it emphasizes the grief in Holden' soul, as in the episode at Allie's grave:
- "It rained on his lousy tombstone, and it rained on the grass on his stomach. It rained all over the place." (140) – "Ploua pe piatra lui nenorocită, ploua pe iarba care-i crescuse pe burtă. Ploua peste tot." (190), "Il pleuvait sur sa tombe pourrie, et il pleuvait à travers l'herbe sur son estomac. Il pleuvait partout." (281)

Holden's limited vocabulary can also be one of the sources of humor and comic effect in the novel. Holden's constant repetition of identical expressions in many different situations is often hilariously funny. But to this repetition also contributes the figures of speech that he uses and which are entirely original, and thus effective and terribly funny. In his conversation with Mr. Spencer, Holden says:

- "He started handling my exam paper like it was a turd or something. […] He put my goddam paper down and looked at me like he'd just beaten the hell out of me in Ping-Pong or something." (10) – "Ţinea lucrarea mea de parc-ar fi fost o bucată de rahat sau mai ştiu eu ce. […] În sfârşit, a pus jos lucrarea mea nenorocită şi mi-a aruncat o privire de parcă m-ar fi bătut măr la ping-pong sau mai ştiu eu ce." (17-8), "Il tenait ma copie dans ses mains comme une merde ou je ne sais quoi. […] Il abaissa ma saleté de copie et me regarda comme s'il venait de me flanquer une raclée au ping-pong ou quelque chose comme ça." (23-5); or:
- "Sensitive. That killed me. That guy Morrow was about as sensitive as a goddam toilet seat." (49) – "Sensibil. Să mor de râs, nu alta. Era tot atât de sensibil ca un scaun de toaletă." (70), "Sensible. Ça me tua. Ce gars Morrow était à peu près aussi sensible qu'une saleté de bidet." (101)

As we can see in the above mentioned quotations, the comic effect does not only come from repetitions, but also from humorous, ingenious and unexpected comparisons – as in the case of "like he'd just beaten the hell out of me in Ping-Pong" or "as sensitive as a

[1] Costello, D. P., id., p. 99

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goddam toilet seat," which have identically been translated both by the French and the Romanian translators, in order to keep the same comic and unexpected effect that such comparisons can have in any language. Salinger uses such humorous comparisons throughout the novel and he strategically places some of them in the most dramatic moments, in order to emphasize the respective feelings. A few examples in point are the following:

- "Anyway, it was December and all, and it was cold as a witch's teat, especially on top of that stupid hill." (3) – "Aşadar, cum vă spuneam, era decembrie şi un ger de crăpau pietrele, mai cu seamă pe dealul acela afurisit." (8) – the Romanian translation has successfully adapted the English comparison to a very common and known Romanian comparison, while the French translator chose a word-for-word translation: "En tout cas, c'était décembre et tout, et l'air était froid comme un téton de sorcière, particulièrement au sommet de cette colline à la noix." (10);
- "Toons. That killed me. He meant tombs." (182) – "Murminte. Să mor de râs. Voia să zică morminte." (245), "Tonneaux. Ça me tua. Il voulait dit tombeaux." (365) – in this case the interesting fact is that each translator managed to create a new word in order to keep the humorous effect created by the bad pronunciation of a kid visiting the museum.

Another aspect of the fact that Holden's language is typical is that it shows the American characteristic of adapting nouns into adjectives and nouns into adverbs. Holden turns nouns into adjectives by simply adding a "y": "perverty," "Christmasy," "vomity-looking," "whory-looking," "hoodlumy-looking," "show-offy," "flitty-looking," "dumpy-looking," "pimpy," "snobby," "fisty." Some examples may be the following:

- "She had a big nose and her nails were all bitten down and bleedy-looking." (2) – "Avea nasul mare şi unghiile mâncate până-n carne – aproape că-i dăduse sângele." (7), "Elle avait un grand nez, des ongles tout rongés, les yeux striés de sang." (8) – as we can see in this first example and also in the following, the same typical English effect created by the adapted nouns into adjectives or adverbs is almost impossible to be rendered the same in Romanian or French, simply because the grammatical patterns of the respective languages do not allow such adaptations, and thus, each language has to use equivalents as close as possible to the original, or even adapted phrases. It is also to be noted in the above mentioned quotation a slight misunderstanding of the text by the French translator in the case of: "bleedy-looking" – "les yeux striés de sang," which does not correctly translate the English word, as in French the verb "strier" means "to striate," "to ridge," "to streak," (in Romanian "a stria," "a încreți," "a brăzda," "a dunga," "a împestrița"), which does not render correctly the idea of "nails bitten and bleedy-looking," because the French author refers to the eyes and not to the nails ("ongles").
- "You always got these very lumpy mashed potatoes on steak night, and for desert you got Brown Betty." (31) –"La biftec ne dădea piure de cartofi prost striviți şi, ca desert, ceva care se chema 'Betty cea roşcovană.' " (46), "Ils vous donnaient toujours ce tas de patates écrabouillées, le soir du steak, et pour dessert du Brown Betty." (65) – It is interesting to notice that the Romanian translators chose to give an equivalent for the name of the cake, although it does not mean much in Romanian, as we do not have a cake with this name and thus it might sound strange in Romanian or it can be misleading at first sight, while the French translator used the English name of the cake.
- "Except for a few pimpy-looking guys, and a few whory-looking blondes, the lobby was pretty empty." (62) – "Dar holul era aproape gol, cu excepția unor tipi care semănau a codoşi şi a unor blonde care semănau a dame." (85), "A part quelques maquereaux et quelques putains blondes, le hall était joliment désert." (125) – from these examples and

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many others quoted above, we can say that the French translator is more direct, using the same language as Salinger regarding the crude and profane words, while the Romanian translators mostly choose to use euphemistic words or expressions, avoiding thus Salinger's original choice of language: "whory-looking blondes" – "dame" – "putains blondes."

Perhaps, as Costello further demonstrates, the most interesting aspect of the adaptability of Holden's language is his ability to use nouns as adverbs, as in "She sings it very Dixieland and whorehouse, and it doesn't sound at all mushy"(104) – "Îl cânta în stil Dixieland[1], foarte păcătos, ca la tavernă, fără sentimentalism de prost gust." (141) – this time again the Romanian translators provide the readers with a footnote for "Dixieland:" "stil muzical caracterizat prin ritm simplu, puternic sincopat"; – "Elle le chantait très Dixieland et bordel et c'est loin de faire l'effet d'un bâton de sucre d'orge." (209)

But Holden is no mere illiterate adolescent. He reveals his education in the way he speaks on two levels at once. He uses, for example, the colloquial "take a leak" at one time and then the more genteel "relieve himself " at another time – this shift in word choice contributes, of course, to the humor in the novel:

- "The way I met her, this Doberman pinscher she had used to come over and relieve himself on our lawn." (69) – "Ştiţi cum ne cunoscusem? Câinele ei doberman venea mereu să-şi facă nevoile în grădina noastră." (95), "Voici comment je fis sa connaissance. Ce grand cabot Doberman qu'elle avait prit l'habitude de venir chez nous et se soulager sur notre pelouse." (140), etc.

Holden is an intelligent, well-read and educated boy: "I'm quite illiterate, but I read a lot." (15) – "De fapt, sunt foarte incult, dar de citit, citesc mult." (25), "Je suis plutôt illettré mais je lis beaucoup." (36). Thus Holden possesses and uses, when he wants, many words that are above the basic English, such as: "ostracized," "exhibitionist," "unscrupulous," "conversationalist," "psychic," "bourgeois," just as in:

- "The whole team ostracized me the whole way back on the train." (3) – "Şi în tren, la întoarcere, băieţii nu mi-au adresat nici măcar o vorbă." (8), "Dans le train, durant tout le retour, l'équipe entière m'avait mis en quarantaine." (9);
- "and they were going to have me psychoanalyzed and all." (34) – "şi voiau să mă ducă la psihanalist." (50), "et ils m'ont fait psychanalyser et tout." (71);
- "I don't know *how* I knew, but I knew. I knew *who* it was, too. I'm a psychic." (90) – "Nu ştiu *cum* de mi-am dat seama, dar mi-am dat. Am ştiut şi *cine* e. Am un al şaselea simţ." (124), "Je ne sais pas comment je le savais, mais je le savais. Je savais qui c'était aussi. Je suis sorcier." (183);
- " 'They're okay.' I was being a lousy conversationalist, but I didn't feel like it." (171) – " – Bine. Nu prea încurajam discuţia, pentru că n-aveam chef de conversaţie." (231), " 'Elles vont très bien.' Je me montrais d'une conversation pourrie, mais je n'étais pas d'humeur à parler." (343)

"Holden is a typical enough teenager to violate the grammar rules, even though he knows of their social importance. His most common rule violation is the misuse of 'lie' and 'lay,' but he also is careless about relative pronouns:"[1] "about a traffic cop that falls in love with this very cute girl that's always speeding." (16) – "despre un agent de circulaţie care se îndrăgosteşte de o fată frumoasă care depăşea mereu viteză legală." (26), "sur le flic qui tombe amoureux de la fille très roublarde à qui tout réussit." (36); the double negative ("hardly didn't even know I was doing it"), the perfect tenses ("I'd woke him up"), extra words: "Like as if all you ever did at Pencey was play polo all the time." (2) – "Ca şi cum

[1] Costello, D. P., id., p. 102

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la Pencey toată ziua nu s-ar face altceva decât să se joace polo." (6), "Comme si tout ce que vous ayez à faire à Pencey était de jouer au polo tout le temps." (7); pronoun number: "it's pretty disgusting to watch somebody picking their nose." (8) – "numai că e cam dezgustător să vezi un om care se scobește în nas." (15), "sauf que c'est plutôt dégoûtant de regarder quelqu'un se curer le nez." (20); and pronouns' position: "I and this friend of mine, Mal Brossard." (31) – "cu un prieten de-al meu, Mal Brossard." (46), "et ce copain, Mal Brossard." (66). It is also to be noted Holden's relative "correctness." He is always intelligible, and is even "correct" in many usually difficult constructions – this seems to emphasize the fact that English was the only subject in which he did not fail:

- "I used to play tennis with he and Mrs. Antolini quite frequently." (163) – "jucam mereu tenis cu el şi doamna Antolini." (219), "j'avais pris l'habitude d'aller assez souvent jouer au tennis avec lui et Mrs. Antolini." (326);
- "She'd give Allie and I a push or something." (61) – "dându-i lui Allie sau mie un ghiont." (85), "Elle nous donnait, à Allie ou à moi, une bourrade ou quelque chose." (124), etc.

On the whole, the structure of Holden's sentences indicates the fact that Salinger thought of the novel more in terms of spoken speech than written speech. Holden's faulty structure is quite common and typical in oral expressions. Another indication that Holden speech is "vocal," as Costello calls it, is the fact that in many places Salinger imitates spoken speech very well, but when it comes to translating such instances so specific to English, it is very difficult to be done. Romanian uses a different system of writing and spelling and that is why it is very difficult, sometimes impossible, to recreate the spoken speech effect through translation:

- "Who belongsa this?" (19) – " – A cui e asta?" (30), "A qui c'est ça ?" (42);
- "Hey. Lend me your scissors a second, willya? Ya got'em handy? […] Get'em a second, willya?" (20) – "Hei, ia dă-mi puțin foarfeca ta! O ai la îndemână? […] – Scoate-o puțin!" (31-2), "Eh! Prête-moi tes ciseaux une seconde, tu veux? Tu les as sous la main ? […] Passe-les-moi une seconde, tu veux ?" (44);
- "Cut'em over the table, willya?" (20) – "Taie-le deasupra mesei, auzi?" (32), "Coupe-les sur la table, tu veux ?" (45) – here a possible adaptation of the oral style is not possible on the spelling level in Romanian, but it could have been done on the grammatical level by giving up the use of the proper Genitive, replacing it with a possble translation such as: "Taie-le pe masă, auzi?" or "Taie-le pe masă, auzi, mă?" in oder to emphasize even more the oral style.

(49); • "Wher'dja get that hat?" (25) – " – Unde ai găsit şapca asta?" (39), "Où qu't'as déniché ce chapeau?" (55) – here the French translation is closer to the original and it manages to keep the oral style of the text;

- "Wuddaya wanna make me do – cut my goddam head off?" (26) – " – Ce vrei … să-mi tai beregata?" (40), "Qu'est-ce que tu veux que je fasse – que je me coupe une oreille ?" (56) – here it is interesting to see how each one of the translators interpreted and translated the word "head," adapting thus the translation for each language: "beregată" in Romanian and "oreille" in French;
- "…and looked at me like I was a madman. 'What're ya tryna do, bud?' he said. 'Kid me?' " (54) – "… şi s-a uitat la mine ca la un nebun. – Ce te-a apucat, amice? Mi-a zis. Vrei să-ți bați joc de mine ?" (76), "… et me regarda comme si j'étais fou. 'Qu'est-ce t'essaies d'faire, l'ami?' dit-il. 'M'mettre en boîte ?' " (110) – in this example again the French translator managed to be closer to the original oral style of the text, by imitating oral speech in writing;

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• "So do I! So do I regard it as wuddayacallit – a physical and spiritual experience and all. I really do." (132) – "Aşa îl consider şi eu! Şi eu consider că e o … cum îi spune … o experienţă fizică şi psihică şi aşa mai departe. Zău că da." (179), "Moi aussi ! Moi aussi, je considère ça comme une *commentappelça* – une expérience physique et spirituelle et tout. Je t'assure." (265-266);

• "This is me. Holden Caulfield. Lemme speaka Sally, please. […] Yeah, wanna talka Sally. Very important. Put her on. […] Wake'er up! Wake'er up, hey. Attaboy!" (136) – " – Eu sunt. Holden Caulfield, vă … vă rog să mi-o daţi pe Sally. […] – Îhî Vreau să vorbesc cu Sally. Foarte urgent … vă – vă rog! […] – Treziţi-o! Zău, treziţi-o. Bravo, băiete !" (184), "C'est moi. Holden Caulfield. Siou plaît, laissez-moi parler Sally. […] Ouais. Veux parler Sally. Très important. Amenez-la. […] Réveillez-la. Réveillez-la, eh, allez." (272);

Yet it is impossible to imagine Holden actually writing "I toldja" or "I'd've" – it can be simply interpreted as a special effect used by Salinger in order to emphasize the oral character of speech in his novel. We can also note the fact that some words or even part of words are italicized throughout the novel. Italics are very important too because they reflect the accent, the beat, the rhythm of speech, which is many times mirrored by the rhythm of thought. This is another ingenious special effect used by Salinger in order to emphasize the rhythm of his book. It is very interesting to notice that the Romanian translators have faithfully managed to render this aspect while translating, of course adapting it sometimes to the needs of the Romanian language. On the other hand, the French translator did not respect the italics used by Salinger and, having in view their importance, this can be considered a great loss of the French translation. This is often done with good effect, imitating quite perfectly the rhythm of speech. Another instance in which the imitation of speech was nicely done by Salinger is the one in which, Janine, the French girl who sang in Wicker Bar in New York, speaks. The Romanian translators tried to imitate Salinger's style, but not very successfully, as they mid all levels of the language – writing, pronunciation and French words, instead of better focusing on only one level. The French translator simply translated the paragraph, without trying to render an English accent, as the French one was out of question in this case:

• "She'd say, 'And now we like to geeve you our impression of Vooly Voo Fransay. Eet ees the story of a leetle Fransh girl who comes to a beeg ceety, just like New York, and falls een love wees a leetle boy from Brookleen. We hope you like eet.' " (128) – "Şi acum, iată version a noatră despre vulevu fransé. E povestea unei petite française care vine en mare oraş comme New York şi se îndrăgosteşte cu băieţel din Brookleene. Esperons che o se vă place." (174), "Elle disait : 'Et maintenant, nous allons vous donner notre avis sur la « Séduction Française ». Voici l'histoire d'une petite Française qui arrive dans une grande cité, juste comme New York, et tombe amoureuse d'un petit gars de Brooklyn. Nous espérons que cela vous plaira." (257-258).

As a short conclusion we can say that an obvious and important difference between the two versions is that the French one follows more closely the original text, or, in other words, it is close to a word-for-word translation, it is more direct; while the Romanian one sometimes skips certain passages or phrases in order to adapt them more to the Romanian style, but it also keeps the italics, it tries to imitate the oral style (not always successfully though), and it provides plenty of foot notes all through the novel (the French version does not do that). A positive feature of the two versions is that they both manage to render the original humor, the comic effect of certain situations and they always render the same repetitions or ingenious, unexpected comparisons Salinger used. There are also inevitable mistakes and misunderstandings of the original text, the Romanian translation uses too

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many euphemistic words which only suggest Holden's direct style, facts which allow us to say that both translations could be improved nowadays, the same way they could be improved 10, 50 or 100 years from now.

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