COMPENSATION AND TRANSLATION: JAMES ELLROY'S *WHITE JAZZ*

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Abstract: The current paper explores the Romanian translation of James Ellroy's text *White Jazz*, with a view to explaining away the translator's choices. The main issues at hand are the solutions provided for the ellipsis present throughout the novel and the slang used by the author, which is typical of L.A.'s '60's. The paper provides theoretical data supporting the translator's choice of rendering certain slang expressions by paraphrase, explanation or even coinage of new words. We also look into how much has been compensated for and what was lost during the process of translation.

Keywords: coinage, compensation, slang, translatability, translation loss.

1. Preliminaries

White Jazz is part of the crime fiction *L.A. Quartet* written by the American novelist James Ellroy. In order to better understand the problem that arise in the attempt of translating Ellroy's texts one should endeavour to explore the techniques employed by the author himself.

One such technique, which seems to be highly favoured by the author, is that of collage and intercutting. This allows Ellroy to explore the relationship between memory and truth as well as that between fiction and history (Walker 2002:190). Thus, memory is often compared to a tape or a photograph and subjective reveries are also intercut with all the texts that make up Ellroy's collage.

James Ellroy refers to all kinds of different media, juxtaposing references to tabloid gossip, police reports with subversive effect. He sees novels and television shows as responsible for constructing a vision of the world, which (although they may repress unpleasant truths) becomes part of a broad, encompassing notion of the real – one that includes images (Walker 2002: 188).

2. Problems encountered in the translation of Ellroy's text

White Jazz is a book on crime fiction, part of *the L.A. Quartet*, set in the 60's. The main technique favoured by the author is that of *intercutting*: instances of violent crimes and police investigation are interspersed with a broad variety of different types of newspaper articles ranging from the *L.A. Times*, *L.A. Mirror*, and *Hush-Hush Magazine*. The language employed in the writing of these articles varies from formal accounts to highly informal slang, with a lot of puns and alliterations that are very difficult to render in translation.

There are two main problems in translating James Ellroy's text: one is ellipsis and the other the use of slang, which after some research proved to be the slang used in 1960's America. The current paper does not deal so much with the problem of ellipsis. Our choice was that of dwelling upon the problem of slang and the way the translator chose to render slang in the target language (i.e. Romanian). However, we cannot ignore it altogether since it is constantly present throughout the text, so we present the most commonly used type of ellipsis by the author: situational ellipsis.

(1) Exley – tall, easy to spot. (Ellroy 2001: 91)
Exley – înalt, uşor de găsit.

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Jesus Chasco – fat, Mex – not my peeper. (Ellroy 2001: 95)
Jesus Chasco – gras, mexican – nu-i omul meu.

The author's choice of using situational ellipsis over textual ellipsis gives rise to register problems. Since *situational ellipsis* is associated with spontaneous/spoken language and *textual ellipsis* with standard / written language, Ellroy's text has the feature of being highly colloquial / spoken, something which obviously allows the extensive use of slang. In what follows, we shall attempt to make an analysis of its use starting from the features of slang and the problems it poses to translators.

3. Theoretical problems on translating ellipsis

According to Quirk et al. (1972) there are two types of ellipsis: textual (structural) vs. situational ellipsis. Below we supply the criteria for ellipsis:

(i) The deleted words are precisely recoverable: *She can't sing tonight so she won't [sing tonight]*
(ii) The elliptical construction is grammatically "defective", by which Quirk et al. (1972) mean that some normally obligatory element of a grammatical sentence is lacking. For instance *won't* typically has a complement in the shape of a verb stem possibly accompanied by its own complements, but the complement of *won't* can be omitted in coordinate constructions and, importantly, there are specific constraints on what can or cannot be omitted from what sort of structure.
(iii) The insertion of the missing words results in a grammatical sentence.
(iv) The missing words are textually recoverable.
(v) The missing words are present in the text in exactly the same form.

The so-called recoverability condition is satisfied if it is possible to reconstruct the deleted material from within the structural context that the rule applies

Textual (structural) ellipsis is of two types. Strict ellipsis observes all criteria ("strict identity"): *I can sing better than you can [sing]*. Quasi ellipsis observes all criteria but (v) "sloppy identity": *She sings better than I can [*sings]*.

Situational ellipsis observes only (i), (ii), and (iii). This is also the type of ellipsis encountered in Ellroy's work. For convenience the example under (1) is repeated below:

(2) Exley – tall, easy to spot. (Ellroy 2001: 91)
Exley – înalt, uşor de găsit.
Jesus Chasco – fat, Mex – not my peeper. (Ellroy 2001: 95)
Jesus Chasco – gras, mexican – nu-i omul meu.

Register problems also arise. Thus, *situational ellipsis* is contrasted with *textual ellipsis*: spontaneous spoken language / standard written language (cf. Miller and Weinert 1998)

4. Problems of equivalence

Jakobson (1959) discusses grammatical deficiency in the source language. The translator is faced with difficult decisions of detail due to the different parameters.

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(3) No equivalence :
a. *Claudine est une bonne etudiante, et Marie est [VP e]aussi.
'Claudine is a good student, and Mary is too.'
b. *Juan ha salido y Pablo ha [VP e] tambien.
'John has left, and Pablo has too.'
c. *Bach es dificil d'interpretar, i Mozart es [VP e] tambien.
'Bach is hard to play, and Mozart is too.' (Busquets 2005)

(4) *Ion a plecat şi Maria a [VP e], de asemenea / iar Maria a [VP e] şi ea.
'Ion has left and Maria has, as well / and Maria has also she.'

(5) Equivalence (but cf. the structures where the missing material is recovered, i.e. *c* to *d*)
a. Max went to the store, but Oscar wondered why.
b. *Max s-a dus la magazin şi Oscar s-a întrebat de ce.*
c. *Max s-a dus la magazin şi Oscar s-a întrebat de ce Max s-a dus la magazin.*
d. *Max s-a dus la magazin şi Oscar s-a întrebat de ce s-a dus Max la magazin.*

An important guiding principle for translators is their (in)visibility. It is particularly difficult to preserve that with a text such as Ellroy's. *White Jazz* poses a real challenge especially since the slang employed by the author is typical of America's 1960's. Thus, one has to find the best way of rendering such language especially if, as is the case of Romanian, there is no equivalent slang to transpose the source text into. This is a problem that has to do with what Nida (2000: 126) calls *dynamic equivalence*.

Some translators are successful in avoiding vulgarisms and slang, but fall into the error of making a relatively straightforward message in the source language sound like a complicated legal document in the receptor language by trying too hard to be completely unambiguous; as a result such a translator spins out his definitions in long, technical phrases. In such a translation little is left of the grace and naturalness of the original (Nida 2000: 138).

5. Features of slang

Following Hervey and Higgins (2001: 132) the characteristics of particular social registers are very often built up out of features of tonal register – and of dialect and sociolect, for that matter. This is especially true of social stereotypes characterized by "downward social mobility". For instance, a middle-class, educated person who is adept at the jargon of criminals and down-and-outs will have an active repertoire of vulgarisms and slang expressions. Thus, "vulgarity" and "slang" are points on the politeness scale of tonal register; but at the same time, they go towards building up the complex of features that define a particular social register.

A particular genre-marking translation problem occurs in the case of STs heavily marked by slang. Sociolect and register are crucial here, but so is the fact that languages differ from one another in respect of the referential domains covered by slang, and even in the kinds of slang available (Hervey and Higgins 2001: 156).

6. Stylistic strategies in Ellroy's text: a translator's perspective.

This section deals with the comparative analysis of the target text (the Romanian translation of *White Jazz*) to the source text (the original English version). The translation tried to avoid the danger signaled by Nida (2000: 138) that of making a relatively simple

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message in the source language sound like a complicated piece of text in the target language in the attempt of trying too hard to explain everything. To this extent, let us compare the following excerpts:

(6) Recently, three wino bums were found strangled and mutilated in abandoned houses in the Hollywood area. **Very Hush-Hush**: we've heard the still-at-large killer snapped their windpipes postmortem, utilizing great strength. The press has paid these **heinously horrific** killings scant attention; only the **sin-sation slanted L.A. Mirror** seems to care that three Los Angeles citizens have met such **nauseatingly nasty nadirs**. The LAPD's Homicide Division has not been called in to investigate; so far only two Hollywood Division detectives are working the case. **Hepcats**, it's the pedigree of the victims that determine **the juice of investigation**. (Ellroy 2001: 7-8)

Romanian version:
*De curând s-au găsit trei vagabonzi alcoolici strangulaţi şi mutilaţi în nişte case părăsite din zona Hollywood. **În stilul binecunoscut al revistei Hush-Hush**: am aflat că ucigaşul aflat încă în libertate, le-a smuls traheele post-mortem, folosindu-se de multă putere. Presa a acordat extrem de puţină atenţie acestor crime cu adevărat **oribile şi oripilante**; numai ziarului **L.A. Mirror ahtiat după scandaluri şi ştiri de senzaţie** pare să îi pese de faptul că trei cetăţeni ai oraşului Los Angeles şi-au găsit **un astfel de sfârşit îngrozitor**. Departamentul de omucideri al poliţiei oraşului Los Angeles nu a fost sesizat ca să pornească o anchetă; până acum la acest caz lucrează doar doi detectivi din cadrul diviziei Hollywood. **Iubitori ai jazzului**, pedigree-ul victimelor este cel care provoacă **suculenţa anchetei**.*

In this particular excerpt, there are instances of translation loss as well as compensation. In the case of *very Hush-Hush* rendered into the target text as *în stilul binecunoscut al revistei Hush-Hush*, the translator was faced with the impossibility of rendering the double meaning of *Hush-Hush* into the target language. *Hush-Hush* is both the name of the tabloid magazine as well as *Hush-Hush* [1930's, 1940's] 'most secret, undercover' (Green 2000: 627). This loss could be recovered by an overtranslation, adding en explanation of the type *în stilul binecunoscut al revistei Hush-Hush, adică sub acoperire.* However, at the time, the translator chose not to overtranslate since this double meaning of *Hush-Hush* would become apparent to the reader of the target text throughout the translation.

Another aspect that is quite difficult to render in the target language is the extensive use of alliterations in these *Hush-Hush* excerpts. For instance, *heinously horrific* killings is rendered as crime cu adevărat *oribile şi oripilante*. The same was possible with *sin-sation slanted L.A. Mirror* where the target text resulted in ziarul *L.A. Mirror ahtiat după scandaluri şi ştiri de senzaţie*. This is a case of compensation but also translation loss, even untranslatability due to the play upon words in *sin-sation*, which is a portmanteau, a blending between *sin* and *sensation*. A counterexample to the instances above is *nauseatingly nasty nadirs* which was rendered as *un astfel de sfârşit îngrozitor,* where the translator chose to explain by means of direct translation rather than preservation of the alliteration. *Hepcats* rendered as *iubitori ai jazzului* is an instance of paraphrase. The translator chose to explain this term instead of finding an equivalent, even possibly creating one in the target language due to the lack of jazz terms in Romanian. The definition supplied by Green (2000) is *hep / hip-cat* 'n. [1930s+] (US Black) a jazz or swing fan; an aware, sophisticated person'. The choice for *iubitori ai jazzului*, is justified given the entire atmosphere of the book and the title. Finally, *the juice of*

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investigation is rendered as *suculența anchetei* which is a true-to-the-text rendition of the author's words.

(7) Hush-Hush hereby names this anonymous killer fiend the **"Wino Will-o-the-Wisp"** and petitions the **LAPD** to find him and set him up with a hot date in **San Quentin's green room**. They cook with gas there, and this killer deserves a four-burner cookout. Watch for future updates on the Wino Will-o-the-Wisp, and remember you heard it first here: off the record, **on the Q.T.** and **very Hush-Hush**. (Ellroy 2001: 8)

Romanian version:
*Prin urmare revista **Hush-Hush** îl numeşte pe acest ucigaş netrebnic **„Wino Will-o-the-Wisp"** şi îi cere poliției oraşului Los Angeles să îl găsească şi să îi aranjeze o întâlnire fierbinte în **camera de recreație de la închisoarea San Quentin**. Acolo se găteşte cu gaz, iar acest ucigaş merită să fie gătit la un aragaz cu patru ochiuri. Urmăriți viitoarele aventuri ale ucigaşului „Wino Will-o-the-Wisp" şi țineți minte că ați auzit prima dată despre asta aici: neoficial, **în secret** şi **foarte mult în stilul revistei Hush-Hush**.*

In the case of the nickname assigned to the killer sought by the LAPD, *Wino Will-o-the-Wisp,* the translator chose a direct borrowing thus leaving the name in the original due to the impossibility of translating it or transposing it into Romanian and preserving the sound effect at the same time. Instead, this can be explained in a footnote by giving the definition of the words making up the nickname. Thus, *wino* [1910+] '(orig. US) an alcoholic, usu. living in poverty' (Green 2000: 1290) and *will o' the wisps* '[20 c] crisps [rhy. sl]' (Green 2000: 1288).

San Quentin's green room was rendered as *camera de recreație de la închisoarea San Quentin*. The green room is a term used in prisoner's slang as recreation room; therefore, it was explained in the target text thus losing the slang tinge. The phrase also contains an instance of compensation where San Quentin is explained as *închisoarea San Quentin* so that the target readers may understand the reference.

Finally, *on the Q.T.* meaning *pe furiş, pe ascuns, pe neve,* was rendered as *în secret*, while *very Hush-Hush* was rendered as *foarte mult în stilul revistei Hush-Hush.* The latter is an instance of both loss and compensation since *Hush-Hush* is, as explained above, a play-upon-words referring both to "something done secretly" and the title of the tabloid magazine, whose articles are recurrent throughout the novel.

(8) **Tail men** walked in and sat down. **Mixed bag: suits and ties, loafer types. Twelve men – eyes on me**. (Ellroy 2001: 284)

Romanian version:
***Iscoadele** au intrat şi s-au aşezat. **O adunătură amestecată: oameni în costume şi cravate, tipuri de haimanale. Doisprezece bărbați – toți cu ochii pe mine**.*

This excerpt offers us again an instance of situational ellipsis. However, what is more to the point of our discussion are the terms used in the police jargon such as *tail men* rendered as *iscoade, suits and ties – oameni în costume şi cravate* and *loafer types – tipuri de haimanale*.

(9) **Little nods – Exley pre-briefed them**.
"Gentlemen, those folders on your desks contain Intelligence Division photos of the four Kafesjians, **along with State Records Bureau mugs of Richard Herrick, and a**

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more recent artist's sketch of him. Know those faces. Memorize them. You'll be stringing three-man tails on each family member, both mobile and on foot, and I don't want you losing them."
Folders open, pix out – pros.
"You're all skilled tail men, or Chief Exley wouldn't have chosen you. You've got radio-equipped civilian cars, and Communications Division has got you hooked up on band 7, which is absolutely Fed-listening-proof. You're hooked up car to car, so you can talk among yourselves or contact me here at the base. You all know how **to leapfrog** suspects, and there are boom mikes outside the Kafesjian house. There's **a man in a point car** listening, and once you assume your perimeter posts, he'll tell you when to roll. Questions so far?"
No hands up.
"Gentlemen, if you see Richard Herrick, apprehend him alive. He's **a peeper** at worst, and both Chief Exley and I believe that **a man peeping on him** is in fact the Herrick family killer. (Ellroy 2001: 284-285)

Romanian version:
Încuviinţări din cap – Exley îi informase deja.
*- Domnilor, dosarele acelea de pe birourile voastre conţin fotografii ale Departamentului de inteligenţă cu cei patru membri ai familiei Kafesjian, împreună cu **semnalmentele lui Richard Herrick din arhivele Biroului de Stat precum şi o schiţă recentă cu acesta realizată de un artist**. Cunoaşteţi chipurile acelea. Memoraţi-le. Veţi înşira echipe de urmărire de trei oameni asupra fiecărui membru al familiei, atât mobile cât şi pe jos, şi nu vreau să le pierdeţi urma.*
Îşi deschid dosarele, îşi scot pozele – nişte profesionişti.
*- Cu toţii sunteţi urmăritori cu experienţă, altfel şeful Exley nu v-ar fi ales. Aveţi maşini civile dotate cu radiouri şi Departamentul de Comunicaţii v-a conectat pe frecvenţa 7, pe care agenţii federali nu o pot intercepta sub nici o formă. Sunteţi conectaţi maşină de la maşină astfel încât puteţi vorbi între voi sau puteţi să mă contactaţi pe mine, aici la bază. Cu toţii ştiţi cum **să evitaţi** suspecţii şi există microfoane sensibile în jurul casei familiei Kafesjian. Există **un om într-o maşină de urmărire** care ascultă şi în momentul în care vă ocupaţi poziţiile vă va spune când să acţionaţi. Aveţi întrebări?*
Nimeni nu ridică mâna.
*- Domnilor, dacă-l vedeţi pe Richard Herrick, prindeţi-l viu. El e în cel mai rău caz un **benoclist** şi atât şeful Exley cât şi eu credem că **un om care-l urmăreşte pe furiş** este de fapt ucigaşul familiei Herrick.*

This excerpt offers a number of instances of situational ellipsis: *Mixed bag: suits and ties, loafer types. Twelve men – eyes on me. = O adunătură amestecată: costume şi cravate, tipuri de haimanale. Doisprezece bărbaţi – toţi cu ochii pe mine. / Little nods – Exley pre-briefed them. = Încuviinţări din cap – Exley îi informase deja. / Folders open, pix out – pros. = Îşi deschid dosarele, îşi scot pozele – nişte profesionişti. / No hands up. = Nimeni nu ridică mâna. / Whistles, smiles. = Fluierături, zâmbete.*

The target language lacks a series of synonyms for the word *peeper,* rendered in Romanian usually as *voyeur*, a French borrowing. So since the language employed by Ellroy is highly slangish, and Romanian does have the verb *a se benocla* which is marked as a slang word, the translator resorted to the coinage of a new word by means of deriving a noun from this verb, namely *benoclist*.

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(10) Bugs in my walls, bugs on my phone. Bugs snooping on Glenda, snooping on Meg. Fred Turentine – the "Bug King" – guarding Chick.
Bugs in my buildings – three hundred units plus. Tenants overheard: fix the roof, kill the rats. Bugs blasting bop – niggers tearing up my slum pads.
"Sir? Lieutenant Klein?"
I woke up aiming – trigger happy.
A bluesuit – scared. (Ellroy 2001: 285)

Romanian version:
Microfoane în pereți, microfoane şi în telefon. Microfoane ce o spionau pe Glenda, şi pe Meg. Fred Turentine – „Regele microfoanelor" – îl păzea pe Chick.
Microfoane în clădirile mele – mai mult de 300 de echipaje. Chiriaşii au auzit: reparați acoperişul, omorâți şobolanii. Microfoane bubuind când sunt lovite – negrotei distrugându-mi apartamentele din mahala.
- Domnule? Domnul locotenent Klein?
M-am trezit ochind – gata să trag.
Un om în uniformă – speriat.

Besides offering more examples of situational ellipsis in the source text that cannot always be rendered as successfully in the target language, this fragment also triggers problems of equivalence is due to the difference in structure between the two languages. Romanian prefers paraphrase in order to explain things and therefore preserving the ellipsis is not possible in all cases because it would render the target text opaque for interpretation by the target readers.

7. Instances of translation loss

Translation loss is illustrated by the examples below discussed below.

(11) More **sin-tillating scoop** on the Mickster
*Alte **detalii picante** despre Mickster*

Sin-tillating is obviously a play-upon-words, a blending / portmanteau resulting from sin (*păcat*) + to scintillate (*a arunca scântei, a radia, a sclipi*). *Scoop* is slang term (*a publica o ştire înaintea altor ziare*).

(12) Rumors are climbing **the underworld grapevine**: two surviving Cohen gunmen (Chick Vecchio and his brother Salvatore "Touch" Vecchio, a failed actor rumored to be **très lavender**) are planning nefarious activities outside of Mickey's aegis. Get in on the ground floor, Mickster – we've heard that your sole source of income is Southside **vending and slot machines**: cigarettes, rubbers, French ticklers and one-armed bandits stuffed into smoky back rooms in **Darktown** jazz clubs. For shame again, Mickey! Shvartze exploitation! Penny ante and beneath you, you the man who once ruled the L.A. rackets with a **paralyzingly pugnacious panache**!

Romanian version:
*Zvonurile se înmulțesc **la radio şanț în lumea interlopă**: doi dintre malacii lui Cohen care au supraviețuit (Chick Vecchio şi fratele lui Salvatore „Touch" Vecchio, un*

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actor ratat despre care se zvonea că este ***cât se poate de pe invers****) plănuiesc activităţi absolut ilegale care nu se vor desfăşura sub egida lui Mickey. Coboară cu picioarele pe pământ, Mickster – am auzit că singura ta sursă de venit este de pe urma* ***automatelor cu jetoane şi a tonomatelor*** *din zona de sud: ţigări, prezervative, prezervative cu rugozităţi şi bandiţi cu o singură mână înfundaţi în camere afumate din cluburile de jazz din* ***cartierul negrilor****. Încă o dată, să-ţi fie ruşine, Mickey! Exploatarea negrilor! Ăsta este un mărunţiş chiar şi pentru tine şi este sub demnitatea ta, omule, tu cel care pe vremuri conduceai afacerile ilegale din L.A. cu o* ***eleganţă paralizantă şi agresivă****!*

The underworld grapevine is translated with *la radio şanţ în lumea interlopă*. For *lavender* 'adj [1920s+] (orig US) a euphemism for homosexual and anything referring to homosexuals' the suggestion is *pe invers* or, possibly, *pidosnic*. *Vending and slot machines* is translated as *automate cu jetoane şi tonomate*. Furthyer, *Darktown* is translated as *cartierul negrilor*, whereas *Darktown* is left untranslated in the Romanian version of *L.A. Confidential*, with no explanatory footnote). Finally, *paralyzingly pugnacious panache* is rendered as *eleganţă paralizantă şi agresivă*, with partial loss of the alliteration.

(13) Dear LAPD:
Recently, three wino bums were found strangled and mutilated in abandoned houses in the Hollywood area. Very Hush-Hush: we've heard the still-at-large killer snapped their windpipes postmortem, utilizing great strength. The press has paid these **heinously horrific** killings scant attention; only the **sin-sation slanted L.A. Mirror** seems to care that three Los Angeles citizens have met such **nauseatingly nasty nadirs**. The LAPD's Homicide Division has not been called in to investigate; so far only two Hollywood Division detectives are working the case. **Hepcats**, it's the pedigree of the victims that determine the juice of investigation--and if three squarejohn citizens got choked by a neck-snapping psychopath, then LAPD Chief of Detectives Edmund J. Exley would waste no time mounting a full scale investigation. Often it takes a catchy tag name to bring dirty criminal business into the public's consciousness and thus create a clamor for justice.

Romanian version:
Dragă LAPD,
De curând s-au găsit cadavrele a trei vagabonzi alcoolici strangulaţi şi mutilaţi în nişte case părăsite din zona Hollywood. În stilul binecunoscut al revistei Hush-Hush: am aflat că ucigaşul aflat încă în libertate, le-a smuls traheele post-mortem, folosindu-se de multă putere. Presa a acordat extrem de puţină atenţie acestor crime cu adevărat ***oribile şi oripilante****; numai ziarului* ***L.A. Mirror ahtiat după scandaluri şi ştiri de senzaţie*** *pare să îi pese de faptul că trei cetăţeni ai oraşului Los Angeles şi-au găsit* ***un astfel de sfârşit îngrozitor****. Departamentul de omucideri al poliţiei oraşului Los Angeles nu a fost sesizat ca să pornească o anchetă; până acum la acest caz lucrează doar doi detectivi din cadrul diviziei Hollywood.* ***Iubitori ai jazzului****, pedigree-ul victimelor este cel care provoacă suculenţa anchetei – iar dacă trei cetăţeni de vază conservatori ar fi fost sufocaţi de un strangulator psihopat, atunci cu siguranţă că şeful detectivilor din cadrul LAPD, Edmund J. Exley, nu ar pierde vremea în a porni o anchetă în toată regula. Adesea este nevoie de un nume cu priză care să aducă afacerile criminale murdare în faţa opiniei publice şi să creeze astfel o paradă de justiţie.*

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As can be seen, the alliteration was maintained in the following two cases. Thus, *heinously horrific* is translated as *oribile şi oripilante*. Further, *sin-sation slanted L.A. Mirror*, another blending which also involves alliteration (***sin* + *sensation* = sin-sation**), is translated with *L.A. Mirror ahtiat după scandaluri şi ştiri de senzaţie*. However, alliteration was lost in *nauseatingly nasty nadirs* rendered as *un astfel de sfârşit îngrozitor*.

There are also instances of translation loss by means of paraphrase so as to explain the meaning. For *hep* / *hip-cat* 'n. [1930s+] (US Black) a jazz or swing fan; an aware, sophisticated person' our suggestion is *iubitori ai jazzului*. Consider next the following excerpt:

(14) University Station, arrest/MO – **buppkis**. FI cards, three recent: a "youngish", "average build" white man was reported peeping whore motels. My **eyeball man**? – maybe – but:

Romanian version:
*Secţia University, arestări/modalităţi de operare – **o laie**. Fişe de investigaţie, trei erau recente: se raportase faptul că un „tinerel" alb, „de constituţie medie" obişnuia să tragă cu ochiul prin motelurile prostituatelor. **Benoclistul** meu? – poate – dar:*

For *buppkis* 'n. [1940s] nothing (whatsoever). [Yidish *bupkes* 'beans']' our suggestion is *o laie*. As for *eyeball man* [cf. to eyeball: 'to stare, to ogle'], in other contexts *peeper*, we suggest a coinage: *benoclist*.

8. Conclusions

The present paper explored certain aspects in the translation of James Ellroy's *White Jazz*. The comparison between fragments in the source text and their equivalent in the target text (Romanian) revealed the difficulties the translator was faced with in choosing the most adequate terms for rendering the slang used by the American author.

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