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TEACHING YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE: CATCHER IN THE RYE AS A LANGUAGE MAKER AND BREAKER

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Abstract

*Young adult literature dealing with familiar universal youth problems and concerns that most of young adults either have experienced or are still experiencing has many qualities which make it particularly suitable for English literature lecturers and foreign language instructors to use it in their curriculums. Young adult literature enables young adults to identify themselves with the familiar youth problems during the maturational and experiential development period and serves as a great motivator for teaching language and developing reading skills. Namely, young adult literature as a developing genre is a valid pathway to engage young adults in learning language through reading literary texts. However, when first published, *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951) as a young adult literature was banned from schools because of portraying a 17-year-old young adolescent using obscene and offensive language. In fact, the language seen as obscene and offensive and inappropriate in adult worlds is very appropriate in the young adult worlds because it is true to their colloquial speech. Thus, aiming to present young adult literature and its usage in teaching language and improving reading, Salinger's novel will be analyzed with reader response approach, discussing whether teaching young adult literature: *The Catcher in the Rye* is a language maker or breaker.*

Keywords

Young Adult Literature, Reader Response Approach, Teaching Language, J.D. Salinger, *the Cather in the Rye*

1. Introduction to Young Adult Literature

Young Adult Literature is a complex term because of the various terms used to categorize and define it such as: “teenage books, teen fiction, juvenile literature, junior novel, teen novel, juvie and tweener books” but in recent years, the terms; adolescents and teens became “so weighed down with negative connotations” (Nilsen & Donalson, 2009, p.4) that *young adult literature* became the widely used term. Young Adult Literature, didactical material for teachers to “bring young people of all sorts of classes under systemized control” (Holt, 2008, p.114) emerged as a genre around the nineteenth century in which young adults were accepted to be those between 12 and 18, but later, in the twentieth century the age period of young adults and the young adult literature began to change. For example, “The Educational Resources Information Clearinghouse (ERIC), defined young adults as those between the ages of 18 and 22, whereas the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), administered by the Educational Testing Service, referred to young adults between the ages of 21 and 25”(Nilsen & Donalson, 2009, p.3). Thus, with the changing world, circumstances and age period of young adults, once seen more relevant for secondary and high school students young adult literature become suitable for university students, as well.

Kelly Byrne Bull, in her article “Connecting With Texts: Teacher Candidates Reading Young Adult Literature,” explains that

“Young adult literature consists of a wealth of genres (fiction, nonfiction, short stories, and poems) that are written for and about adolescents that is rich and complex, using authentic language and addressing issues that are relevant to contemporary adolescent readers”(2011,p.223).

Young adult literature, written for and about adolescents, is marked by its “dedication to depicting how potentially out-of-control adolescents can learn to exist within institutional structures”(Trites, 2000,p.8). B. Joyce Stallworth adds that “young adult literature (YAL) . . . contains themes, plots, language, and characters that are consistent with young adults’ experiences”(1998,p.59). Jean E. Brown and Elaine C. Stephens state that Young Adult Literature:

May be defined as books written specifically for and about youth. It is a body of literature written for an adolescent audience that is, in turn, about the lives,

experiences, aspirations, and problems of young people. In other words, the term “young adult literature” describes the primary audience for these works as well as the subject matter they explore (1995, p.6).

The young adult literature as a genre bridges the gap between children’s literature and adult literature with its distinguished characteristics that have been listed by Pam B. Cole:

- The protagonist is a teenager.
- Events revolve around the protagonist and his/her struggle to resolve conflict.
- The story is told from the viewpoint and in the voice of a young adult.
- Literature is written by and for young adults.
- Literature is marketed to the young adult audience.
- Story doesn’t have a “storybook” or “happily-ever-after” ending.
- Parents are noticeably absent or at odds with young adults.
- Themes address coming-of-age issues such as: maturity, sexuality, relationships, drugs, and teenage problems.
- Books contain fewer than 300 pages, closer to 200 (2009, p.49).

Young adult literature has a narrative style that is contemporary and appealing to young adults who are meaning makers, interested and engaged with emotional topics such as family issues, identity construction, friendships, first love, making decisions about the future, college, suicide, sexism, abuse, assault, drugs and alcohol and many more that increase students' motivation to read, share familiar problems and learn teenage language.

Actually, numerous books were written for young adults such as *Huckleberry Finn* (1884) by Mark Twain, *David Copperfield* (1850) by Charles Dickens and *The Outsiders* (1967) by S. E. Hinton “dealing with teenage characters and written with a teenage reading audience in mind” (Carlo, 1984, p.4), but while such books focused on “the travails of young man’s education” and adventure, Salinger focused on young man’s “innermost concerns”(Pinsker, 1993, p.12) psychology and language. Thus, J. D. Salinger’s *Catcher in the Rye* signed the start of a young adult literature concerning the language and psychological problems of an adolescent. According to Cart:

Catcher’s most powerful contribution is the idiosyncratic, first person voice of its narrator, Holden Caulfield. But the book is also quintessentially adolescent in its tone, attitudes, and choice of narrative incidents, many of which are rite of passage . . . (2010, p.27).

Salinger by focusing on the language and psychology of the young adult brought a new perspective in teaching and reading young adult literature. Salinger, instead of focusing primarily

on plot development like most young adult novels, focused on young adult character's development, psychology, and language. Thus, Salinger's young adult novel became popular among young adult readers who experience familiar psychological problems alienation, confusion, hesitation, and rebellion during their adolescent years. However, the language of *The Catcher in the Rye*, J. D. Salinger's only full-length novel published in 1951 has always been a controversial matter in schools because of its language being defined as slang, offensive and even vulgar; therefore, when first published, it was banned. Furthermore, *The Catcher in the Rye* was not accepted as a "good role model for teenagers (Bloom, 1987, p.145) because of the discussion of adolescent sexuality in a complex way and slang and offensive language. However, later the novel managed to become a popular bestseller dealing with sensitive and psychologically crippled teenage character that is going through an individuation process in the "phoniness of urban middle class culture" (Ousby, 1999, p.322). Namely, it became one of the most popular novels that is considered as a significant example of young adult literature and accepted as a suitable "genre for young adults" (Koss, 2008, p.20). Therefore, according to Judith A. Hayn, Jeffrey S. Kaplan and Amanda Nolen:

The arrival of J. D. Salinger's (1951) Catcher in the Rye nearly 70 years ago introduced adults and adolescents to a character that had not made much of an appearance in American letters—the teenage voice. Gone was the desire for sweet and innocent fantasy (first dates, learning to drive, fun at the prom), and in came the often harsh and unforgiving reality of adolescent lives (neglectful parents, wayward youth, and abusive relationships) (2011,p.177).

J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* accepted as the prototype of the young adult novel is told in flashbacks and in the first-person narration of a rebellious teenager named, Holden Caulfield who wants to protect the innocent from the corrupted and phony adult world. Salinger's controversial novel, *The Catcher in the Rye* with its rebellious young adult protagonist, first person narration, and simple and teenage slang language is a significant novel in teaching young adult literature. Actually, using young adult literature to develop language is a pathway to improving language learning and developing reading skills. Namely, young adult literature plays a crucial role in engaging and motivating young adults in reading and learning language.

Briefly, young adult literature as a developing genre mirrors the teenage world and opens windows to new worlds enabling young adults to understand the factual and the fictional worlds that help them to make interpretations that are shaped with their own experiences and perspectives because the events and the problems are relevant to their own lives. Additionally,

the young adults begin to deconstruct and socially interact with the young adult books they read and feel in control of their own language learning and reading process.

2. Reader Response Approach and Aim

There is no single approach, method or technique that could be successful in teaching language, therefore in the past, number of teaching methods and approaches have been developed dealing with language learning from different perspectives. Approach, method, and technique are among the most frequently used terms in curriculums. In fact, “the organizational key is that *techniques* carry out a *method* which is consistent with an *approach*.” (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 15). Yet, to avoid confusion among these terms, American linguist Edward Anthony in 1963 defined each term emphasizing that:

- Approach is a set of correlative assumptions that deal with the nature of language teaching, and learning describing the nature of the subject matter to be taught.
- Method is an overall plan of the orderly presentation of language material, which is based upon the selected approach that includes several methods.
- Technique is what takes place in a language-teaching classroom such as a strategy, or plan for accomplishing a specific objective (qtd. in Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 15).

Throughout the history lots of different teaching approaches and methods have been used for teaching language such as; Grammar-Translation Approach, Direct Approach, Reading Approach, Audio-lingual Approach, Community Language Learning, The Silent Way, The Communicative Approach, Functional Notional Approach, Total Physical, Reader Response Approach, The Natural Approach. However, in recent years, teachers, educators, instructors and linguists focused on satisfying the learners’ needs; therefore, they stopped looking for a better approach and method and started seeking techniques for "teaching practices or strategies that have been designed to satisfy local needs and experiences" (Savignon, 2007, p. 207). Thus, language teaching approaches and methods moved from teacher-centered to learner-centered ones.

Reader-response approach is one of the learner-centered methods that focus on the reading process and the reader's interpretation. Thus, it is one of the most efficient skills to enhance the students’ capacities in coping with literature that is a reading-centered task. Thus, in this paper the reader response approach is preferred in language teaching process because reading literary texts are motivating sources for learning a language. Many literary texts and stories present different dialects of English, slang words, idioms and expressions that will help the students in understanding language as a whole and make a direct contact with their lives and

the worlds because the students during the reading process bring their experiences and knowledge with them. Thus, the students can play an active role in meaning making as they define, present, tell, identify, explain, discuss, differentiate and restate the events and describe characters as they read the literary text. According to Govindarajoo and Mukundan;

Reader-response method [...] sees the reader as an active participant who produces a unique reading experience because he brings into the reading experience his own physical and psychological conditions causing his personal history to become entrenched into the creation and interpretation of the text.(2013, p. 79)

As the reader response approach includes transaction between the reader and the text, young adult literature includes a transaction between the young adult novel and the teenage reader's experience that can motivate them in language learning. Briefly, this study aims to introduce a reader-response approach to teaching language through young adult literature to Turkish university students. Thus, reader response approach will be helpful in discussing whether Salinger's, *The Catcher in the Rye* as a young adult literature is a language maker or breaker in teaching language because literature is a reading centered task that is shaped according to the readers' responds.

Reader response approach is important in language teaching through literature because teaching language through literature cannot be considered without the skill of reading. The origins of this theory go back to 1930s. Louise Rosenblatt, one of the pioneers in this theory, states; “what the organism selects out and seeks to organize according to already acquired habits, assumptions, and expectations becomes the environment to which it also responds” (1978, p.17). Namely, reader response focuses on the transaction between the reader and the text in construction of meaning that is very relevant in the reading process of literary texts. In reading literature texts, the reader must play an active role in meaning making because “words are primarily aspects of sensed, felt, lived-through experiences” (Rosenblatt, 1982, p. 271). The transaction between the reader and the text in meaning making can play a significant role in teaching language through young adult literature because in young adult literature transaction is an important mean in reading and responding to the literary text.

Generally, reader response approach shifts teacher's role from dictating the meaning of a text to “helping students discover what a piece of literature can mean” (Mitchell, 1993, p.41) by allowing them to control their own learning as they interpret the literary text. This approach focuses on a student's initial response and experience leading them into depth analysis and interpretations of the literary texts. Namely, students freely “discover what the piece of literature means, students see that their responses are valued because the assignments are based on their

response, and students think and create rather than regurgitate” (Mitchell, 1993, p.48). Reader Response makes young adults become active participants in the learning and reading tasks because every response is acceptable as long as the students support their responds. Briefly, reader response “empowers students by showing them that what they have to say is valued” (Mitchell, 1993, p.42). Since young adults seek freedom rather than control in their words and worlds, reader response approach provides them the freedom they seek and the sense that they can confidently interpret their own experiences within literary texts. Thus, this approach is suitable for teaching language through literature to young adults. In other words, reader response approach is a suitable approach in teaching language through young adult literature and Salinger's young adult novel, *The Catcher in the Rye* fits very well into reader response theory that encourages students to develop their language and reading. Furthermore, when young adult literature is applied to reader response theory it will help open up the door for discussion, student creativity and student centered learning that will enable students to form their own methods in learning and interpreting a literary text. Briefly, reader response approach allows students to explore literary texts from their personal experience, discover and develop their interpretation about the meaning of the literary text.

3. Classroom Applications

As a non-American, I have been teaching American novel courses over more than nine years. Generally, I include the canonical works (*Wieland*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, *The Scarlett Letter*, *Billy Budd*, *Great Gatsby*, *Portrait of a Lady*, *As I Lay Dying*, *Color Purple*, so on) in my curriculum but in the recent years I included J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*. First, I had hesitations because, young adult literature was commonly used by teachers in high schools, but my students were university students between the ages of 18 and 24. Although they were considered as young adults, I thought they would see Salinger's novel as children's story but I have observed that my students read this young adult novel with enthusiasm and faster than the other novels in the curriculum. Thus, I asked what made Salinger's novel more attractive than the other novels. Most of the students responded that the language and the plot was easy to follow, the themes were familiar for them and the plot was covering a wide variety of topics that was relevant to their real-life experiences such as, relationships, growth, development, confusions, psychological problems, and self-discovery. Thus, I developed interest in young adult literature, and I decided to teach *The Cather in the Rye* as relevant young adult fiction to develop students' language because reading literary text is a beneficial way to develop the language that is not your mother tongue. For two years, I have evaluated the presentations of the students and realized that

they could talk longer about *The Cather in the Rye* novel than the classical ones because the classics were often too distant from the students' experiences and the language was too figurative they needed a dictionary while reading. However, it is interesting that they were able to read *The Cather in the Rye* mostly without the aid of a dictionary because they could guess the meaning of the words while reading, therefore the reading process was faster. Thus, young adult literature is a suitable genre to be included in curriculums and it is relevant to use in teaching language to young adults.

3.1 Classroom Assignments

While teaching *The Cather in the Rye*, as I do generally for all the novels in my curriculum, I assigned my third year student's to prepare presentations about the novel focusing on certain issues as historical background, author, genre, plot, setting, narration, themes, characters important quotations. Since I have around 30 or 40 students per year, I generally separate my class into 7 groups of four or five students and ask them to prepare presentations. Including Salinger's *The Cather in the Rye* in my recent curriculum list and intending to use young adult literature to improve language learning and reading, I assigned my students to prepare presentations about Salinger's young adult novel from a reader response lens.

The first group was asked to prepare a presentation focusing on the questions; Who is J.D. Salinger? and What is the significance of his novel, *Catcher in the Rye*? After the presentations of the first group students, their interpretations and inferences about the author and his novel are discussed with the whole class to evaluate their understanding, participation and responds.

The second group read information about the historical background of the novel and its genre. After defining young adult literature and its development, I asked the students how they found the novel and the genre young adult novel? The responds to my question was interesting because generally the students find the novels difficult to read and understand but most of the students stated that;

- The young adult novel matched their interests,
- The experiences of the character were familiar with their own life experiences,
- The language was easy to follow even though accepted as slang and vulgar.
- The first person narration was relevant for them to understand the psychological problems.

Actually, the first two groups gave the class theoretical and historical information about Salinger and the genre of the novel, and the third group students presented the individual and social experiences of the characters drawn in Salinger's young adult novel.

After the presentation of the third group, focusing on the characters, the role of Holden, the young adult protagonist who desired to bring change with his rebellious attitudes was discussed. Afterwards, the characters were evaluated according to the response of the students whether the characters' attitudes were right or wrong.

Fourth group presented a discussion over the narration and the setting of the novel. Namely, the students presented the narrative structure and explained where the novel was taking place.

The fifth group students presented the events in the novel by examining the developments. They highlighted the frustrating and traumatic events that influenced the psychology of all the characters.

The sixth group students analyzed the language of the novel focusing on familiar and odd expressions through important quotations and examples from the novel.

The final, seventh group made a critical presentation because they were asked to read critical essays written on Salinger's young adult novel, and present different perspectives about the *Catcher in the Rye* as a young adult novel, focusing on the language and literature relation.

Finally, all the groups were asked to write a paper around 5 or 6 pages long, interpreting Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* as a young adult novel focusing on the issues they have presented throughout the presentations, and discussing whether Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* can be a language maker or/and breaker. In fact, the discussions were based on students' individual interpretations of the young adult novel, *The Catcher in the Rye* as they constructed meaning through the knowledge they shared and the data they collected through reading different texts. Actually, while oral presentations improved reading and language learning, the written papers including personal narratives, connections between personal experiences and the young adult novel helped develop writing skills and interpretation of the literary text.

3.2 Evaluation of Classroom Application

After evaluating the presentations and the papers of the groups, I noticed that the students focused on familiar themes such as; family relations, parental protection, friendship, rebellious attitudes, psychological issues, slang language and sympathized with Holden, the young adult protagonist who used a teenage vernacular and slang language. Moreover, I observed that the language students used during the presentations were emphasizing the slang expressions more than the figurative and literary one. Furthermore, I realized that *The Catcher in Rye* as young adult literature, helped students gain confidence in public speaking and introduced their interest in reading and constructing meaning while reading a young adult novel. Additionally, I noticed that students do not enjoy reading alone but in groups because reading in groups enabled them to

interact with each other and share knowledge. Thus, Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* as a young adult literature stimulates interaction, improves language learning and develops reading and writing skills. However, teaching language via young adult literature can be a breaker because of the slang language and misused expressions but still it can be maker because it improves reading, develops vocabulary and colloquial language usage.

4. Analysis of Holden Caulfield's Language as a Maker and Breaker

J. D. Salinger with Holden Caulfield's language presents the "teenage vernacular spoken in New York in the 1950s, and of strong personal idiosyncrasies" (Costello, 1959, p.175). The language of Holden throughout the novel is "blasphemous", "daring" and "obscene" and is called "typical teenage slang" (Costello, 2007, 12,16). This colloquial teenage slang language and narration is like a dramatic monologue presenting the psychology and problems of the main character, Holden Caulfield who has psychological problem as remarked in 1982 by E. H. Miller; "most critics have tended to accept Holden's evaluation of the world as phony, when in fact his attitudes are symptomatic of serious psychological problem"(qtd. Salzman,1991,p.99). Namely, Holden Caulfield is a frustrated and rebellious teenager, going through an individuation process, therefore his attitudes, language and narrative reflects his psychological problems. The setting of the novel is psychologically structured, because of little descriptions made about the setting that seems to be Holden's mind. The story is narrated in series of flashbacks that can be interpreted as a sign of Holden's inability to cope with the realities of the adult world and Holden's "grip on reality is loosening, and he can no longer distinguish between past and present" (Carlo, 1984, p.17). The slang language, verbal slips, double entendres, errors, forgetting, accidents and falling image are all means that add up to form the teen-slang language and psychological structure of the novel.

The Catcher in the Rye as a young adult fiction, from the very first sentence emphasizes the psychological disturbance of Holden Caulfield who is "an adolescent hero in the midst of an identity crisis" (Salzberg, 1990, p.197). Actually, there is no logical order about the way a person's mind works but with the flashbacks how Holden's mind drifts in and out of the past has been presented. Holden is talking about the things his mind allows; therefore he either talks about his memories or emotions and about the realities that he cannot cope within the adult world. Holden tries to express his psychological disturbance by saying that he will talk about "madman stuff"(1). Probably, "madman" is Holden Caulfield, himself and the things that caused him to go mad are the thing he defines as "stuff." Even though Holden is trying to tell his story, he is still dismissing many important things with "throwaway phrases"(Carlo, 1984, p.21)

because from one point he is trying to explain his problem but from another point he does not directly tell everything. In fact, he is confused, therefore he cannot be certain whether to tell everything about his story or not because he is unable to commute with people. The two traumas in his past; the death of his brother Allie and the suicide of one of his schoolmates, James Castle, influences him deeply, and makes him become a rebellious young adult against the adult world, therefore Holden's "informal, schoolboy vernacular is particularly typical in its vulgarity and obscenity" (Costello, 1959, p.175). Holden is judgmental about everything and everybody who are living in a phony (superficial) world. Moreover, Holden "in a phony world feels compelled to reinforce his sincerity and truthfulness constantly with, It really is or It really did" (Heiserm & Miller, 1956, p.136).

Actually, Holden by subverting the detonated meanings of the words in a phony world is forming/making himself a language that is confusing, repetitive, unique and slang reflecting his psychology, anger, like, dislike, disappointment and mood. Holden's language usage can be divided into three groups:

- *Confusing and interchangeable words* reflecting his crippled psychology.
- *Repetitive and misused words* reflecting his anger and frustrations.
- *Opposing and made up words* reflecting his rebellious attitudes.

1) Holden Caulfield, throughout the novel uses such words, *goddam, ass, hell, bastard, sonuvabitch, crap, crazy, killed and old*, as *confusing and interchangeable* words to express his anger, dislikes, frustrations, disappointments, emotional ties and strong likes that reflect his crippled psychology. For example, Holden instead of using the expression of "Goddam" in its lexical meaning uses it to express his emotional tie with the object as in "goddam baseball glove"(41) and "goddam windows"(39) or to indicate his dislike as in "goddam stupid moron"(44). Moreover, he uses *damm* interchangeably with *goddam* that indicates his confused mind as in "damn subject"(131). Holden uses the word, *ass* in a variety of ways as referring to the specific part of the body as in "I moved my ass a little"(9), or as a expression of frustration as in "freezing my ass off", "in a half-assed way"(11) and as an rebellious expression; "Game, my ass"(8). The word *hell* is one of the frequently used words in Holden's teenage vocabulary rather than expressing its lexical meaning, it is used as a simile to exaggerate the situation; "cold as hell"(41), "old as hell"(7) and "pretty as hell"(35). Both *bastard* and *sonuvabitch* (Son of bitch) is interchangeably used when Holden is in deep anger and dislikes things. When, Holden is angry with Stradlater for his treatment of Jane Gallagher, he "called him a moron sonuvabitch"(129) because he is furious over Stradlater's attitude. Holden's usage of the word, *crap* in different meaning is expressing his dissatisfaction such as: "I spilled some crap all over

my gray flannel,(38)" or as "I was putting on my galoshes and crap"(37). For Holden *crazy* has both a positive and negative connotation. From one side, crazy indicates his dislikes, disappointments, boredom, and impatience as in the phrase; "That drives me crazy". On the other side, "to be crazy about" something indicates a strong like or desire. Holden sometimes uses the word **killed** as a synonym with *crazy* to indicate his strong likes and affection as "her lips and all. That killed me"(77). Holden uses the adjective *old* with different connotation to define, mock, criticize almost every character who are real or fictional, mentioned in the novel such as; 'old Maurice' (he hates) to 'old Peter Lorre,'(he define) to 'old Phoebe,' (he pities) and even old Jesus (he mocks).

2) Holden by using *repetitive and misused words* such as: *lousy, pretty, crumby, terrific, quite, old and stupid* indicates the habit of typical teenage vernacular that is narrow, ignorant, unimaginative, imprecise, crude, slang, and grammatically and functionally subverted. One of the most interesting aspects of Holden's language is his ability to use nouns as adverbs: "She sings it very Dixieland and whorehouse, and it doesn't sound at all *mushy*" (98). Sometimes, Holden makes use of repetitions in a sentence to indicate his focal point as in: "He was a *very nervous guy*-I mean he was a *very nervous guy*." (157) and sometimes he uses odd and opposing expressions as in: "She *killed* Allie, too. I mean he *liked* her, too" (58). Grammatically and contextually Holden's language usage shows difference and subversion because of his confused mind.

3) Holden, using *opposing and made up words* form a language that is unique to his understanding. Moreover, Holden feels himself different from the others; this feeling of otherness is the indicator of a psychological matter of alienation, separation and formation of his language context. Actually, Holden's alienation is really a separation from the others because he needs love and support. Holden, "must find his place in the structure of relationships established on the pattern of family, environment and reified in the structures of language" (Salzberg, 1990, p.198). Holden's use of language is very broken, full of pauses and slang words.

Generally, language is a mean for people to communicate with each other but for Holden, language is a mean of objecting, rebelling and refusing to enter the adult world that he think is phony and corrupted. Holden often finishes his sentences with words like "and all" and "or anything." Often he uses these phrases to extend some inexpressible emotion or action like "... how my parents were occupied and all before they had me" or "...they're *nice* and all."(1) But many times there is no significance at all to the expressions as in "...was in the Revolutionary War and all,"(2) "It was December and all" and "...no gloves or anything.",(3) right in the pocket and all (3). The incompleteness of the sentences and the lack of communication show that

Holden's individuation process is incomplete and he is at the trash-hall of becoming an adult. While Holden is going through the individuation process, lots of people that surround him all take their part in shaping his individuality and language. Thus, Holden Caulfield's socially and culturally shaped language can be a maker because of forming the base of daily language but on the other side it can be a breaker because he uses the words in different connotations, with slang and misused meanings. Holden Caulfield psychologically disturbed is afraid of growing up, because he thinks the innocence and purity of life disappears when people grow up. Thus, he "just wants to be the catcher in the rye and all" (173) "to change the order of things that he finds unacceptable" (Lundquist, 1988, p.45) and he wants to be the "catcher", the savior of the children who is "falling" from innocence of childhood into obscenity and phoniness of adulthood. Holden is angry at the phoniness in the adult world, therefore he wants a world populated by innocent children rather than corrupted adults. Yet, Holden cannot remain as a child forever and stand at the "edge of crazy cliff" (116) to be the catcher in the rye (world) because he is growing and falling into adulthood.

Holden realizing that everything is doomed to change, therefore he decides to return home and face the realities of maturity and adult world. Holden, in the final chapter, which is accepted as an epilogue decides to stop his narration:

That's all I'm going to tell about. I could probably tell you what I did after I went home, and how I got sick and all, and what school I'm supposed to go to next fall, after I get out of here, but I don't feel like it. I really don't. That stuff doesn't interest me too much right now.

A lot of people . . . keep asking me if I'm going to apply myself when I go back to school next September. It's a stupid question, in my opinion. I mean how do you know what you're going to do till you do it? The answer is you don't. I think I am, but how do I know? . . .D.B. asked me what I thought about all this stuff I just finished telling you about. I didn't know what the hell to say. If you want to know the truth, I don't know what I think about it. I'm sorry I told so many people about it. About all I know is, I sort of miss everybody I told about . . . It's funny. Don't ever tell anybody anything. If you do, you start missing everybody (214).

In fact, stopping his narration indicates the change in his language. Holden, at the beginning of the novel, by saying "If you really want to hear about it"(1) started his story, and at the end by saying, "That's all I'm going to tell about" (213) finished it. In fact, Holden who was a rebellious character at the beginning of the novel has changed and started to grow; therefore, he learnt where to talk and where to stop. Holden's language that is a breaker (slang and misused)

was used to isolate himself from the others but later his language became a maker because he learnt to communicate and enter(fall) into the adult world. Thus, Holden has come to terms with the adult world in which he has fallen into because of the continuing growing process, changing circumstances and developing social and cultural issues. Namely, adolescence is a process 'to grow into maturity', to enter into maturity (Rana & Adhikari, 2015, p.216) but "adolescents do not achieve maturity in a young adult literature until they reconcile themselves to the power entailed in the social institutions with which they must interact to survive" (Trites, 2000, p.20).

In sum, young adult literature can be both a maker and breaker because from one side the students become makers because they interpret and make meaning of the young adult text, and from the other side they become breakers because of the slang, misused words that they learn as reading and responding to the text can drive them to fallacy.

5. Conclusion

Consequently, teaching Salinger's *The Catcher in The Rye* as a young adult literature to develop language can be both a maker and breaker because as it develops reading and vocabulary, it deconstructs the formal and grammatical structure of language. In other words, teaching Salinger's *The Cather in the Rye* as young adult literature is both useful and confusing because young adult literature presents subjects and characters that are interesting, familiar and entertaining for young adult readers who bring all their life experiences as they read and respond to the literary text. Using reader response approach in teaching language through Salinger's young adult novel enabled the students to think critically about what they are reading and go beyond the literal levels of reading as they interpreted and made inference about the novel during the reading process. Salinger's *Cather in the Rye*, as a young adult novel presenting a world similar to what students have experienced give them the opportunity to talk about their own insights, helping them to speak English in front of their classmates as they make their presentations. The language of Salinger's young adult literature was found to be simple and easy to follow by the students but at the same time confusing because the language was representing the slang and grammatically incorrect teenage vernacular language that was not relevant for students who were learning English in a grammatical and formal way.

In sum, the young adult literature is a growing and becoming genre, therefore controversial matters and confusions will continue in future studies with positive and negative perspectives while teaching language through young adult literature because the young adult world is changing and challenging literary genres and language learning process.

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