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Analyzing Translation Strategies of Culture-Specific Items From English Into Arabic in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

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***Abstract*—Despite growing interest in translating African-American literature, little research has examined how Culture-Specific Items (CSIs) are handled, especially the balance between preserving cultural authenticity and ensuring translation readability. This study analyzes the procedures and strategies used to render CSIs in Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* into Arabic. By employing Newmark's (1988) taxonomy of translation procedures and Venuti's (1995) domestication and foreignization strategies, 713 CSIs were systematically identified, extracted, and analyzed from the source and target texts using a mixed-methods approach. The analysis reveals that literal translation was the predominant procedure, used to translate 43.5% of the items, followed by functional equivalence (11.8%) and synonymy (9%). Based on the CSI analysis, 60.6% of the items were foreignized. Furthermore, back-translation assessment indicates that while 54.8% of the CSIs maintained semantic accuracy, 45.2% experienced semantic shift. Of these, 19.8% showed a slight change in meaning, 3.4% showed a significant change in meaning, 8.3% exhibited a breach of the target language system, 13% resulted in distortion of meaning, and 0.7% were not translated. These findings suggest that although literal translation preserves source culture elements, it often compromises the semantic accuracy, especially when handling items used idiomatically and metaphorically to express African-American folklore and traditions.**

***Index Terms*—Culture-Specific Items, African-American literature, domestication and foreignization**

I. Introduction

The translation of culture-specific items in literary texts requires translators to have extensive knowledge of the source and target cultures. When rendered correctly, these translations help bridge the gap between cultures and peoples. *Their Eyes Were Watching God* is a novel by the famous African-American novelist and anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston published in 1937. It was translated into Arabic by Samah Jafar in 2016. It describes the lives of African-Americans during a troubled period of American history when the civil rights of African-Americans were still being contested. The novel has been translated into many languages but it was translated into Arabic only in 2016. The novel is rich in cultural references, creating a gap between the source and target texts, especially because Arab and African-American cultures have limited overlap (Gohar, 2018). The concept of culture gained significant interest in the field of translation studies, and it has since been identified as one of the main obstacles facing translators especially in translating culturally loaded literary texts with distinctive ideological characteristics (Wang, 2024).

The main focus of this paper is to classify and analyze the translation procedures and strategies used in translating the CSIs in the Arabic translation of the African-American folklore novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. CSIs, as defined by Newmark (1988), are elements in the source text tied to specific cultural contexts that require certain translation approaches to convey their meaning effectively. Due to their strong cultural and contextual grounding, researchers perceive CSIs as problematic because they do not always have equivalents between different languages (Rababah & Moindjie, 2025; Sketchley, 2021; Tian, 2023). While CSIs have received significant scholarly attention in translation studies (Al-Khazzaaleh et al., 2025; Korneenkova et al., 2025; El Zahra & Indhiarti, 2023), little research has examined the translation of CSIs in African-American folklore texts into Arabic despite the growing interest in translating such texts (Gohar, 2018).

The novel describes the life and struggles of an African-American woman during a troubled period of American history when civil rights of African-Americans were being contested especially in the South. Published during the Harlem Renaissance, the novel captures culturally and historically significant references from this period. Hurston herself affirms

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her intention to preserve the African-American folk talk, stories, and ways of life (Hurston, 1942) making this text particularly rich in CSIs reflecting the African-American folklore and culture.

Research Objectives and Questions

The objectives of this study are:

1. Identify and classify the CSIs in the novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* using Newmark's 1988 taxonomy.
2. Determine the translation procedures employed by the Arabic translation based on Newmark's 1988 framework.
3. Assess the semantic accuracy of translated CSIs through back-translation analysis.
4. Evaluate the overall orientation of the translation towards domestication and foreignization using Venuti's (1995) dichotomy.

The paper attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are the CSIs in the novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, and how are they classified based on Newmark's taxonomy?
2. What translation procedures were employed in translating the CSIs in the novel from English into Arabic?
3. What is the semantic accuracy of the translated CSIs and what type of errors occurred?
4. Does the Arabic translation predominantly employ domestication or foreignization strategies?

This study addresses an important gap in translation studies by examining the translation procedures of CSIs in African-American folklore literary text into Arabic. As the only available translation of any of Hurston's works in Arabic to date, this analysis provides significant insights into the challenges of translating culturally distant texts. The study contributes to the limited research on Arabic translation of African-American literary texts and offers practical guidance for translators working with source texts rich in cultural references and CSIs. Moreover, it highlights the relationship between the semantic outcomes and the procedural choices in the translation demonstrating that consistency in approach does not guarantee achieving translation quality.

II. Literature Review

A. Theoretical Foundations of CSI Translation

Culture-Specific Items (CSIs) constitute a major part of literary texts, and they have been conceptualized differently across translation studies. Newmark's (1988) taxonomy classifies them into five comprehensive categories: ecology, material culture, social culture, social organizations, and gestures and habits. Other taxonomies such as Aixelá (1996), who classifies them into two main categories: proper nouns and common expressions. However, this binary classification oversimplifies the identification process and complicates the systematic corpus analysis as they involve more than just individual items (Amenador & Wang, 2022). Recent studies have successfully applied Newmark's approach to different literary texts and yielded successful results (Al-Soghiar, 2025; Juan et al., 2023; Laabed & Bekouche, 2022; Obeidat, 2019; Prompan, 2024; Rababah & Moindjie, 2025; Shalimova & Shalimova, 2020). For analyzing early twentieth-century African-American folklore texts, Newmark's 1988 taxonomy provides clear and systematic analytical results.

B. Translation Procedures for CSIs

Newmark (1988) proposes 18 translation procedures for rendering CSIs from literal translation and transference to more adaptive procedures such as paraphrase and cultural equivalent. Studies show considerable variation in the effectiveness of these procedures depending on the type of text, cultural distance, and target audience characteristics (Borysenko et al., 2024; Obeidat, 2019; Tian, 2023). Literal translation, Newmark's preferred procedure, is often criticized for producing unnatural target translations when the target and source cultures are distant. However, it can preserve the source culture if the target readers possess sufficient cultural background or if preservation is the purpose of the text (Venuti, 1995). However, studies consistently show that employing literal translation in rendering idiomatic and metaphorical CSIs often produces semantic distortion (Davies, 2003). Other procedures such as functional equivalence and cultural substitution emphasize semantic accessibility but compromise the source culture elements (Nida, 2001). Recent studies suggest that employing a variety of procedures yields effective results more than depending on a single approach (Borysenko et al., 2024).

C. Domestication and Foreignization

Venuti's dichotomy of foreignization and domestication has significantly influenced literary translation studies despite the criticism it received due to its binary nature. Some researchers argue this dichotomy oversimplifies the translator's decision-making process (Pym, 2014) while others argue it fails to account for the power dynamics of cross-cultural translation (Munday, 2016). However, the paradigm offers insights into the translator's orientation patterns, and the success of the translation can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies used. Studies of Arabic literary translation show translators' tendency towards domestication when translating Western classical texts while translations of contemporary texts show the use of a variety of procedures (Abdelwahab, 2022; Al-Ramadan et al., 2025). The translation of African-American literature poses a particular challenge to translators with its historical and political implications for Venuti's domestication and foreignization dichotomy. Certain procedural choices may neutralize the African-American identity and dilute the translation's impact on the target readers (Le Gall, 2022).

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D. Arabic Translation of African-American Literature

Literature on the translation of African-American literary texts remains limited to date, with most studies focusing on established authors like Amiri Baraka's Dutchman (Gohar, 2018) which does not present African-American culture as comprehensively as *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. Existing studies show that translations of African-American literary texts are faced with challenges related to vernacular speech, historical and cultural references such as slavery, segregation, white supremacy, and religious expressions rooted in Christian American life which are largely unfamiliar to a predominantly Muslim Arab readership. Such challenges are compounded by translators' unfamiliarity with African-American history and culture (Gohar, 2018).

III. Methodology

A. Corpus and Text Selection

This study analyzes Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937) Arabic translation of " عيونهم كانت تراقب الرب, (Oyounuhum kanat turaqibu arrab) by Samah Jafar (2016). The source text was selected based on its richness in CSIs depicting African-American folklore and culture, the novel's canonical status in American literature, and the temporal distance between the original and the translation which allows for an objective analysis. The Arabic translation, published by Dar-Athar in Saudi Arabia, is the only Arabic translation of Hurston's work to date making it a unique corpus for study.

B. Research Design and Approach

This study employs a mixed-methods approach combining qualitative and quantitative analysis. The qualitative approach examines the semantic accuracy through back-translation and contextual analysis, while the quantitative approach involves systematic identification and classification of the CSIs and their translation procedures. The CSIs in the original text were identified and classified through a systematic analysis using Newmark's (1988) five categories. The process of identifying the CSIs was strict; the items had to be linked to a specific cultural context, pose comprehension challenges for the target readers, and express cultural knowledge specific to the source culture. Generic cultural references were excluded unless they carried specific cultural connotations in the text. The second step of the analysis involved providing back-translation to the CSIs to allow for a better judgment of the procedures and strategies used in the translation and decide the semantic accuracy of the translation. The translation procedures were identified using Newmark's framework of his proposed 18 translation procedures. Furthermore, Venuti's 1995 dichotomy of foreignization and domestication was applied to determine the orientation of the items.

C. Identification and Classification of Culture-Specific Items

The researcher identified potential CSIs from both texts. The items were then revised and approved by a professional English-Arabic translator. Any disagreements were resolved through discussion and consultation. The process yielded 713 CSIs across the five categories. The procedures used in translating the CSIs were analyzed using Newmark's framework of 18 translation procedures. The translation strategies were analyzed and identified by applying Venuti's 1995 dichotomy of foreignization and domestication. The researcher identified the procedures and the strategies, and an independent professional translator approved them. Any disagreements were resolved through discussion and research. Back-translation was provided by an independent translator proficient in Arabic and English to assess the semantic fidelity.

Semantic accuracy was assessed using the following five-category framework adapted from studies investigating translation of CSIs including Mozaheb et al. (2021) and Naguib (2021):

1. Successful translation: no change in meaning
2. Slight change in meaning: minor semantic change does not affect comprehension
3. Significant change in meaning: clear semantic change affecting comprehension but does not obscure the meaning
4. Distortion of meaning: substantial semantic change in meaning obscuring comprehension of the meaning
5. Breach of target language system: translation violates the Arabic idiomatic, grammatical or stylistic norms.

The use of this framework distinguishes between changes representing a legitimate translation choice to enhance readability and those compromising the meaning of the original.

IV. Limitations of the Study

Many limitations affect the generalizability and the scope of the study. First, analyzing only one translation limits drawing conclusions about Arabic translation practices in general and in rendering African-American literary texts in particular. Moreover, focusing on Newmark's taxonomy, although it provides a systematic analysis, may discard other culturally significant translation issues. Third, the reception of the target text and its impact cannot be captured using back-translation alone. Finally, the study does not consider editorial or social constraints that may have affected the translator's decision-making process.

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V. Results

A. Distribution of CSIs and Translation Procedures

Table 1 presents the distribution of the CSIs across Newmark's categories and the translation procedures employed in their translation.

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF CSIS BY CATEGORY AND TRANSLATION PROCEDURE

No.	CSI category / Procedure	Ecology	Material culture	Social culture	Social organization	Gestures and habits	Total
1	Literal translation	95	101	37	48	29	310
2	Expansion	11	17	1	0	1	30
3	Reduction	6	14	7	3	10	40
4	Cultural equivalent	3	14	2	3	3	25
5	Synonymy	13	16	22	3	10	64
6	Descriptive equivalent	1	3	1	0	0	5
7	Shift	17	12	4	4	9	46
8	Footnote	1	0	1	2	0	4
9	Modulation	9	3	1	2	3	18
10	Couplet	4	1	4	0	0	9
11	Paraphrase	3	4	2	2	3	14
12	Transference	4	50	5	3	0	62
13	Functional equivalent	13	21	23	10	17	84
14	Recognized translation	0	0	0	1	0	1
15	Translation label	0	0	0	0	0	0
16	Compensation	0	0	0	0	0	0
17	Naturalization	0	0	1	0	0	1
18	Through translation	0	0	0	0	0	0
19	Componential analysis	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	180	256	111	81	85	713

The analysis reveals that literal translation dominates CSI translation procedures at 43.5%, followed by functional equivalence at 11.8% and synonymy at 9%. This distribution suggests an approach toward foreignization, preserving the source culture elements while potentially compromising the target text accessibility.

Table 1 also shows that material culture CSIs constitute the largest category accounting for approximately 36% of the items, which reflects the novel's attention to the material aspects of African-American life. Ecology CSIs constitute almost 25% of the CSIs, largely describing the flora and fauna references that characterize the nature of the American South. Social culture items account for about 16% and refer to the leisure activities, community interactions and their work habits of the African-American community in the south. Social organizations account for about 11% of the CSIs and represent the religious, political and institutional references. Gestures and habits account for about 12% of the items and reflect the behavioral and nonverbal ways of communication of the African-Americans within certain cultural contexts.

The distribution of the translation procedures varies across the categories. Literal translation dominates in the translation of social organizations accounting for 59% of their total, followed by ecology terms, accounting for 53%, material culture at 39%, social culture at 33%, and gestures and habits at 34%. Social culture, material culture, and gestures and habits show more varied use of the translation procedures which reflects the complexity of translating social practices and culturally embedded behaviors.

B. Domestication and Foreignization Strategies Analysis

Based on the classification of the translation procedures used to translate the CSIs, the results show that foreignization procedures (including literal translation, transferences, shift, footnotes and couplets), totaling 520 occurrences representing approximately 61%. While domestication procedures (functional equivalence, cultural equivalent, adaptation, expansion, reduction, naturalization, and paraphrase) totaled 193 occurrences representing 27.1%. This distribution reflects a clear foreignization strategy, suggesting the translator aimed to preserve source cultural elements while introducing Arab readers to African-American culture and history.

C. Semantic Accuracy Analysis

Back-translation analysis shows unusually high levels of semantic shift in the target text (Table 2).

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TABLE 2
SEMANTIC SHIFT IN TRANSLATING CSIS

Semantic shift \ CSI	Ecology	Material culture	Social culture	Social organizations	Gestures and habits	Total
Successful	98	162	38	58	35	391
Slight change in meaning	31	54	27	7	22	141
Significant change in meaning	4	7	7	3	3	24
Breach of target language	17	6	14	8	14	59
Distortion of meaning	27	27	24	4	11	93
Not translated	3	0	1	1	0	5
Total	180	256	111	81	85	713

While 54.8% of the CSIs maintain semantic accuracy, 45.2% experience some degree of semantic shift. The 19.8% experiencing "slight change" could represent acceptable adaptation costs, but the combined 24.7% showing significant change, distortion, or system breach indicates significant semantic compromise.

Literal translation, despite being the dominant translation procedure, shows mixed accuracy results. Although it is effective in translating concrete items, it often produces semantic distortion when it is used to translate idiomatic expressions, metaphors and cultural-specific descriptions.

VI. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

This section presents an analysis of selected CSIs representing each category showing how translation procedures affected semantic accuracy. The examples are presented with the source text context, their translation, back-translation, translation procedure and semantic assessment.

A. Ecology CSIs

Ecology CSIs include references to elements of flora, fauna, winds, plains, hills, weather and geographical locations. Although many of these items are universal, their metaphoric or idiomatic use in the original caused significant translation challenges.

TABLE 3
TRANSLATION ANALYSIS OF ECOLOGY CSIS

	Source Text	Target Text	Back-Translation	Procedure	Outcome
1.	Packed tight like **a case of celery**	فقط **بشرتهم داكنة** أكثر من **الكرفس**	Only their skin is darker than celery	Shift	Distortion of meaning
2.	You got mo' nerve than **uh brass monkey**	لديك جرأة أكبر **من قرد نحاسي**	You have more nerve than a brass monkey	Literal translation	Breach of target language system
3.	Ah jus lak uh chicken. **Chicken drink water, but he don't pee-pee**"	أنا مثل الدجاجة. **الدجاجة تشرب الماء لكنها لا تتبول**	I am like a chicken. The chicken drinks water but it doesn't urinate	Literal translation	Distortion of meaning
4.	Ah sho hope you **ain't lak uh possum** —de older you gits, de less sense yuh got	أتمنى أن لا تكوني قد تسرعت – فكلما كبرت زادت حساسيتك	I wish that you hadn't rushed as you age your sensitivity increases	Reduction	Distortion of meaning
5.	Ah'll **break up dat settin' uh eggs**".	سوف **اكسر كرسي البيض**	I will **break the chair of eggs**	Literal translation	Breach of target language system
6.	they's a lost ball in **de high grass**	لقد فقدن الكرة **بين الحشائش العالية**	they have lost the ball **between the high grass**	Footnote	Distortion of meaning

In the translation of these items, the translator employed different translation procedures. Notably, these items were used metaphorically and do not actually refer to the universal items themselves. In the first example, the translator shifted the imagery describing how crowded the court was during Janie's trial from being people tightly packed one next to the other, to their skin color, darker than celery. The result of this translation distorted the meaning of the original causing a semantic error. Meanwhile, the second example, the translator used literal translation to translate an idiom which refers to someone being brave. Although literal translation maintained the item of the original. However, its idiomatic usage has not been conveyed successfully in the translation. the reference to courage iterated by "brass monkey" does not exist in the Arabic language, thus, the literal translation preserved the idiom of the source text but breached the target language system. In the third example, the translator also employed literal translation to translate the item to convey the meaning of keeping secrets. The idiom employs the name of a universal animal; chicken, but the idiom does not exist in Arabic therefore the translation distorted the meaning of the original. There are idioms in Arabic that convey a similar meaning, however, due to using literal translation, the intended meaning was not successfully conveyed into Arabic.

In the fourth example, the idiom also employs an animal; a possum. This animal is native to the American continents but not in the Arab world so maintaining it would have resulted in an unnatural idiom especially that comparing a person to a possum would not make sense. The translator deleted the name of the animal however this resulted in distortion of

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the meaning. The translator misunderstood the meaning of the idiom. The "older it gets the less sense it has" which means that possums act strangely with old age. In this example, the speaker refers to Janie's older age as she is older than Tea Cake and because of that she is not acting her age. The meaning of the idiom has not been conveyed correctly and it also affected the sentence after it. Additionally, the fifth example employed literal translation as well to render an idiomatic everyday expression which describes a winning set in a game of cards "setting of eggs" as a "كرسي البيض" (chair of eggs) which makes no sense in Arabic. The translation throws the reader into a strange linguistic construction that breaches the language structure and feels completely out of context. This contributes to readers realizing the text is a literal translation of the original. The final example, the "high grass" is used idiomatically and describes the people who lost their way as being a lost ball in the high grass; no one will be able to save them. The literal translation of the idiom was accompanied by a footnote "it refers to people who don't know what they are doing or where they are or how to do something.

This footnote explains the meaning and helps in comprehension of the idiom, however, the literal translation of the idiom, despite being explained by a footnote, makes no sense in Arabic and it caused a distortion of the intended meaning.

B. Material Culture CSIs

The material culture CSIs refer to clothing, food, transportation, housing, and towns. This category has the highest frequency of CSIs and the most varied translation procedures.

TABLE 4
TRANSLATION ANALYSIS OF MATERIAL CULTURE CSIS

	Source Text	Target Text	Back-Translation	Procedure	Outcome
1.	What she doin' coming back here in dem **overhalls**?	لم عادت إلى **أوفرهيلز**	Why did she return to Overhills?	Transference	Distortion of meaning
2.	You don't take nothin' to count but **sow-belly** and corn bread	لا تهتم بشيء سوى **مليء المعدة** وخبز الذرة	You don't care about anything but filling the stomach and corn bread	Paraphrase	Slight change in meaning
3.	Ah betcha you still craves **sugar-tits**	انا متأكد انك لا زلت تشتاقين **للهاية**	I am sure you still miss your pacifier	Functional equivalence	Successful
4.	Like she had **grapefruits in her hip pockets**	كما لو أن هناك **ثمار العنب في تجاويف وركها**	Like there are grapes in the curves of her hips	Synonymy	Distortion of meaning

In the first example, the speaker describes the appearance of Janie after returning to Eatonville. In the English text, Janie is wearing overalls; what workers in the Everglades used to wear while working. When she left the town with her new husband, she was wearing a dress, so coming back wearing dirty overalls showed the townspeople that her husband had left her without anything. The overalls in the novel are symbolic and very important as it represents the growth and change in Janie's life. The translator incorrectly transferred the name of the item into a name of a place. This caused a distortion of the meaning of the original and removed the significance of the item. In the second example, Janie is confronting her husband; Joe, about his lack of attention to her and that he only cares about food. The item "sow-belly" refers to the meat of a female pig's belly which is a stable meal in American culture. The translator opted to paraphrase the item sow-belly into "filling the stomach" which caused a slight change in meaning.

In the third example, the context is set in Janie's first husband's house when she first met her second husband, Joe. He was flirting with her by commenting on her young age. To describe her youth, he says she is too young to be married because she might still miss "sugat-tits". These "sugar tits" were pieces of clothing soaked in sugar which were given to babies as means of soothing them. The translator successfully employed the familiar modern-day functional equivalent of the item "لهاية" (pacifier). The flirtatious and condescending tone has been successfully maintained.

In the fourth example, the narrator describes Janie's body through the eyes of the men who were watching her as she came back to town. She describes her buttocks as round and firm as grapefruits; large round citrus fruit. This description conveys attractive physical features. The translator employed synonymy but confused "grapefruits" with "grapes" (عنب) causing a distortion of meaning. This error fundamentally changes the metaphor from praise to something potentially awkward or unflattering, demonstrating how selecting a synonym without considering semantic weight can completely alter intended meaning.

C. Social Culture CSIs

Social culture CSIs include work and leisure activities and cultural practices.

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TABLE 5
TRANSLATION ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL CULTURE CSIS

	Source Text	Target Text	Back-Translation	Procedure	Outcome
1.	Most of the great **flame-throwers** were there	اغلب **الحكائين** كانوا هناك	Most of the story tellers were there	Synonymy	Distortion of meaning
2.	It must be uh **recess in heben if St. Peter** is lettin' his angels out lak dis.	لا بد ان هناك **عطلة في السماء لذلك ترك القديس بطرس** ملائكته تخرج بهذا الشكل.	There must be a holiday in heaven so Saint Peter let his angels come out like this.	Literal translation	Breach of the language system
3.	Anyhow mah husband tell me say **no first class booger would have me**	على كل حال فقد اخبرني زوجي **ان ليس هناك شبح بامكانه امساكي**	Anyway my husband told me that there is no ghost that can catch me	Synonymy	Distortion of meaning
4.	whut you come in heah **wid uh face long as mah arm for.**	فلم اتيت الى هنا **عابسة بهذا الشكل؟**	So why did you come here frowning like that?	Functional equivalence	Successful

In the first example, before the hurricane workers gather at Tea Cake and Janie's house for companionship and courage. The narrator describes the scene and the people gathering there with "flamethrowers" attempting to cheer people. Flamethrowers are performers who manipulate fire for entertainment. This is a dangerous job and requires a lot of skill and courage, the author chose to emphasize that even the bravest men in the everglades sought comfort before the hurricane hit. The translator rendered it as "story-tellers" in an attempt to use a synonym which caused a distortion of meaning by eliminating the meanings associated with the original meaning such as courage and skill. In the second example, the speakers are playfully flirting with one of the women in town, Daisy, by comparing her to an angel who came down from heaven to town. This compliment draws on Christian imagery, comparing her beauty to that of an angel. The reference to Saint Peter who is traditionally depicted as the gatekeeper of heaven, functions as a hyperbole often used in African-American speech. This expression has a secular social function rather than a religious function which may have been lost in the translation. However, the overall complementary meaning is preserved making this an acceptable translation.

In the third example, Pheoby is talking to the townspeople who were eager to know all about Janie and why she came back to Eatonville. One of them wanted to go with Pheoby to see Janie and check for herself and told her that she wants to accompany her so that the "booger man" does not catch her on the way. This references a folktale used to scare children not to walk in the street alone after dark. This reference can be found in cultures around the world, depiction of a monster trying to kidnap children who do not listen to what their parents tell them. It is clear that this is an attempt from her to go with Pheoby so she can get good gossip. The reference is translated via a synonym which does sound scary "ghost" but it does not reflect the whole intended meaning of the original and there are many cultural references in Arabic that better reflect the meaning. Finally, the fourth example describes the context of Janie's first visit to her grandmother after being married to her first husband, Logan. Janie told her that her husband is good to her. The grandmother was worried because Janie had "face long as mah arm". This expression is used to reflect a person's feelings of sadness which is usually referred to as having "a long face". The translator successfully translated the item with its functional equivalent which reflects the intended meaning.

D. Social Organizations CSIs

These items include political, historical, institutional, and religious references.

TABLE 6
TRANSLATION ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS CSIS

	Source Text	Target Text	Back-Translation	Procedure	Outcome Error
1.	Look lak dey think God don't know nothin' 'bout de **Jim Crow law**.	يظنون ان الرب لا يعرف شيئا عن **قوانين جيم كرو**	They think that God doesn't know anything about Jim Crow laws.	Footnote	Successful
2.	half sobbed **a running chant prayer** over the head of the weeping girl	رأس **بترديد الصلاة على** الفتاة الباكية	By repeating prayers on the head of the crying girl.	Functional equivalent	Slight change in meaning
3.	One mornin' soon, now, **de angel wid de sword** is gointuh stop by here	خلال احدى الصباحات القريبة سوف تتوقف **الملائكة ذوات السيوف** هنا	During one morning soon the angels with swords will stop here	Shift	Major change in meaning
4.	you know **Old Uncle Sam** always do have de biggest and de best uh everything	أنت تعرفين أن **العم سام** يملك اكبر وافضل شيء بين كل الاشياء	You know that uncle Sam owns the biggest and best thing of all things	Literal translation	Successful

In the first example, after the hurricane hit the Everglades and a large number of people died and white people began digging up their dead and demanding the black men, who were forced to work, to separate the black from the white bodies so no black person is buried in a white grave yard and vice versa. Tea Cake is complaining saying that they, the white men, do not think that God knows anything about Jim Crow Laws. The Jim Crow Laws were a segregation law widely used in the American South in the states that refused to abolish slavery. These laws guaranteed white supremacy and

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ensure the continuation of slavery. They are unjust and have been abolished. The translator successfully used a footnote to explain the meaning of the item which provides the reader with a context explaining its meaning. In the second example, the narrator describes what Janie's grandmother did to comfort her. The chant prayer refers to a repetitive Christian vocalization common in African-American Christian tradition. The translator used an Islamic term "Salah" which is performed five times a day. The translator used a functional equivalent causing a slight change in meaning. Both items involve addressing God, however, the Islamic "Salah" requires performing certain movements and reciting certain verses from the Quran. Meanwhile, the Christian chant prayer involves rhythmic vocalization of words. the surface meaning of "prayer" is maintained, but the specific religious practice has been altered. A better translation for this item would have been "دعاء" (supplication). This example demonstrates the difficulty of translating religious practices across Christian-Muslim cultures. In the third example, the grandmother explains that she is getting older and might die soon. The angel of death, which is usually depicted in Christian faith as an angel with a sword, reaper, will soon come to claim her soul. Both Muslim and Christian cultures have the concept of an angel of death. The translator shifted the item from singular to plural which caused a major change in meaning. A simple Arabic translation "angel of death" (ملك الموت) would have expressed the intended meaning. The angel of death in Islamic culture is not portrayed as having a sword so the meaning has changed significantly. In the fourth example, the speaker is referencing a political item which was and is still used to refer to the American government as "Uncle Sam". It originated during the War of 1812 when a meat packer "Sam Wilson" would stamp "U.S." for United States on the boxes but the soldiers would jokingly say it came from Uncle Sam and later became to be used in military propaganda. The translator used literal translation as this is a well-known symbol for the American government.

E. Gestures and Habits CSIs

This category includes behavioral patterns and non-verbal means of communication specific to a certain community.

TABLE 7
TRANSLATION ANALYSIS OF GESTURES AND HABITS CSIS

	Source Text	Target Text	Back-Translation	Procedure	Outcome
1.	Sam Watson, **you'se mah fish**.	تعال يا سام واتسون **لتلاعبني**	Come Sam Watson play with me	Functional equivalent	Successful
2.	she **pressed her teeth together** and learned to hush	**كانت تضغط على اسنانها معا**، وتعلمت الصمت	She was pressing her teeth together and learned silence	Literal translation	Breach of target language
3.	Yo' mama **don't wear no Draws**	أمك **لا ترتدي ملابس داخلية**	Your mother doesn't wear underwear	Synonymy	Breach of target language
4.	This was a **show-off game**	فقد كانت **هذه لعبة مختلفة**	This was a different game	Functional equivalent	Slight change in meaning

In the first example, Joe and Sam are playing a form of board game. The item "my fish" means that "I want to catch you" in the game. The image is lost; however, the use of a functional equivalent explained the meaning and the translation can be said to be successful despite the loss of the image. In the second example, Janie, after being physically and verbally abused by her second husband. It shows the changes from speaking out her mind to learning to be quiet despite having an opinion about anything. The narrator tells us that she pressed her teeth, which is a sign of struggling to keep quiet which turned into a habit and not a temporary situation. The literal Arabic translation violates the target language norms as it does not employ the Arabic language structure used to express this meaning. The better alternative might have been to use an already existing idiom "عضت على اسنانها" or "عضت على لسانها". In the third example, the item is part of a taunt or verbal dueling with insults about a person's mother. This type of speech, when used in Arabic language is extremely insulting and is actually a taboo to mention a man's mother or even her underwear which caused a breach in the language system. In the fourth example, the characters were playing a card and board games and the challenge was so great that they no longer played to win money, but to show off their skills in the games. The English item "show-off" is used to show one's verbal and mental skills in a competitive atmosphere. The item already has an equivalent or synonym in Arabic which is "تباهي", however, the translator chose a functional equivalent which has caused a slight change in meaning.

The analysis of the above examples across the different categories reveals a number of patterns. First, the use of literal translation is successful in translating universal items but fails to capture the idiomatic or metaphorical expressions. Secondly, functional equivalent maintains the communicative function of the items but may alter the deeper connotations of the meaning. Using transference, with footnotes has greatly helped in handling the historically and religious references by providing an explanation or specific context. Additionally, the distance between the Christian and Muslim cultures creates challenges for translating items citing religious expressions.

VII. CONCLUSION

The results show that literal translation was the predominant procedure, used in 43.5% of CSI translations. The use of literal translation in rendering a large number of the CSIs resulted in 60.6% foreignization of the text. The results also show that the errors that occurred in the translation of the items mainly caused slight changes in meaning in 19.8% of the items. Meanwhile, those that altered the meaning through distortion, major change, or breach of the language system accounted for 24.7%. The translator's choices in many cases have affected the coherence of the translation, which alters

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or distorts the meaning of the original. Due to the foreignization of the text, the translator maintained the use of the source text's grammatical structure, which caused some hindrances to the understanding of the text. The translator plays an important role in bridging the gap, especially in texts that have different cultural backgrounds, and is responsible for the overall quality. Major literary works that depict socially and historically significant references, such as *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, where Hurston sought to preserve African-American folklore, require special translational attention. This research, with its analysis of semantic errors in the translation of CSIs, guides the employment of better translation procedures to convey the message of the original.

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