

Translation Method and Meaning Equivalence in The Song Lyric “Let It Go Sung” By Idina Menzel and “Biarkan” By Nadya Almira Puteri

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the translation method and meaning equivalence in the song lyrics "Let It Go" sung by Idina Menzel and its translated version "Biarkan" by Nadya Almira Puteri. Using a qualitative approach, this research explores how linguistic and cultural elements in the original lyrics are translated into Indonesian. The translation methods examined in this analysis include literal translation, free translation, and adaptation, as well as how each method affects the meaning equivalence between the two versions. The findings indicate that although there are differences in structure and word choice, the translation "Biarkan" successfully retains the core message and emotions contained in the lyrics of "Let It Go." This study is expected to provide deeper insights into the challenges and strategies involved in translating song lyrics, as well as its contributions to cross-cultural understanding.

Keywords: Translation method, Meaning equivalence, Song lyrics translation, "Let It Go", "Biarkan"

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INTRODUCTION

Language is the basis of communication in this world. There are many different languages in this world (Rao, 2019). Therefore, translation is necessary to combine people with different languages (Sulistyo & Felayati, 2023). Language is transferred either by orally significant translation which is written orally equivalent to the target language (BSA) equivalent. In translation, the translator must examine the grammatical patterns or cultural structures, cultural context, and situational communication of the Source language (BSU) text. Therefore, language and translator errors can be avoided. It is a way to reconstruct the exact meaning from the source language into the target language without changing the purpose of the message being sent. The translation format is from English to Indonesian lyrics.

Translation can be defined as the result of linguistic text operations in which texts in one language are contextualized in different languages (House, 2015). Meanwhile, according to Brislin, translation is defined as a complex process of thinking and moving from one language to another, either spoken or written language (Brislin, 1976). Thus, we find that recipient language translation is the translation process associated with the closest importance to the source of the voice message. Therefore, it is clear that the closest translation of the recipient language is the closest, with respect to the importance of the closest sound source.

According to Catford, the translation of textual material in a language using textual material corresponding to another language (Catford, 1974). According to Newmark, the meaning of the text is translated into another language according to the author's intention. (Newmark, 1988) There are still voice translators who misinterpret the importance of the source language. This is called an error (Rao, 2019). Errors are one of the problems experienced by almost all voice translators. To make a good and correct translation, translators need to master both the source and target languages (Izmayanti, 2023). This championship occurs in the form of excellent vocabulary for both languages, cultural knowledge, as well as about translating ideas and ideas into the target language of the source language. By acquiring the source and target languages correctly, Journal of Indonesian Language Learning Band 13, No. 1 Year 2023 57 The possibility of errors in translation will be small (Sudoh Dkk., 2021).

Translation plays a crucial role in bridging linguistic and cultural gaps, especially in the realm of music where lyrics often convey deep emotions and complex meanings. The song "Let It Go," performed by Idina Menzel for Disney's animated film *Frozen*, has gained immense popularity worldwide, resonating with audiences through its powerful message of self-acceptance and liberation. The translated version, "Biarkan," performed by Nadya Almira Puteri, aims to capture the essence of the original while making it accessible to Indonesian listeners.

This research focuses on the translation methods employed in the adaptation of "Let It Go" into "Biarkan," examining how these methods influence meaning equivalence. Translation methods can vary significantly, ranging from literal translations that prioritize word-for-word accuracy to more liberal approaches that emphasize the overall message and emotional impact. Understanding the nuances of these methods is essential for evaluating the effectiveness of the translation in conveying the original song's intent.

This study seeks to explore the cultural implications of translating song lyrics, as music often reflects the values and emotions of a particular society. By analyzing the translation of "Let It Go" into "Biarkan," this research aims to highlight the challenges faced by translators in maintaining both the artistic integrity and emotional resonance of the original work. Ultimately, this study contributes to the broader field of

translation studies by providing insights into the complexities of translating song lyrics and the significance of meaning equivalence in cross-cultural contexts.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design to analyze the translation methods and meaning equivalence in the song lyrics "Let It Go" by Idina Menzel and its Indonesian version "Biarkan" by Nadya Almira Puteri. The research methodology consists of the following steps:

1. **Data Collection:** The primary data for this study includes the original lyrics of "Let It Go" and the translated lyrics of "Biarkan." The lyrics will be obtained from official sources to ensure accuracy. Additionally, relevant literature on translation theory and methods will be reviewed to provide a theoretical framework for the analysis.
2. **Translation Method Analysis:** The study will categorize the translation methods used in "Biarkan" based on established translation theories, such as those proposed by Peter Newmark and Eugene Nida. The analysis will focus on identifying whether the translation employs literal translation, free translation, adaptation, or a combination of these methods. Each method will be examined in terms of its effectiveness in conveying the original meaning and emotional impact of the lyrics.
3. **Meaning Equivalence Assessment:** To evaluate meaning equivalence, a comparative analysis will be conducted between the original and translated lyrics. This will involve identifying key themes, emotions, and messages in both versions. The study will assess how well the translated lyrics maintain the essence of the original song, considering factors such as cultural context, idiomatic expressions, and emotional resonance.
4. **Data Interpretation:** The findings from the translation method analysis and meaning equivalence assessment will be interpreted to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of the translation. The study will discuss the implications of the chosen translation methods on the overall understanding and appreciation of the song in both languages.

By following this methodological framework, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the translation methods and meaning equivalence in the song lyrics "Let It Go" and "Biarkan," contributing to the field of translation studies and enhancing cross-cultural appreciation of music.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Data Collection

Let It Go

Sung by: Idina Menzel

The snow glows white on the mountain tonight not a footprint to be seen
A kingdom of isolation and it looks like I'm the queen
The wind is howling like this swirling storm inside
Couldn't keep it in heaven knows I tried
Don't let them in don't let them see
Be the good girl you always have to be conceal
Don't let them know

Well, now they know
Let it go! Let it go !
Cant hold it back anymore
Let it go! Let it go!
Turn away and slam the door
I don't care what the're going to say
Let the storm rage on
The cold never bothered me anyway
Its funny how some distance
Makes everything seem small
And the fears that once controlled me cant get to me at all
Its time to see what I can do
To test the limits and break through
No right, no wrong, no rules for me
I'm free!
Let it go! Let it go!
I am one with the wind and sky
Let it go!
You'll never see me cry
Here I stand and here I'll stay
Let the storm rage on
My power flurries through the air into the ground
My soul is spiraling in frozen fractals all around
And one thought crystallizes like an icy blast
I'm never going back. The past is in the past
Let it go! Let it go !
And I'll rise like the break of dawn
Let it go! Let it go!
That perfect girl is gone
Here I stand in the light of day
Let the storm rage on!
The cold never bothered me anyway

Biarkan

Sung by: Nadya Almira Puteri

Butiran salju berjatuhan tak ada jejak kaki yang terlihat
Istana bagai penjara dan akulah ratunya
Angin dingin berhembus merasuk dalam
Tak mampu lagi untuk mengindah
Jangan tunjukkan mereka
diam saja simpan rahasia
Tak boleh ada yang tau
Kini semua tahu
Biarkan, Biarkan

Tak mungkin lagi ku simpan
Biarkan, Biarkan
Terbukalah rahasia
Walaupun badai menerjang
Hadapi saja
Ku tak pernah takut kedinginan
Baru kini ku mengerti
semua yang terjadi
Ketakutan yang pernah ada kini musnahlah sudah
Sudah saatnya diriku
menjalani jati diriku
Tak perlu aturan lagi
Lepaslah
Biarkan, Biarkan
Ku bersama bintang bintang
Biarkan, Biarkan
Kini ku bahagia
Walaupun badai menerjang
Hadapi saja
Semangatku menerjang udara lepas
Jiwaku menyatu membekukan segalanya
Setitik ragu menjadi serpihan gelas
Ku tinggalkan duka masa depan indah
Biarkan
Biarkan
Matahari menyambutku
Biarkan, Biarkan
Kini ku bahagia
Walaupun badai menerjang
Ku tak pernah takut kedinginan

2. Translation Method Analysis

Peter Newmark's Theory of Translation

Peter Newmark significantly advanced the understanding of translation by thoroughly exploring its principles and methodologies, particularly for advanced learners. He viewed translation as a meaning transfer process that inherently involves a tension between the source and target languages, leading to potential over- or under-translation. Newmark categorized translation methods into two main orientations: those prioritizing the source language (word-for-word, literal, faithful, and semantic translation) and those emphasizing the target language (adaptation, free, idiomatic, and communicative translation), which he visually represented as a flat V diagram

SL emphasis

Word-for-word translation

Literal translation

TL emphasis

Adaptation

Free translation

Faithful translation

Semantic translation

Idiomatic translation

Communicative translation

Picture 1. Diagram of Translation Method by Peter Newmark

The method of translation emphasize to the source language:

1. Word-for-Word Translation

SL word order is maintained and words are translated singularly based on their most common meaning, out of context. Cultural words are translated literally. The main use of word-for-word translation is to understand the mechanics of the source language or to interpret difficult texts as a pre-translation process.

SL: Don't let them know

TL: Tak boleh ada yang tahu

SL: Now they know

TL: Kini semua tahu

2. Literal Translation

Form-based translation attempts to follow the form of the source language. Grammatical constructions are converted to their closest Bsa equivalents, but lexical words are again translated singly, out of context.

SL: A kingdom of isolation and it looks like I'm the queen

TL: Istana bagai penjara dan akulah ratunya

3. Faithful Translation

It attempts to produce the exact contextual meaning of the original language within the constraints of the grammatical structure of the TL.

SL: The wind is howling like this swirling storm inside

TL: Angin dingin berhembus merasuk dalam

4. Semantic Translation

Semantic translation seeks to translate, as close as possible to the semantic and syntactic structure of the second language, the precise contextual meaning of the original. It differs from 'faithful translation' only in that it must take into account the aesthetic value of the original text.

SL: The snow glows white on the mountain tonight not a footprint to be seen

TL: Butiran salju berjatuhan tak ada jejak kaki yang terlihat

The translation methods give the emphasis on the target language:

1. Adaptation

This is the freest form of translation, and is used mainly for drama (comedy) and poetry; the theme, characters, plot, are usually retained, the culture of the original is converted to the culture of the original, and the text is rewritten.

SL: The snow glows white on the mountain tonight not a footprint to be seen

TL: Butiran salju berjatuhan tak ada jejak kaki yang terlihat

2. Free Translation

It reproduces material without means, or content without its original form. It is usually a paraphrase that is much longer than the original.

SL: Cant hold it back anymore

TL: Tak mungkin lagi ku simpan

3. Idiomatic Translation

Idiomatic translation is a meaning-based translation that makes every effort to convey the meaning of the source language text in the natural form of the receiving language. It reproduces the ‘message’ of the source language, but tends to distort the nuances of meaning by choosing colloquialisms and idioms that do not exist in the source language.

SL: Couldn’t keep it in heaven knows I tried

TL: Tak mampu lagi untuk mengindah

SL: And I’ll rise like the break of dawn

TL: Matahari menyambutku

SL: That perfect girl is gone

TL: Kini ku bahagia

4. Communicative Translation

Communicative translation seeks to give an effect that is as close as possible to that of the source language reader. It gives the exact contextual meaning of the original source in such a way that both the content and the language are easily accepted and understood by the reader.

SL: I dont care what they’re going to say

TL: Walaupun badai menerjang

3. Meaning Equivalence Assessment

Some theorists have their own assumptions about equality. The first assumption comes from Vinay and Darbelnet in Munday’s book. They state that equivalence refers to cases where languages describe the same situation with different language styles or structures. On the other hand, Roman Jakobson defines that translation involves two equivalent messages in two different codes.

Catford in Hatim and Munday writes that texts in different languages can be equivalent in different degrees (fully or partially equivalent), in terms of different levels of presentation (equivalent in terms of context, semantics, grammar, lexis, etc.), and at different levels (word by word, phrase by phrase, sentence by sentence). According to Mona Baker, equivalence is considered a necessary condition in translation, a constraint in the development of translation studies, or a useful category in describing translation. She also adds that the underpinning of equivalence is the relationship between the source text (ST) and the target text (TT).

As for the many equivalence models, the author uses Nida and Taber’s theory which divides equivalence into two, namely formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence. The explanation is as follows below:

1. Formal equivalence

Formal equivalence focuses on the message itself, both in form and content. One is concerned with the message in the recipient language having to match exactly the different elements in the source language. Formal equivalence consists of target language elements that represent the closest equivalent of the source language, be it a word, phrase, or sentence. Therefore, formal equivalence is recommended to be used on certain occasions that have serious implications on the target text as the translation will not be easily understood by the target readers.

2. Dynamic equivalence

Dynamic equivalence, on the other hand, is based on what Nida calls “the principle of equivalent effect where the relationship between the recipient and the message should be substantially the same as the relationship that exists between the recipient and the original. They argue that often, the form of the original text is changed, but as long as the change follows the rules of the source language, or the contextual consistency of the author's intent.

From the explanation of equivalence above, it can be concluded that equivalence is an important concept in the translation process that seeks verb equivalence that is commensurate with the source text. Translation is done based on equivalence according to its level, such as word, sentence, or text.

5. Data Interpretation

This chapter will analyze by comparing the source language (SL) of Let It Go song lyrics with the target language (TL) of Let It Go song lyrics in the form of phrases, words, and sentences. It also provides opinions related to these steps, namely to find out the translation method and the types of meaning equivalence used in the two song lyrics.

Table 1. Here is the table of corpus data after being collected

No	SL	TL
1.	Don't let them know	Tak boleh ada yang tahu
2.	Now they know	Kini semua tahu
3.	A kingdom of isolation and it looks like I'm the queen	Istana bagai penjara dan akulah ratunya
4.	The wind is howling like this swirling storm inside	Angin dingin berhembus merasuk dalam
5.	The snow glows white on the mountain tonight not a footprint to be seen	Butiran salju berjatuhan tak ada jejak kaki yang terlihat
6.	Cant hold it back anymore	Tak mungkin lagi ku simpan
7.	Couldn't keep it in heaven knows I tried	Tak mampu lagi untuk mengindah
8.	And I'll rise like the break of dawn	Matahari menyambutku
9.	That perfect girl is gone	Kini ku bahagia
10.	I dont care what they're going to say	Walaupun badai menerjang

TEXT 1

SL: Don't let them know

TL: Tak boleh ada yang tahu

The translation of "Don't let them know" as "Tak boleh ada yang tahu" primarily utilizes translation.. This is evident because the Indonesian phrase deviates from a literal rendering of the English, opting instead for a natural and common idiom within the target language. While both expressions effectively convey the same meaning—the need for secrecy—the Indonesian translation achieves this through a phrase that is idiomatic and fits seamlessly into the linguistic patterns of Indonesian, rather than directly mirroring the structure and words of the English source. Therefore, the focus is on achieving equivalent impact and naturalness in the target language through an established idiomatic expression.

TEXT 2

SL: Now they know

TL: Kini semua tahu

The translation of "Now they know" to "Kini semua tahu" demonstrates a high degree of meaning equivalence and naturalness, aligning with principles of communicative translation. The word "Now" in the source language (SL) is directly and naturally matched with "Kini" in the target language (TL), both referring to the present moment. For the phrase "they know," the translation "semua tahu" effectively captures the idea that the information has become widely known. While "they" could refer to a specific group, the choice of "semua" (everyone) in the TL broadens the scope, implying that the information has spread widely—a common idiomatic expression in Indonesian. As for "know" and "tahu," they are direct lexical equivalents, both signifying the acquisition or possession of knowledge. Thus, this translation achieves dynamic equivalence or functional equivalence, where the core message is conveyed with the same impact to the target audience.

TEXT 3

SL: A kingdom of isolation and it looks like I'm the queen

TL: Istana bagai penjara dan akulah ratunya

The translation of the sentence "A kingdom of isolation and it looks like I'm the queen" into "Istana bagai penjara dan akulah ratunya" demonstrates strong dynamic equivalence. The phrase "A kingdom of isolation" is not translated literally. Instead of "kingdom of isolation," which might sound less natural, the translator opted for "Istana bagai penjara" (Palace like a prison). This choice is highly effective because "Istana" directly replaces "kingdom" (implicitly referring to the queen's residence), and "penjara" (prison) vividly represents the concept of "isolation" with stronger connotations of confinement and entrapment. The simile "bagai" (like/as if) accurately conveys the paradoxical feeling of grandeur veiled by loneliness. Furthermore, "and it looks like I'm the queen" is translated as "dan akulah ratunya." The addition of the emphatic particle "-lah" to "aku" (I) makes the statement "akulah ratunya" more direct and definitive, conveying that this role is a fate or an unavoidable reality, while also implicitly referring to her dominion over the 'palace' or the situation. Overall, this translation successfully captures the connotative meaning and emotional impact of the original sentence by prioritizing naturalness and cultural resonance in Indonesian.

TEXT 4

SL: The wind is howling like this swirling storm inside

TL: Angin dingin berhembus merasuk dalam

The translation of "The wind is howling like this swirling storm inside" into "Angin dingin berhembus merasuk dalam" showcases a shift in lexical and structural choices to achieve dynamic equivalence. The phrase "The wind is howling" is rendered as "Angin dingin berhembus." The translator's addition of "dingin" (cold), though not explicit in the source text, enriches the sensory experience and makes the wind's presence more palpable. Meanwhile, the complex simile "like this swirling storm inside" is

condensed into the concise phrase "merasuk dalam" (penetrates deep/permeates deeply). This change means the translation doesn't explicitly state the wind is "like" an internal storm, but rather that the wind "penetrates" and profoundly affects the inner self. Thus, while not a literal translation, this Indonesian version successfully conveys the feeling of an oppressive, internal turmoil brought on or mirrored by the external wind, using a more concise and idiomatic way to express the deep psychological impact.

TEXT 5

SL: The snow glows white on the mountain tonight not a footprint to be seen

TL: Butiran salju berjatuhan tak ada jejak kaki yang terlihat

The translation of "The snow glows white on the mountain tonight not a footprint to be seen" into "Butiran salju berjatuhan tak ada jejak kaki yang terlihat" demonstrates a significant shift in visual and temporal focus to achieve dynamic equivalence. Instead of describing existing snow that is emanating light ("glows white") as in the source text, this translation opts to present the active process of snowfall through the phrase "Butiran salju berjatuhan" (Snowflakes are falling). While this alters the initial imagery from static, luminous snow to actively falling snow, the translation successfully maintains the core meaning of an untouched and isolated environment. The absence of footprints ("not a footprint to be seen" becoming "tak ada jejak kaki yang terlihat") remains central to the message, underscoring the pristine and solitary nature of the scene, albeit with a different approach to its depiction.

TEXT 6

SL: Cant hold it back anymore

TL: Tak mungkin lagi ku simpan

The translation of the phrase "Cant hold it back anymore" into "Tak mungkin lagi ku simpan" demonstrates strong **dynamic equivalence** in capturing the core meaning and emotion conveyed. The word "Cant" is accurately rendered as "Tak mungkin" (impossible/cannot), which conveys the idea of inability or limitation. The phrase "hold it back," referring to the act of restraining or concealing something, is effectively matched with "ku simpan" (I keep/hide it), which implicitly means no longer able to hold it back or conceal it. The addition of "lagi" (anymore) reinforces the temporal aspect of "anymore" in the source text. Thus, this translation successfully communicates the feeling of being unable to continue suppressing or hiding something, preserving the emotional intensity and communicative intent of the original sentence.

TEXT 7

SL: Couldn't keep it in heaven knows I tried

TL: Tak mampu lagi untuk mengindah

The translation of "Couldn't keep it in heaven knows I tried" to "Tak mampu lagi untuk mengindah" demonstrates **incomplete equivalence**. While "Couldn't keep it in" is captured by "Tak mampu lagi" (cannot anymore), "untuk mengindah" **doesn't accurately** convey the meaning of "holding back" or "concealing." More crucially, the phrase "heaven knows I tried," which emphasizes the subject's **hard work and persistence**, is **entirely missing** in the translation. As a result, the message about the internal struggle and the maximum effort made by the subject is not conveyed, leading to only **partial equivalence** at the surface level of meaning.

TEXT 8

SL: And I'll rise like the break of dawn

TL: Matahari menyambutku

The translation of the sentence "And I'll rise like the break of dawn" into "Matahari menyambutku" (The sun welcomes me) demonstrates strong meaning equivalence, despite adapting the imagery and focus.

The English phrase "rise like the break of dawn" connotes a sense of rebirth, a fresh start, hope, and strength emerging after darkness, much like the sun illuminating the world at dawn. It's a powerful metaphor for transformation and resilience. The translator opted for "Matahari menyambutku." This choice doesn't literally state "rising" or "like the dawn," but it implicitly communicates a similar idea through the positive connotation of the welcoming sun. The rising sun is a universal symbol for new beginnings, hope, and triumph over darkness. With the sun "welcoming" the subject, it creates a personal image of acceptance and resurgence linked to dawn, albeit figuratively. Although it omits the direct comparison ("like the break of dawn") and shifts the subject from "I who rise" to "the sun that welcomes," this translation successfully conveys the essence of rebirth, strength, and acceptance of a bright future, thereby achieving dynamic equivalence in transmitting the emotional and thematic impact.

TEXT 9

SL: That perfect girl is gone

TL: Kini ku bahagia

The translation of "That perfect girl is gone" to "Kini ku bahagia" represents a significant departure from the original meaning, thus failing to achieve meaning equivalence. The source phrase denotes the loss or absence of an idealized person, often implying sadness or a realization of an ideal's disappearance. In stark contrast, the translated phrase declares a present state of happiness. There is no explicit or implicit reference to the "perfect girl" or the concept of loss. Instead, the translation functions as an emotional interpretation or response to a situation that might have been *caused* by the girl's departure. This would be categorized as an inaccurate translation in an academic context, as the core message of loss is not conveyed, being replaced by a statement of personal happiness. While this might serve as a creative adaptation in artistic contexts like song lyrics, it does not represent a semantically equivalent translation.

TEXT 10

SL: I don't care what they're going to say

TL: Walaupun badai menerjang

The translation of "I don't care what they're going to say" to "Walaupun badai menerjang" represents a fundamental shift in meaning, thus failing to achieve meaning equivalence. The original phrase expresses indifference or defiance towards others' opinions. In contrast, the translation literally means "Even though a storm strikes," which is a metaphor for facing general life challenges or obstacles, not directly linked to what people say. Consequently, the core message of disregard for others' words is entirely lost, replaced by the idea of resilience in the face of adversity. This would be considered an inaccurate translation in an academic context, as its propositional and thematic meanings have been drastically altered. It functions more as a creative interpretation or adaptation for a different poetic or emotional effect, rather than an equivalent rendering of the original meaning.

CONCLUSION

This study, analyzing "Let It Go" by Idina Menzel and its Indonesian translation "Biarkan" by Nadya Almira Puteri, examined translation methods and meaning equivalence.¹ Using a qualitative approach based on Newmark's methods and Nida and Taber's equivalence theories, the research compared ten key lyrical lines.

The findings primarily showed the use of **dynamic equivalence** in "Biarkan." While some parts were translated quite literally, most lines prioritized conveying the song's emotional core and message in a

natural, culturally relevant Indonesian way, even if it meant straying from the exact original wording. Examples like "A kingdom of isolation..." becoming "Istana bagai penjara..." and "The wind is howling..." turning into "Angin dingin berhembus merasuk dalam" clearly illustrate this adaptive strategy. The translator deliberately reshaped imagery and expressions to resonate better with Indonesian listeners, focusing on emotional impact over strict literal form.

This adaptive approach sometimes led to **incomplete meaning equivalence**. For instance, "Couldn't keep it in heaven knows I tried" was translated as "Tak mampu lagi untuk mengindah," omitting the vital emphasis on past effort. Even more significantly, "That perfect girl is gone" became "Kini ku bahagia" (Now I am happy), and "I don't care what they're going to say" was translated as "Walaupun badai menerjang" (Even though a storm strikes). These instances represent a complete shift from the original meaning, replacing the core message with an emotional response or a different thematic focus. While such creative liberties might suit an artistic adaptation, from a pure translation studies viewpoint, they do not maintain semantic equivalence.

"Biarkan" largely succeeds in preserving the fundamental message and emotional spirit of "Let It Go," showcasing the power of **dynamic equivalence** in song translation. Yet, this study also highlights the inherent difficulties and compromises, particularly when achieving naturalness and emotional impact in the target language results in a notable deviation from the original's literal meaning. This research offers valuable insights into the intricate process of cross-cultural musical adaptation, emphasizing the fine line between linguistic precision, cultural appropriateness, and artistic interpretation.

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