

## INTRODUCTION

The development of digital media has brought significant changes to the way music is produced, distributed, and consumed in contemporary society. Short video-based digital platforms, such as TikTok, enable users to act not only as consumers but also as content producers, actively creating, modifying, and disseminating musical material globally (Kaye et al., 2021). In this context, music is no longer viewed simply as a means of entertainment, but also as a dynamic and participatory medium of cross-linguistic and cross-cultural communication (Nakanishi, 2025). This demonstrates a shift in the way music is produced and enjoyed by listeners.

Changes in the way listeners enjoy music have also opened up space for the emergence of a relatively new applied linguistic practice: translating song lyrics into digital content. In the context of translating song lyrics, translation encompasses not only the process of translating meaning from the source language to the target language, but also involves adapting linguistic forms to suit the song's rhythm, rhyme, and musical structure (Jung & von Freyhold, 2025). Low (2017) emphasized that translating song lyrics must consider aspects of sense, naturalness, rhythm, rhyme, and singability to ensure the translation remains naturally sung in the target language. Similarly, Li et al.'s (2023) study of song translation in the field of computational modeling demonstrated that the process of song translation also involves aligning lyrics with musical notes (lyrics-melody alignment). Thus, translating song lyrics has unique characteristics that distinguish it from translating other texts or subtitles.

In applied linguistics, this phenomenon is relevant for analysis through the perspective of audiovisual translation. Gottlieb (1992) explains that in the context of audiovisual media, the translation process often faces limitations of space and time that influence the translator's choice of strategy. However, in the context of translating song lyrics that are performed and demonstrated in a performative manner, the musical and singable aspects remain important factors influencing the form of the translation.

One interesting phenomenon in this context can be found on the TikTok platform: the emergence of content creators who translate song lyrics as a form of creative expression. One of content creators, Yusril Yudane, is the subject of this research, who translates *Dangdut* songs from Indonesian into English and then re-sings them in videos. This practice demonstrates that

translation is not only linguistic but also performative, involving the alignment of language, music, and digital media.

*Dangdut*, as a popular music genre in Indonesia, has strong cultural characteristics and often uses distinctive linguistic expressions that do not always have direct equivalents in English. This makes the translation of *Dangdut* lyrics an interesting phenomenon to study from a linguistic perspective, particularly in examining how cultural meanings and linguistic elements are negotiated during the translation process.

Although numerous studies have been conducted on audiovisual translation, these studies generally focus on conventional media such as film, television, and professional streaming services (Cintas & Remael, 2014; Künzli, 2025). Several studies related to song translation have also been conducted, such as Seran & Subiyanto (2023), who examined the translation strategies of Taylor Swift's song "All Too Well" on YouTube. This study found the use of strategies such as paraphrase, transfer, condensation, and expansion. Furthermore, Adiba et al. (2025) analyzed the mistranslation of automatic subtitles in the song *La Reine de Neige* from the film *Frozen* (2013) on YouTube. Another study was conducted by Mogi et al. (2023) who examined the song translation techniques in the dubbing of the film *Moana* as part of audiovisual translation.

However, these studies have focused on translating song lyrics on YouTube, so studies on subtitle translation on social media platforms like TikTok are still relatively limited. Furthermore, studies on translation on TikTok have focused on user participation, digital culture, and the spread of music trends, rather than on linguistic analysis of the song lyric translation process (Kaye et al., 2021). Therefore, research specifically examining song lyric translation strategies in short video formats like TikTok is still relatively limited.

Furthermore, studies specifically examining the translation of *Dangdut* song lyrics into English are still relatively limited. *Dangdut* is a music genre with linguistic characteristics and distinctive terms that are often difficult to find direct equivalents in the target language. This is because *Dangdut* lyrics, especially those in regional languages, contain vocabulary and cultural concepts that have no direct equivalent in the target language (Nugroho, 2025). This uniqueness makes the *Dangdut* translation process an interesting field to study, especially in the context of digital media, which demands concise and easily understood messages for a

global audience.

The novelty of this research lies in the subject of the translation of Indonesian *Dangdut* song lyrics into English on the TikTok platform, a topic rarely explored in audiovisual translation research. Furthermore, this study highlights the translation practices of independent content creators, thus providing a new perspective on translation practices in the social media era. This research is expected to contribute to the development of translation studies, particularly in the application of audiovisual translation strategies and song translation in digital media, and serve as a reference for future research on the translation of song lyrics and social media content.

Based on the explanation above, this study formulates the following research questions:

1. What are the strategies for translating *Dangdut* song lyrics from Indonesian into English used in Yusril Yudane's four TikTok videos?
2. How are singability aspects (sense, naturalness, rhythm, rhyme, and harmony with the melody) maintained in the translation of these song lyrics?

## **METHOD**

### **2.1 Research Design**

The study used a descriptive qualitative research design to analyze the translation strategies of Indonesian *Dangdut* song lyrics subtitles into English on Yusril Yudane's TikTok account. This study focuses on the study of translation strategies in *Dangdut* song lyrics subtitles and how the meaning of the lyrics is transferred from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL). This study uses Gottlieb's (1992) subtitling strategy theory which divides subtitle translation strategies into ten categories: condensation, decimation, deletion, expansion, dislocation, transfer, paraphrase, transcription, imitation, and resignation. This theory is used to identify the types of translation strategies that appear in Yusril Yudane's TikTok video subtitles. Research data were collected from subtitles and TikTok videos that display the translation of Indonesian *dangdut* song lyrics into English. In addition, this study also uses Low's (2017) song translation theory which emphasizes that translating song lyrics is a complex process because translators need to balance aspects of meaning, rhythm, rhyme, and