



## Phonological Transformation Of Fusha To 'Ammiyah Egypt: Case Study On Sabry Aleel Song

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### Abstract

This article examines the phonological change from Fusha Arabic to Egyptian dialect ('Ammiyah) in the context of the song "Sabry Aleel." This study aims to identify and describe the sound changes that occur when song lyrics are sung in the 'Ammiyah dialect compared to Fusha Arabic. The research methods used are descriptive and phonological analysis, with data collected through the observation-note method. The results of the study showed that the change in sound from Fusha to 'Ammiyah reflected social interaction and cultural dynamics in Egyptian society. Music plays an important role as a medium of cultural expression that allows local dialects to become closer to the daily lives of listeners. The phonetic changes found included simplification of consonant and vowel pronunciation, reflecting language adaptations for ease of communication. From a sociolinguistic perspective, phonological changes not only reflect shifts in the structure of language, but also describe power relations, identity, and social integration. The use of 'Ammiyah in songs can be seen as a form of resistance to Fusha's dominance, which is often associated with formal status, education, and power. In contrast, 'Ammiyah presents a local identity that is more inclusive and relevant to people's daily experiences.

### تجريد

تناول هذه المقالة التغيرات الفونولوجية من اللغة العربية الفصحى إلى اللهجة المصرية (العامية) في سياق أغنية صبري قليل. وتهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحديد ووصف التغيرات الصوتية التي تحدث عند غناء كلمات الأغنية باللهجة العامية مقارنةً باللغة العربية الفصحى. وتعتمد هذه الدراسة على المنهج الوصفي والتحليل الفونولوجي، حيث تم جمع البيانات من خلال أسلوب الملاحظة والتدوين. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن التغيرات الصوتية من الفصحى إلى العامية تعكس التفاعل الاجتماعي والديناميكيات الثقافية في المجتمع المصري. وتلعب الموسيقى دورًا مهمًا كوسيلة للتعبير الثقافي، مما يسمح للهجات المحلية بأن تصبح أقرب إلى الحياة اليومية للمستمعين. وتشمل التغيرات الفونولوجية التي تم رصدها تبسيط نطق الحروف الساكنة والحركات، مما يعكس تكيف اللغة لتسهيل عملية التواصل. من منظور علم الاجتماع اللغوي، لا تعكس التغيرات الفونولوجية مجرد تحولات في بنية اللغة فحسب، بل تصف أيضًا علاقات القوة، والهوية، والاندماج الاجتماعي. ويمكن اعتبار استخدام العامية في الأغاني شكلاً من أشكال المقاومة لهيمنة الفصحى، التي غالبًا ما ترتبط بالمكانة الرسمية، والتعليم، والسلطة. وعلى النقيض من ذلك، تعبر العامية عن هوية محلية أكثر شمولاً وارتباطاً بالتجارب اليومية للمجتمع.

### الكلمات المفتاحية :

الفونولوجيا

الفصحى

العامية

مصر

الأغنية

### Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji perubahan fonologis dari bahasa Arab Fusha ke dialek Mesir ('Ammiyah) dalam konteks lagu *Sabry Aleel*. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan mendeskripsikan perubahan bunyi yang terjadi ketika lirik lagu dinyanyikan dalam dialek 'Ammiyah dibandingkan dengan bahasa Arab Fusha. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah deskriptif

**Kata kunci:**

Fonologi  
*Fusha*  
 'Ammiyah  
 Mesir  
 Lagu

dan analisis fonologis, dengan data yang dikumpulkan melalui metode observasi dan pencatatan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perubahan bunyi dari *Fusha* ke 'Ammiyah mencerminkan interaksi sosial dan dinamika budaya dalam masyarakat Mesir. Musik memainkan peran penting sebagai media ekspresi budaya yang memungkinkan dialek lokal menjadi lebih dekat dengan kehidupan sehari-hari pendengar. Perubahan fonetik yang ditemukan meliputi penyederhanaan pengucapan konsonan dan vokal, yang mencerminkan adaptasi bahasa untuk kemudahan komunikasi. Dari perspektif sosiolinguistik, perubahan fonologis tidak hanya mencerminkan pergeseran dalam struktur bahasa, tetapi juga menggambarkan relasi kekuasaan, identitas, dan integrasi sosial. Penggunaan 'Ammiyah dalam lagu dapat dilihat sebagai bentuk perlawanan terhadap dominasi *Fusha*, yang sering dikaitkan dengan status formal, pendidikan, dan kekuasaan. Sebaliknya, 'Ammiyah menghadirkan identitas lokal yang lebih inklusif dan relevan dengan pengalaman sehari-hari masyarakat.

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## A. Introduction

Arabic is known as one of the languages that has an incredible diversity of dialects. This makes it undeniable that there is a difference in Arab society between the language used for everyday oral communication and the language used in writing. This spoken language is known as '*Lugat Al-Hādis*' (conversational language), while written language is referred to as '*Lugat al-Kitābah*' (written language) or '*Luwat al-ādāb*' (literary language). This colloquial conversational language, which is often referred to as '*Lugat al-Hādis*', is the form '*āmmiyyah*, i.e. the language used for everyday interactions (Hasnah, 2019). In the study of Arabic, the difference between classical standard Arabic (*Fusha*) and local dialects ('*Ammiyah*) is one of the interesting topics in linguistics and sociolinguistics. *Fusha* considered a formal language (Social & Sociolinguistics, 2024) that are used in official contexts, such as education, religion, and media, while '*Ammiyah* is a form of colloquial language (Mubarak, Muradi, & Rahman, 2021) which is commonly used in informal conversations and various cultural expressions, including music.

Music, as one of the art forms closest to society, is often a reflection of language dynamics. In this context, the use of '*Ammiyah* in song lyrics is an interesting phenomenon, especially when compared to *Fusha*. For example, the song "Sabry Aleel," which is very popular in Egypt, shows how '*Ammiyah* are selected and adapted to create emotional closeness and effective communication with their listeners. Even though *Fusha* (Standard Arabic) is used as the official language and written throughout the Arab world (Azizah &

Mar'atus, 2018), each country and region has a local dialect that is used in everyday conversation (Hasnah, 2019). One of the most famous and frequently used dialects in popular culture is the Egyptian dialect (Language, n.d.). Variety 'Ammiyah used by Egyptian people today still have many similarities with Arabic *Fusha*, both in terms of words and sentence structure (Erfiani, 2020). Sound transformation from *Fusha* into the Egyptian dialect, as seen in the song "Sabry Aleel," reflecting an interesting process of language change in art. In addition, in Arabic, changes in the sound of consonants are often influenced by the speaker.

Just like Arabic, fusha cannot be spoken perfectly by Egyptian Amiyah speakers (Fadhilah, 2020). Sabry Aleel's song is a window for us to understand how the linguistic nuances of standard Arabic can be adapted into the rich dialect of Egypt, creating an immersive experience that is not only musical but also cultural. By analyzing these changes in sound, we can explore how music became a vehicle for expression that enriched and expanded our understanding of language dynamics and cultural identity in modern Egypt. In the context of music, the use of the Egyptian dialect is often preferred compared to Fusha Arabic because it is considered more familiar and easy for listeners to understand (Erfiani, 2020). One interesting example to research is the song "Sabry Aleel". The song is not only popular in Egypt but also in other Arab countries, making it a relevant case study for understanding the sound changes of the Arabic language *Fusha* into the Egyptian dialect.

Research about change Language sounds arab fusha ke in 'ammiyah has been done by Fina Nur Fadhila, et al. (2020). With the title Sound Changes Arabic Fusha into the Egyptian Dialect on the song Tamally Ma'ak. This study analyzes Changes in language sounds Arabic fusha on Egyptian 'Ammiyah speakers through songs Tamally Ma'ak. In research This researcher uses Crowley's theory. Facts used are vocabulary obtained from the song Tamally Ma'ak (Social & Sociolinguistics, 2024)

Furthermore, research by Difla Nur Imtiyasi and Kholisin (2022) with the title Comparison the sound of two languages; 'Amiyah and Fusha Song Karya Nancy Ajram. Research This aims to analyze the forms of sound changes between language dialects Egyptian 'Amiyah Arabic and Fusha Arabic. The researcher used Crowley's theory of sound change to analyze data in the form of song lyrics from 5 songs of singer Nancy Ajram, who despite being a Lebanese national, uses the Egyptian dialect in her work (Imtiyas & Kholisin, 2022).

The latest research was by Azizah Fithriyyahni and Mar'atus Solikah (2081), with the title Language Arab *Fusha* and '*Ammiyah* and Coverage Use. This research discusses the dualism of the use of Arabic, namely between Arabic *Fusha* (standard variety) and Arabic '*Ammiyah* (non-standard variety). Arabic *Fusha* is the language used in the Qur'an, official situation, poetry writing and prose, as well as expressions of thought and scientific writing. It is both classical Arabic and modern standard Arabic. While Arabic '*ammiyah* is a variety of languages used for daily affairs, and there are various dialects '*Ammiyah* in Arab countries. This phenomenon of language dualism then gave birth to a debate about the choice of Arabic language variety, whether *Fusha* or '*Ammiyah*, who wants to made as a language in the Arab countries. One of the ideas that emerged was the proposal to use Variety of languages '*Ammiyah* that considered more close to people's daily lives, and eliminate the use of language *Fusha* (Azizah & Mar'atus, 2018)

However, there is an underlying problem with this phenomenon, how is the phonological change from *Fusha* to '*Ammiyah* reflected in music, and what are the implications for the linguistic and socio-cultural identity of Egyptian society? In addition, there is a gap in research that specifically examines the changes in sound that occur in the context of popular songs as a cultural medium. This issue is important because the phonological changes in song lyrics reflect not only linguistic transformations, but also more complex social dynamics, including shifts in communication patterns and local identity representations.

This study aims to explore the phonological changes that occur when Arabic *Fusha* Adapted into Egyptian dialect in the context of songs "*Sabry Aleel*" (Fadhilah, 2020). By analyzing the changes in sound that occur, this study will identify the typical phonological patterns of the Egyptian dialect as well as discuss the cultural and linguistic implications of the use of the dialect in popular music. In addition, this study will also explore how these changes in sound affect the understanding and reception of songs by Arabic-speaking listeners *Fusha* as well as other Arabic dialects. Through a descriptive approach and phonological analysis, this research is expected to contribute to the study of Arabic linguistics, especially in understanding the dynamics between *Fusha* Arabic and local dialects. Thus, this research is not only relevant for linguistic academics but also for music and culture practitioners who are interested in the development of language and dialects in the context of popular art

## B. Research Methods

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research approach. In this research, the researcher is directly involved in the situation and setting of the studied phenomenon, conducting the study objectively while acknowledging the subjective realities being examined. According to (Fadli, 2008) qualitative research is a process of understanding human or social phenomena by creating a comprehensive and complex depiction, which can be presented through words, reporting detailed perspectives obtained from informants, and conducted in a natural setting (Walidin,48 & Tabrani, 2015: 77).

The initial step taken by the researcher in this study is data collection, followed by categorization and explanation. The data collection phase lasted for one week, starting in early June 2024. The final step is data explanation. The primary data in this study is the song *Sabry Aleel*, obtained from YouTube. The secondary data sources supporting this research include several journal articles on phonology and sound change. In qualitative research, the main instrument is the researcher, who determines the research focus, classifies data, evaluates and analyzes data, interprets findings, and draws conclusions. A supplementary instrument used in this study is a table for data organization.

The theoretical framework applied in this research is Crowley's theory. According to Ali (Ali, 2020) Crowley's theory focuses on phonological changes. Crowley (1987: 71) identifies three types of sound change: (1) phonetic change without phonemic change, (2) phonetic change with phonemic change, and (3) phonemic change without phonetic change. This study specifically examines phonetic changes that do not alter meaning. Crowley's sound change theory primarily focuses on the levels of words, phrases, and sentences.

The steps in data collection according to Crowley's theory: *First*, identify phonological changes. Crowley's theory provides a framework for identifying the types of sound changes that occur. Such as, **Addition**, Addition of sounds that are not in the form of *Fusha*, **Elision**, **Removal of certain sounds to simplify pronunciation, which is often found in 'Ammiyah**, **Substitution**, **Substitution of certain sounds to adjust to local dialect patterns**. **Assimilation or Disassimilation**, A change in sound to resemble or distinguish oneself from adjacent sounds. In the analysis of the lyrics of the song "*Sabry Aleel*," this change can be identified by comparing the words in the form of *Fusha* with the '*Ammaliyah*' version used in the lyrics.

*Second, Determination of Patterns and Rules of Change* After identifying phonological changes, Crowley's theory encourages to look for systematic patterns in those changes. For example, Does *the sound of qaf* in *Fusha* always change to *hamzah* in '*Ammiyah*?; Are long vowels in *Fusha* abbreviated in '*Ammiyah* to speed up pronunciation? This pattern determination helps to understand the extent to which the change is influenced by the linguistic context, such as the position of the sound in the word or the influence of the surrounding sound.

*Third, Social and Cultural Analysis of Change* Crowley's theory can also be enriched with a sociolinguistic perspective to analyze why these changes occur. In the context of the song "*Sabry Aleel*," the change in sound from *Fusha* to '*Ammiyah* can be analyzed as a form of adaptation for **ease of communication**, '*Ammiyah* is simpler and more familiar to local listeners; for ease **of expression of cultural identity**, Using '*Ammiyah* in music strengthens emotional connections and emphasizes local identity; and **Symbolic resistance**, The use of '*Ammiyah* in lyrics can be seen as a form of resistance to the dominance of *Fusha* which is considered formal and elitist.

*Fourth, Contextualization in Music* Crowley's theory is relevant to analyze how phonological changes occur in the context of music. For example, Whether phonological changes occur more often in fast-paced or high-pitched lyrics Or Whether these changes make it easier to pronounce according to musical needs, such as rhythm or melody. In the case of "*Sabry Aleel*," this theory allows for a detailed analysis of the relationship between the structure of language and the aesthetic context of the song.

## **C. Result and Discussion**

### **1. Results**

This study discusses the sound transformation in Arabic Fusha in Egyptian Amiyah speakers. In his study, the researcher refers to the theory put forward by Crowley. The data used is in the form of vocabulary taken from the lyrics of Sabry Aleel's song. Sound changes in a language occur when a sound joins other sounds, so that the change arises due to an adjustment in the characteristics or identity of the sound that follows.

To analyze phonetic innovations or sound changes, this study employs Crowley's (1987) theory of sound change. According to Crowley (1987: 25-47), there are several types of sound changes. The first is **lenition**, which includes cluster reduction (elimination of consonant clusters), apocope (loss of final sounds), syncope (loss of

medial sounds), haplology (elimination of repetitive syllables), and compression (merging of sounds). The second type is **sound addition**, which consists of anaptyxis (insertion of a vowel sound), epenthesis (insertion of a consonant within a word), and prosthesis (addition of a sound at the beginning of a word). The third type is **metathesis**, which refers to the reordering of sounds within a word. The fourth is **fusion**, which involves the merging of two distinct sounds into one, while the fifth is **unpacking**, where a single sound separates into two. The sixth type is **vowel breaking**, which occurs when a single vowel splits into a diphthong. The seventh is **assimilation**, where a sound becomes more similar to a nearby sound, whereas the eighth is **dissimilation**, in which a sound becomes less similar to a neighboring sound. Lastly, there is **abnormal sound change**, which refers to irregular phonetic alterations that do not follow common patterns of sound evolution. (Suparman & Muhammad Nurahmad, 2022)

In Sabry Aleel's song, a comparison of language sounds is found Arabic Fushah and Arabic 'Ammiyah Egypt

No	Word in Arabic Fushah	Phonetic Transcript	Pronunciation of 'ammiyah	Phonetic Transcript	Sound Changes
1.	جَايَة	Jaayah	غَايَة	Ghaayah	G

The data above shows the change in the pronunciation of ج to غ as happened in جَايَة to غَايَة change. This happens because there are two sounds that are not the same or almost same. This may be triggered because phonemic sounds. As a result of the great influence of environment so it is named sound changes Neutralization.

He explained that the sound ج is a soft, voiced affricate consonant with a short obstruction. It originates from the lungs, and the obstruction is released gradually in a shifted manner. The articulation structure involves a close contact that is then slowly released. The place of articulation is the tip of the tongue and the back part of the gums. The sound produced is an apico-prepalatal combination. In terms of pronunciation, the tip of the tongue makes firm contact with the back gum area, while the soft palate is raised, causing the airflow from the lungs to be temporarily obstructed. The tip of the tongue touches the contact point before being gradually released in a shifted motion.

Meanwhile, the sound /g/ is a voiced velar plosive consonant, which is produced with a complete obstruction of the airflow that is then released suddenly. Its articulation structure consists of a tight closure followed by an abrupt release. The initial phase, where the airflow is fully blocked, is called the obstruction, while the second phase, where the air is forcefully released, is referred to as the explosion. Based on its place of articulation, the velar plosive consonant is formed by the back of the tongue as the active articulator and the soft palate as the passive articulator. In terms of pronunciation, the back of the tongue makes firm contact with the soft palate, momentarily stopping the airflow before releasing it suddenly to produce the sound.

So, it can be concluded that the change from the consonant جَ to /g/ occurs because the articulation of the /g/ sound is easier to pronounce for speakers of the Egyptian 'Ammiyah dialect.

1.	قَلِيل	Qaliil	أَلِيل	Aliil	A
2.	قَرَب	Qarib	أَرَب	Arrab	A
3.	قَد	Qad	أَد	Ad	A
4.	قَلِيل	Qaliil	أَلِيل	Aliil	A
5.	بِقَسْوَة	Bi qaswah	بِأَسْوَة	Bi Aswah	A
6.	بِقَلْب	Biqalbi	بِأَلْب	Two Albi	A
7.	عَقْلِي	'Aqli	عَالِي	The Lord	A

The change in sound pronunciation from /s/ to /ʔ/ (A) can be observed in examples such as *Qalbi* becoming *Albi* (White). This type of sound change is referred to as dissimilation, which occurs when two similar or nearly identical sounds change to become more distinct (Syamsul Hadi, 2003). Meanwhile, the /s/ sound is classified as a velar fricative consonant. Based on the type of articulation, velar fricatives involve a mild obstruction, where the airflow is temporarily halted by the lips or tongue before



being released all at once. The articulation of this sound falls into the uvular category, meaning it is produced by air passing through the esophageal (halq) region (Jannah, 2019).

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1.	أَنْتَ	Anta	أَنْتَ	Entaa	E
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The data above shows a change in vowel pronunciation from [a] to [ə], as seen in the transformation of *anta* to *entaa*. This change occurs because the altered sound is perceived as stronger compared to the original. In phonetic terms, voiced sounds are stronger than voiceless ones, obstruent sounds are louder than continuants, and vowels are stronger than glottal sounds. This type of change is referred to as lenition or attenuation, a phonological process in which a strong sound weakens in articulation compared to other surrounding sounds. (David Crystal, 2011)

The vowel [a] is a short, mid, unrounded vowel, meaning it is produced with the tongue in a low-central position and the lips unrounded. In contrast, the vowel [ə] is a mid-central, unrounded vowel, articulated with the tongue positioned in the center of the mouth without rounding the lips. The shift from [a] to [ə] represents a phonetic adjustment that often occurs due to ease of articulation and natural speech tendencies.

## 2. Discussion

In etymology, the term phonology comes from two Greek words: *phone*, meaning "sound," and *logos*, meaning "knowledge." Thus, the literal meaning of phonology is the "science of sound." Phonology is a branch of linguistics that studies sound systems. The primary objects of phonological study are, first, speech sounds (phone), which refer to the phonetic system, and second, phonemes, which relate to phonemic structures. According to Syarif Hidayatullah in (Nasikin, Arfan, & Hidayatullah, 2023) phonology is the study of speech sounds in terms of their function within a linguistic communication system. A crucial aspect of phonology is examining the role of sounds in distinguishing meaning. If a particular sound difference alters the

meaning of a word, the sound is classified as a phoneme. However, if the sound variation does not result in a meaning change, it is referred to as a phone.

There are several key concepts in phonology regarding sound structures. First, Phonemes (*fonem*). A phoneme is the smallest functional unit of language, meaning it serves to differentiate meaning. In English, phonemes have various pronunciations depending on their position in a word or syllable. For example, the phoneme /t/ at the beginning of a word or syllable is pronounced freely, as in *hat*. However, at the end of a word, the /t/ is pronounced with a tighter closure, as in *make*, where the lips remain closed when articulating the sound (Kridalaksana, 2009) *Second*, Allophones (alofon). Allophones are phoneme variants that appear depending on their position in a word but do not change meaning. For example, in Indonesian, the phoneme /p/ has two allophonic variations: [p], which is pronounced normally, and [p>], which is pronounced with a stronger closure. These variations are written in square brackets, with [p] representing the standard pronunciation and [p>] indicating a non-released articulation (Kridalaksana, 2009). Thus, it can be concluded that phonology is a branch of linguistics that studies language sounds, their formation processes, and their phonetic and phonological changes.

From a sociological perspective, this literary work examines the phonological shift from Fusha Arabic to Egyptian 'Ammiyah in the song *Sabry Aleel*.

*First*, the social influence on language. Language serves as a reflection of social and cultural dynamics within a society. The shift from Fusha Arabic (the standard form) to Egyptian 'Ammiyah (the local dialect) illustrates social interaction and linguistic change in Egyptian society. While Fusha is predominantly used in formal and written contexts, 'Ammiyah is more prevalent in daily communication and popular culture, including music.

*Second*, cultural representation in music. Music serves as a powerful medium for expressing cultural identity. The song *Sabry Aleel*, which employs Egyptian 'Ammiyah, demonstrates how musical language adapts to the preferences and linguistic habits of local audiences. This reflects an appreciation for dialects that are more familiar and closely connected to everyday life, in contrast to standard languages, which may be perceived as more rigid or formal.

*Third*, Phonetic Changes and Language Structure. This study is likely to explore phonetic changes from Fusha to 'Ammiyah, particularly shifts in consonant and vowel

sounds. For instance, certain letters in Fusha Arabic undergo modifications in pronunciation, resulting in a more simplified form in 'Ammiyah. Such changes illustrate how language adapts and evolves to facilitate communication within a specific social context.

*Fourth, Power and Identity Dynamics.* The choice to use 'Ammiyah in songs can also be seen as a form of resistance to Fusha's dominance as a symbol of power and education. This can be seen as a way to reinforce local identity and create a space where everyday language has the same legitimacy and cultural value as formal language.

*Fifth, the interaction between Tradition and Modernity.* Using 'Ammiyah in contemporary songs shows the interaction between tradition and modernity. While Fusha Arabic is rooted in religious traditions and texts, 'Ammiyah reflects modern realities and the influence of globalization. This creates an interesting dynamic where the two forms of language interact and influence each other.

*Sixth, Public Acceptance and Music Market.* This analysis could also explore how public acceptance of songs that use 'Ammiyah compares to those that use Fusha. This can indicate cultural preferences, social class identities, and how the music market is responding to linguistic changes.

#### **D. Conclusion**

This article examines the phonological changes that occurred when Fusha Arabic, which is standard and classical Arabic, was adapted into the Egyptian dialect ('Ammiyah) in the context of the song "Sabry Aleel." Research shows that these changes not only reflect social and cultural interactions within Egyptian society but also illustrate a shift from the formality of Fusha to greater familiarity and connectedness of 'Ammiyah. The use of 'Ammiyah in this song shows how music plays a role as a medium of cultural expression that suits the preferences and habits of local listeners, where local dialects are considered more familiar and relevant in daily life compared to the more formal Fusha language.

The phonetic changes studied included modifications to consonant and vowel sounds, where the pronunciation of certain letters in Fusha was simplified in 'Ammiyah, reflecting language adaptations to facilitate communication in different social contexts. The article also highlights how the use of 'Ammiyah in songs can be seen as a form of resistance to Fusha's dominance as a symbol of power and education, reinforcing local identities and creating a more inclusive form of cultural expression.

Through descriptive methods and phonological analysis, this study explores the changes in sound that occur with data collected through the observatory-note method, where researchers listen to songs and record the changes in sounds that appear. In conclusion, the change in sound from Fusha Arabic to Egyptian 'Amiyah in the song "Sabry Aleel" not only reflects the social and cultural dynamics in Egypt but also shows how music can be a vehicle of expression that enriches understanding of local cultural and linguistic identities.

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