

## **Segression of Foreign Language Epistemology in Boarding Schools in the Context of Communication Ethnography**

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### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan segregasi episteme penggunaan bahasa asing pesantren di era modernisasi dalam konteks etnografi komunikasi. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis Library Research. Data yang digunakan dalam penelitian diperoleh dari berbagai literatur ilmiah yang mengulas pembelajaran bahasa asing di pesantren. Teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan oleh peneliti adalah dokumentasi. Adapun teknik analisis data menggunakan content analysis. Hasil dari penelitian ini menyatakan bahwa Bahasa Arab yang diajarkan di pesantren tradisional memiliki pesan etnologi. Santri mampu membaca kitab kuning dan memahami literatur-literatur fikih, tasawuf, kalam, dan tafsir. Tradisi kultural di pesantren tradisional turut mempengaruhi proses folklore pembentukan bahasa non-verbal. Simbol menjadi unsur semiotis penyampaian pesan bahasa non-verbal. Santri mampu berkomunikasi bahasa asing dengan baik guna menghadapi globalisasi, sehingga dalam komunitas ini, bahasa menjadi unsur penting guna menggerakkan kehidupan pondok. Folklore bahasa verbal akan cepat terbentuk dengan adanya kegiatan yang mewajibkan berbahasa asing di setiap keadaan. Goals pembelajaran bahasa asing dan folklore yang ada di kedua pesantren tersebut akan memengaruhi konstruksi bahasa yang berbeda, sehingga bahasa menjadi faktor pembentukan masyarakat tutur pesantren yang relatif heterogen.

**Kata kunci:** Bahasa, Pesantren, Folklore, Etnografi, Komunikasi

### **Abstract**

This study aims to describe the epistemic segregation of foreign languages in Islamic boarding schools in the modernization era in the context of communication ethnography. This research uses a qualitative approach with the type of Library Research. The data used in this study were obtained from various scientific literature that reviews foreign language learning in Islamic boarding schools. The data collection technique used by researchers is documentation. The data analysis technique uses content analysis. The results of this study state that the Arabic language taught in traditional Islamic boarding schools has an ethnological message. Santri are able to read the yellow book and understand fiqh, tasawuf, kalam, and tafsir literature. Traditional Islamic boarding schools' cultural traditions also influence the folklore process in forming non-verbal language. Symbols become a semiotic element of conveying non-verbal language messages. Santri can communicate well in foreign languages to face globalization, so in this community, language becomes essential in driving Islamic boarding school life. Verbal language folklore will quickly form with activities that require foreign languages in every situation. The goals of learning foreign languages and folklore in the two pesantren will affect different language constructions. Language is a factor in forming a relatively heterogeneous pesantren speech community.

**Keywords:** Language, Islamic Boarding School, Folklore, Ethnography, Communication

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Talking about language is endless. Language is a communication medium with many mysteries that can be studied, studied, and understood from various subjective and objective perspectives. In the contemporary era, the existence of language is continuously developing in harmony with the latest research in the field of linguistics and its various sub-fields. As an embryo of language science, linguistics has a very urgent role in determining the success of the latest language research to add factual language discourse. One of the efforts to raise the newest research in interdisciplinary linguistics is the rise of studies in sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistics itself is a scientific discipline that conceptualizes sociology and linguistics. Between sociology and language is a generalization rather than community activity in social reality with a language consensus. From a sociological perspective, language is one of the cultural elements of society. Language is the embodiment of living media in the local wisdom of society. The relationship between society and language cannot be separated because society and language are inseparable social structures.

Public relations and language in social reality do not only stop in one space and time. This relationship will always exist if the speech community still uses verbal language as the language of communication. One of the speech community communication spaces is the language environment Austin & Austin (2003), which at this stage is called pesantren. Islamic boarding schools are one of the long-standing Islamic da'wah media in the archipelago. The presence of Islamic boarding schools in the archipelago also enriches the media for actualizing Islamic da'wah. Azra (2012), the history of pesantren until now continues to make specific accommodations and concessions to find a pattern that it sees as appropriate enough to deal with changes that are now increasingly rapid and widespread Rafiq (2006). Manifestations of accommodation and concessions made by Islamic boarding schools have now entered the management area of foreign language learning.

In its development, Islamic boarding schools have always experienced model changes, such as Modern Islamic Boarding Schools (Khalaf) and Traditional Islamic Boarding Schools (Salaf). Modern Islamic boarding schools are institutions that actualize general education simultaneously with religious education. The education system in modern Islamic boarding schools uses classical methods. Meanwhile, traditional Islamic boarding schools use material sourced from classical books Malik (2021).

The existence of foreign languages in Islamic boarding schools started to grow when Islamic boarding schools existed. Islamic boarding schools certainly make foreign

languages, especially Arabic, have a better register. How come? All literature about Islam is in Arabic. Santri, who live in Islamic boarding schools, are inevitably required to master Arabic. Hence, the content of the curriculum for strengthening Arabic in Islamic boarding schools tends to be denser with the teaching of *Naḥwu* (Syntax), *Ṣarf* (Morphology) sciences, and other scientific tools to support the success of students mastering Arabic.

So far, most of the research related to Islamic boarding schools has only been limited to studies from the point of view of education, curriculum, and pesantren epistemology. Suppose the investigation leads to the area of language. In that case, it is mainly in the area of language application (applied linguistics) which includes language learning, language teaching, language learning methods, and evaluation of language learning. This research will add to the discourse on foreign languages in Islamic boarding schools in the field of foreign language learning methodology. Academic research on language in Islamic boarding schools in the sociolinguistic, anthropolinguistic, sociosematic, and sociopragmatic perspectives has not been widely studied, even though from the perspective of these scientific disciplines, language discourse has many hypotheses that are not yet known by the public.

Foreign languages in Islamic boarding schools as a medium of communication and mandatory material taught are the existence of a social order between communicators and communicants in forming verbal messages. In the ethnographic study of communication, the existence of a foreign language in this institution is expressed by the pesantren speech community to fulfill specific functions. Language is not only a form of a local wisdom tradition that must be preserved. More than that, language is a form of expression for the communicator in speaking to carry out normative messages by paying attention to empirical phenomena when the language is spoken. Language manifestations in Islamic boarding schools also bring language attitudes. From an ethnographic communication perspective, what are the aims and objectives of foreign languages taught in traditional and modern Islamic boarding schools? That question is the academic anxiety of researchers.

## **II. RESEARCH METHOD**

This research uses a qualitative approach with the type of Library Research. The data used in this study were obtained from various scientific literature that reviews foreign

language learning in Islamic boarding schools. Following the type of research, the data collection technique used by researchers is documentation. Documents are records of events in the form of notes, diaries, letters, and other documents that have occurred in the past Wijayanti et al. (2018). The data analysis technique uses content analysis by classifying data based on certain types and symbols and analyzing it based on specific criteria Wijayanti et al. (2020).

### **III. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **A. Ethnography of Communication in Speech Community and Community Socio-Cultural Explanations**

Contemporary linguistic studies Ferdinand de Saussure has much echoed have contributed a lot in the field of interdisciplinary linguistics, one of which is sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistics is the result of the comparison and dialectics of two humanities disciplines, namely sociology and linguistics.

In sociology, communication ethnography is the central pillar to becoming a medium of communication between speech communities and languages. Speech community and language are material objects of interest in language research. These two elements have different roles and functions in research.

Humanities research on language and its relation to social reality is an area of sociolinguistics and anthropolinguistics that gave birth to the ethnographic sub-discipline of communication. According to AD Smith, the term ethnography comes from the Greek term Ethnhos, meaning people, race, or cultural group. The word ethnic combined with the phrase graphic to form the period ethnographic, meaning refers to the sub-discipline known as descriptive anthropology. In the broadest sense, science focuses on trying to describe the ways of human life. Thus, ethnography refers to the social scientific description of human beings and the cultural foundations of humanity Denzin (2009).

In another nomenclature, ethnography is an abstraction of science that examines the ways of human life in various aspects and objects. In ethnographic studies, fundamental things make social mobility and social change so fast, namely the social philosophy in the human paradigm the human way of life and outlook one of the determining factors in the development of social mobility. Servings targeted in ethnography include the social, economic, political, religious, and communication fields.

Communication is sending and receiving information or messages between two individuals (communicants and communicators) or more effectively so that they can be understood easily. The medium used in communication is language. If the ethnographic presentation discussed is more directed in the field of communication, then it will become an ethnographic communication discourse.

Hymes (1964), the term communication ethnography itself denotes the scope of its study, and communicative its range and the types of complexity associated with it. Regarding the content of the study, one cannot only separately take the results of studies from linguistics, psychology, sociology, and ethnology but then relate them. If you want new data, you need to directly examine the use of language in the context of the situation so that you can see patterns of speech activity, apart from separate studies of grammar, personality, social structure, religion, and so on Sumarsono (2017). Language, a medium of social communication, is not only targeted by linking language with social sciences, which are then connected to become hypotheses that can be accounted for.

More than that, if you want to know and obtain valid data regarding the role and function of language, the researcher must see directly the situations and conditions in which the language is used and actualized by the speech community. Such an ethnographic view of communication will form a stigma that language is not necessarily studied conceptually, but can run into practical matters both in terms of language intelligence and language attitudes. These two things are often opposites, even though they have to go hand in hand Sholihah (2018).

Hymes (1964), Sociolinguistics contributes to the study of communication in general through the study of the organization of the verbal tools and the ends they support. This sociolinguistic approach is called communication ethnography, which is about speech ethnography. To understand this study, Hymes suggests changing the orientation of language studies, including seven items. The emphasis must be directed into (1) the speech structure or system (*la parole*); (2) more function than structure; (3) language as an order, in the sense that it contains many functions, and different functions show different perspectives and arrangements; (4) the accuracy of the linguistic elements with the message to be conveyed; (5) the diversity of functions of various languages and other means of communication; (6) community or another social context as a starting point for understanding; (7) the functions themselves are strengthened or justified in context, and it is usually the place, boundaries, and arrangement of language and other means of

communication that are raised as problematic. In short, the priority is more to speech than code, to function rather than structure, to context rather than message, to accuracy rather than authority or just possibility. Still, the interrelationships are always essential so that they do not only generalize specificities but also specialize in general Sumarsono (2017).

More than that, Hymes also confirms that ethnographic studies of communication explain communicative competencies such as rules for communicating, sharing rules for interaction, and cultural and knowledge rules as the basis for interaction, context, and content of communication events and interaction processes. The focus is on what speakers know to communicate appropriately in the speech community patterned and organized as a system of communication events and how these communication event systems interact with other cultural systems Troikke (1988).

Referring to Hymes' statement above, currently, ethnographic studies of communication are not only focused on the level of human verbal communication. Hymes (1972) also does not make language structure a determinant of language content. Several language elements' micro and macro linkages are the determining factors in producing a more factual and empirical hypothesis. In Hymes's view, the messages and functions of language in human speech acts are primary to understanding language's role as a formal research object. Language is not a premium medium that social systems can manipulate. Hymes also describes three crucial concepts related to speech ethnography or communication ethnography: speech procedures, speech community, situations, events, and speech acts Sumarsono (2017). These three elements are essential components in the ethnographic study of communication. Speech procedures, or what can be said with speech acts, is an unusual theme in the pragmatics sub-discipline. The focus objects in pragmatics are locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary speech works regarding the verbal language used in communication.

The point of view of the intentions and messages of human contact will be seen according to his speech acts. The position of speech community plays a very significant role in communication research. Where there is language as a medium of communication, of course, there are speech communities that are both individual and group in nature. Then communication situations and events are also the keys to research. The situations and events determine the presence of language intentions and messages during communication. Thus, the ethnographic presentation of communication will become more complex by dialectics with other linguistic sub-disciplines.

## **1. Foreign Language Resistance in Islamic Boarding Schools as an Effort to Strengthen the Modern Islamic Education System**

Pesantren, a medium of Islamic da'wah that has existed since classical times, has a significant role in today's modern education. The solid cultural base in Islamic boarding schools gives them a brand embedded in society so that they become centers of excellence that produce students with a comprehensive scientific paradigm. Apart from that, the curriculum design in pesantren is considered quite attractive. The curriculum implemented in Islamic boarding schools differs from the curriculum the government determines. Hanafi (2017) explains that the shift in educational epistemology in Islamic boarding schools has attracted comments from several Indonesian Muslim scientists.

Azra (2012), the current prophetic mission of Islamic boarding schools should not only understand students in the field of religion, but Islamic boarding schools must be able to reproduce Islamic scholars as the next generation of Islamic scholars for the advancement of civilization. Thus, the reorientation of the existing curriculum in Islamic boarding schools must be in harmony with the times while being dialectical with social reality. The pesantren tradition must now rise and try to enrich its role in participating in advancing the Indonesian nation in various fields so that the goal of building a modern Indonesian civilization with nobility as the main strength of the government can be achieved more quickly. Preservation of the elite will guarantee political stability. Political stability will ensure high and quality economic growth. With nobility, too, high economic growth is aimed at distributing the welfare and economic justice of the people. Equal distribution of interest and economic justice for low-income communities must be achieved through equal distribution of opportunities and improvement of the quality of education for the younger generation as a whole Dhofier (2009). Several factors will accomplish the preparation of pesantren in advancing the civilization of such a nation. The main factor that must be done is the renewal of education revitalization. Islamic boarding school education must be able to compete in the modern era. Education is the forerunner to growing students' knowledge, character, attitude, and mentality to advance the nation's civilization. The progress and decline of the nation's society lie in how the country cares for the younger generation. Steps that the central government can take to revitalize education is by updating the curriculum. The current educational curriculum must be able to answer modern problems and meet the needs of the times, especially in science and humanities. Science is for advancing the

nation's civilization in the science and technology sector, while societies are for increasing the nation's culture in the social, political, and economic sectors.

One of the renewals of the pesantren curriculum in the development of humanities is the strengthening of foreign languages. The demand for mastery of foreign languages in the millennial era for society is one form of language progress. Various factors, such as social, economic, and cultural, are behind the emergence of foreign language learning to transform society into a bilingual community. The struggle to maintain the existence of foreign languages has penetrated the realm of formal and non-formal educational institutions, one of which is Islamic boarding schools Putra (2017). In the pesantren, foreign languages are also taught, both Arabic and English. Arabic is the language of Islam to understand primary Islamic literature. At the same time, English is the language of academics and science and technology, which is often used in various matters Putra & Sholihah (2020).

Thus, foreign language resistance as an explanation of learning in Islamic boarding schools becomes the primary material to lead students toward modern civilization. Foreign language is not a marginal material but a material that has a top priority scale. In another review, a foreign language is a primary need for students. Such manifestations make pesantren an alternative institution to develop language skills. So far, Islamic education institutions that are very appropriate for developing language skills are pesantren Putra & Sholihah (2020).

Islamic boarding schools are language acquisition institutions that can bridge students' success in developing language skills. The methodology for learning foreign languages in Islamic boarding schools now looks dynamic, ranging from conventional to modern. Most traditional Islamic boarding schools today still use the classical method, namely the grammatical method (*qawā'id wa tarjamah*), in learning Arabic. In modern huts, they already use the direct method (*mubāsharah*). Both of these methods have a role based on the objectives of learning a foreign language. In traditional Islamic boarding schools, students must be proficient in verbal communication, namely reading skills. The proper foreign language learning method is the grammar method. This method allows students to analyze language items in text units or yellow books.

Meanwhile, the goals and objectives that modern pondoks are interested in are students who can speak foreign languages actively. Thus the correct method to use is the direct method. Foreign language learning and teaching activities using each technique will



produce different students' language skills. Santri, born from the womb of traditional Islamic boarding schools, will be more mature in terms of language grammar so that they are sharper and have robust analysis when reading the yellow book. Meanwhile, students who were born in the womb of a modern Islamic boarding school will have good and active foreign language skills.

The synthesis that can be drawn from the above discourse is that one of the contributions of pesantren in revitalizing Islamic education in the modern era is by strengthening the existence of learning foreign languages, both Arabic and English. These two foreign languages are media to open the horizons of world civilization conceptually and actually. Conceptually, the meaning is that students must understand literature in foreign languages, while actually, students must be able to dialogue and communicate in foreign languages to face globalization. The stereotypes of society that view pesantren as marginalized Islamic educational institutions will be refuted by the revitalization of strengthening foreign languages in pesantren. Santri, diligent in learning foreign languages at Islamic boarding schools, will be better prepared to face global competition.

## **2. Foreign Languages in Islamic Boarding Schools; Direction, Language Relativity, and Segression in the Ethnographic Context of Communication**

Hymes (1972) reveals language as an order in that it contains many functions, and different functions show different perspectives and arrangements Sumarsono (2017). In ethnographic studies of communication, the statement expressed by Hymes is thus strengthened by the fact that language functions are prioritized over language messages. The function of language, which is the result of the speech act of the speech community, influences the relativity of the meaning of the resulting language. Situations and events that accompany communication also become a barometer of language relativity.

As previously discussed, Arabic in traditional and modern Islamic boarding schools has a different character. Suppose we refer to Hymes' statement that language structure is the initial capital in forming language meaning. The system (*la parole*) is not a key. Language as a system of santri speech groups that is strengthened by normative regulations from institutions will provide several different functions and different perspectives and mutually reinforce each other. In this context, normatively, the Arabic language taught in traditional Islamic boarding schools has an ethnological (religious) message. The goal of learning Arabic pieces of evidence is that students can read the yellow book and understand fiqh,

tasawuf, kalam, and tafsir literature. As an introduction, students will receive more linguistic materials as the key to opening other religious materials. Such literature is studied to strengthen the servant's transcendental mission to His Lord.

The point and primary source of the yellow book as Islamic religious literature cannot but be the revelation of Allah Swt conveyed to the Prophet Muhammad saw. This essence and the primary source are then supplemented by a second source, the Sunnah or Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad. However, revelation and hadith are not the only sources of the *Kitab Kuning* discourse. Reason then plays a role in the speech of the yellow book Azra (2012). In addition, the sources of the teachings in the yellow book also quote a lot from the opinions of classical scholars. These three sources make the yellow book's epistemology an Islamic literature with high validity and credibility in traditional pesantren. The role and function of the yellow book is a priority scale for changing the attitude of the santri. Santri who understand the teachings of *fiqh*, *tasawwuf*, and interpretations in the yellow book can be sure to have a more respectful attitude toward their God. From the ethnographic perspective of communication, cultural traditions in traditional pesantren also influence the process of folklore in forming non-verbal language, which is more precisely the skill of reading the yellow book. There is no communicative language function in this region. The methodology for learning the yellow book with the *bandongan*, *sorogan*, and *wektonan* techniques will strengthen the formation of a folklore speech community Hakim & Novianty (2020).

The local traditions of the pesantren will be the starting point for understanding that traditional pesantren are Islamic boarding schools with yellow books. Because it is called the yellow book pesantren, the Arabic language in this pesantren is only taught when students study the yellow book. Such manifestations will carry the terminology that traditional pesantren teach non-verbal Arabic. Language as an arbitrary sound symbol system is manifested by reading skills Midi HS (2020). All the regulations that apply in traditional pesantren will influence the students' attitude. In terms of language, for example, politeness and language ethics by using speech acts are also considered in this community. Santri has certain boundaries and areas in using language. The regional language is the language of communication, and Arabic is the language of learning the yellow book while accompanied by Arabic-Pegon script in translating Arabic into regional languages. Thus, the ethnographic view of communication regarding the re-actualization of learning Arabic in traditional Islamic boarding schools has an ethnological function, namely the goal of the

students after studying Islamic literature in the fields of *fiqh*, *tasawuf*, nature, and interpretation is for the students to have an attitude of total obedience to God. This is reinforced by traditional local folklore in pesantren.

Unlike the tradition in modern Islamic boarding schools, the existence of foreign languages (Arabic and English) does not only have an ethnological message; the goal of learning foreign languages is for students to be able to communicate in foreign languages well to face globalization so that in this community, language becomes an essential element in moving the joints -the joint of cottage life. The natural form of this is the existence of conversation activities (*muḥādaśah*) and speeches (*muḥāḍarah*) to hone the language intelligence of the students Fitriani (2020).

Modernity encourages Islamic educational institutions to continue to adapt, especially modern boarding schools. Verbal language folklore will quickly form in the presence of a language environment. Santri is required to speak a foreign language in every situation. From the ethnographic point of view of communication, the speech system (*la parole*) is an emphasis that must be considered. The speech system for learning foreign languages in modern Islamic boarding schools is directed toward the direct method technique Midi HS (2020). Normatively, students are required to speak Arabic and English in all circumstances. Language as an order of concrete behavior in life in the Islamic boarding school will shape the behavior and mentality of pretty good students. In this situation, students must speak Arabic and English in all respects and form a paradigm within themselves that foreign languages are necessary for life. Speaking skill is a priority scale in this hut. At the same time, the folklore in this hut cannot be left alone. The influence and resistance of the speech community, which is quite strong, and the language environment determine the success of foreign languages Louise (2007).

This institution's language behavior and speech acts are systematized and instilled when students learn foreign languages in class. Language functions are prioritized over just language structures. Santri is free to speak foreign languages according to what they want to say without paying attention to the rules of the language. Sometimes, students use regional symbolic terms that colleagues around them only understand. Normative rules in linguistic settings are not given much attention. The important thing in this situation is that students can speak foreign languages even though they are judged to be wrong. Mental is the main basis for language success. The more often you speak, the more successful you are in speaking.

In terms of the ethnography of communication, the verbal language formed in modern huts results from the social order. The social order created from the folklore of the language environment is the main door for language success so that it can be reduced to sharpening language skills. The linguistic structure is not the only determining factor for success in this term. Language messages take precedence over language structures. Language as an arbitrary system has occupied a completely free position in modern cottage speech society. In addition, the conditions of situations and events in constructing language also determine the relativity of language meaning. Language as a verbal system is a message resulting from dialectics between communicants and communicators that are adapted to the situations and events when the language is spoken. This is assumed to test communicative behavior in a particular speech community Austin & Austin (2003).

Thus, the direction, relativity of language, and epistemic segregation of the two types of pesantren differ. Foreign language learning in traditional Islamic boarding schools emphasizes ethnological functions by studying Islamic religious literature that originates from the yellow book. Language reading skills are the top priority scale that students in this pesantren must master. Normativity and language ethics are upheld. The system and grammar are more adhered to. Then, the paradigm formed in modern Islamic boarding schools is that a foreign language is a necessity that students must master to face globalization. Social order and language functions are given more attention than language structure. Language etiquette and language normativity in modern cottages are not given much attention.

#### **IV. CONCLUSIONS**

If you look at Hymes' theory, the epistemological segregation of foreign language learning in traditional and modern Islamic boarding schools seems natural. The goal of learning foreign languages and folklore in the two pesantren will affect different language constructions. Language is a factor in forming a relatively heterogeneous pesantren speech community. Epistemologically, the Arabic language in traditional Islamic boarding schools is strengthened by the traditional cultural system, which results in language as a social system having language ethics and language registers that are pretty high. Language is communicated with a parole structure based on the correct language rules. Arabic is taught when students receive religious material from the yellow book.

The function of language is more toward ethnology or belief. Arabic is used as the language of instruction so that students understand religious literature in *fiqh*, *tasawuf*, *kalam*, and interpretations that originate from the yellow book. The more proficient students are in Arabic, the more experienced students will be in reading the yellow book and understanding the contents of the book. Arabic is systematized transcendentally, meaning that students who understand religion from the yellow book literature will increase their capacity for faith and holiness in their Lord.

In contrast to the manifestations of the Arabic language in modern huts. Foreign languages (Arabic and English) were born due to historical factors and specific prophetic missions. To prepare students who are loyal and have a high capacity and mentality to face globalization, students are required to have comprehensive foreign language skills. Santri must compete with modernity with increased stability in the coming era, so that santri can change civilization to become more advanced and better. One of the keys is that students must have good foreign language skills. Axiologically, a foreign language is a key to unlocking world civilization. Then, epistemologically, students' success in mastering foreign languages in modern Islamic boarding schools is determined by a social order called the speech community or language environment (*bi'ah lughawiyyah*). Santri learns foreign languages both in class and outside the classroom. The results of learning the language must be manifested in practical daily steps; students are required to communicate in a foreign language in various circumstances and places. Language structure is not the only element that is important in shaping the relativity of language. In addition to social order, the communicative function of language in modern Islamic boarding schools is also the key to the success of the santri language.

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