



Teachers effective role in developing the student's interest with fun learning in Malaysian elementary schools

Kalai Selvan Arumugham

Tunku Seri Indera Putera, High School, Malaysia

Abstract

Creating student's interest in learning new knowledge is most crucial and significant to achieve better outcomes. Teachers have been developing and establishing new techniques to stimulate students' interest. Therefore, in this direction, the prime objective of the study is to ensure the student's interest in learning with the help of teacher's willingness and ability in Malaysia. Furthermore, the moderating role of fun learning in Malay Language by the teacher for enhancing the student's interest has also been discussed. This study is a cross sectional based study. Sample size of this study is selected 300 school teachers. 300 questionnaires were distributed among the teaching staff of Malaysian schools. From these 300 questionnaires, 238 valid questionnaires were accumulated. 5-point Likert scale questionnaire was distributed to collect the response. Smart PLS software was used to analyse the data. Findings report that teacher's willingness and ability has developed students' interest with the help of fun learning in Malay Language. Further, it has also been concluded that fun learning put a strong effect in enhancing student's creativity and knowledge.

Keywords: teacher willingness, teacher ability, fun learning, student's interest, Malay language, Malaysia

1. Introduction

Creating student's interest in learning new knowledge now a day has been a challenge for the teachers. Teachers have been developed and established new techniques to stimulate students interest (Cole, 2009) ^[9]. For example, teachers sometimes show the scientific videos to the students to make the lecture effective (Lee & Butler, 2003) ^[19]. Teachers' words matter to make the students learnt the new knowledge (Putnam & Borko, 2000) ^[25]. The way teachers deliver the lecture has been count a lot. Students can disengage in a few minutes sitting in a class room if they feel lecture is boring (Strayer, 2012) ^[28]. Thus, a teacher takes help to develop fun learning for the students in a class room setting. Fun learning has been emerging successful trends for making the effective learning.

In Malaysia, a pre-school education program is an early educational program for children before they enter formal education in Year One primary school (Preschool Curriculum Guidelines, 1998). Pre-school is an optional education for children before entering school. Pre-school is part of the Malaysian education system. The Malaysia Ministry of Education provides pre-school education to enable children aged four to six years old to enter early schooling, especially children who come from the lower income background.

Pre-school education aims to nurture the potential of children in all aspects of development, master basic skills and foster positive attitudes in preparing them for primary school. The concept used is "Learning while Playing" by emphasizing the "Themed Learning". And these learning methods include class activities, group activities and individual activities. The uniqueness of pre-schools organized by the Malaysia Ministry of Education is the group activities which can enhance the quality of emotional and intellectual control. The early exposure to this activity is

to provide a solid foundation for the concept of smart schools (Malaysia Ministry of Education, 2003).

The concept of learning while playing, allows them to master (learn) the skills or the lesson in a fun situation. Therefore, this atmosphere exists because the attitude to win is certainly innate in every child. The advantages of learning while playing are:

- Students can learn without knowing that they are learning
- No pressure
- Trying to win.

Likewise, without the presence of a teacher, the learning process does not seem to be effective. Teachers must capable of creating an effective teaching and learning process (Stigler & Hiebert 2009). Therefore, teachers need to be aware of the importance of fun learning elements while teaching in order to create good relationships with students (Hattie, 2012).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

During the training of teachers at the Malaysian Teacher Education Institute, mathematics teachers have been taught to opt several teaching methods to ensure the students interest in class, moreover these methods also facilitate the teachers in terms of developing a spur in their teaching methods relating to the effective utilization of resources. These methods are expected to be explored and used when they become as math teachers in schools. A teacher should also be able to identify, decide on choosing the most effective teaching aid and to optimize resources in order to achieve their planned teaching objectives.

Linnenbrink and Pintrich (2003) ^[21] illustrated that implementing teaching methods have a lot of potential in developing the student's interest and also such methods

encourage the students to build up an optimistic gesture in class. In the same manner, student's learning abilities and interests are highly dependent upon how a teacher conveys his point of views while teaching. A school with well-equipped teaching resources centre cannot help the pupils in learning if the teacher is not competent to use the material effectively. However, there are still many mathematical teachers that only in teaching the 'chalk and talk' approach (Becker, & Watts, 2001) [3]. This situation causes the student to become bored and the teaching became less satisfactory. In addition, Pre-schools are already familiar with the multiplication concepts and operations in their daily lives. Therefore, an easy concept of multiplication needs to be exposed to pre-school students is the Fun-Learning in Malay Language to the Kid's tool without making them aware of it. By using this tool, it is hoped that it can help students to solve their daily problems.

1.2 Research Objectives

- To determine the effect of teacher's willingness that has a notable consequence concerning the student's interest.
- To examine the effect of teacher's ability in order to give the positive impression in arousing student's interest.
- To inspect the linkage between teacher's willingness and student's interest via the moderating role of fun learning in Malay Language.
- To scrutinize the linkage between teacher's ability and student's interest that gives the impression of the moderating role of fun learning in Malay Language.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Student's Interest

Students' interest mean being active and participative during the class in order to learn more. It depends on a teacher how much he keeps them engaged in instructing the lesson delivered in class room. When students develop the interest in class then they express it in different ways for instance they seek learning via becoming more participative in class, they turn out to be more rational in developing the perception concerning the courses. Student's interest doesn't only work for students, but it also matures the teaching methods of teachers and this positivity ultimately brings the constructive learning surroundings (Marsh and Cooper, 1981). On the other hand, whenever the things that go against the student interest then ultimately it become hard for students to sustain the concentration in class (Hsu, 1999). In the same way, learners inclined to learn more when they develop the interest about the specific objects and this is a sign of their general valuation of the learning practices. In the Malaysian Quality of Education Standards (SKPM) element 9.13, teacher's disposition has highlighted the importance of fun learning practices among school teachers. This policy is projected by the ministry in line with the Multiple Intelligence Theory by Gardner and Traub (2010) [12], which has outlined the eight potential inclinations of the study. Typically, everyone will have at least one or two more prominent intelligence compared to other intelligences. All intelligence can be developed through education, experience and environment. This diversity demands the creativity of teachers to help students learn in a way, that meet the students' interest and ability (Abdullah, 2008; Baki, 2003) [1, 12].

2.2 Fun Learning

In the context of language while teaching, the element of humour will make learning outcomes more meaningful to students (Brown & Voltz, 2005) [6]. Teachers need to use fun learning elements in Malay Language that can express funny feelings and using graphs like cartoons and body language that can create a fun atmosphere for students (Biggs, 2011) [4]. As the Malay Language Teaching should not only emphasize on the mastery of content alone. However, it needs to be taught in a comfortable and enjoyable environment. Because students usually get bored when a language teacher is able to teach grammar well, but in a dull state. According to Daud, Basri, Baki, Hamzah and Nawawi (2011) [10, 11], a joke training practice can create a fun learning environment. Moreover, innovation can be more beneficial to introduce new learning techniques.

The students were exposed on how to use in Malay Language to the Fun-Learning Kid's tool. They are taught to solve problems in their daily lives involving multiple operations. They can solve the problem without having to memorize the multiplication table (Kirriemuir & McFarlane, 2004) [18]. Therefore, they managed to solve the multiplication problems just by playing, using the Fun-Learning Kid's tool. It showed that 100% of the students can answer exactly 6 questions that are presented to them. The Fun-Learning Kid's tool can stimulate their cognition to think apart from they were having fun playing it (Kirriemuir & McFarlane, 2004) [18].

2.3 Teacher's Willingness

Willingness in teaching has a significant effect on developing student's interest. As a passionate teacher inspires the student in a great manner. Likewise, Fried (2001) defines a passionate teacher as: "someone in love with a field of knowledge deeply stirred by issues and ideas that change our world, drawn to the dilemmas and potentials of the young people who come into class every day". For a high-quality student, learning passion is indispensable. According to the Olson (2003), "When we discover and explore our passions about teaching and learning, and begin to share them with others, doors are opened, and the possibilities are endless".

Although teacher's willingness matters a lot in rising student's interest, but just teacher's willingness is not enough other's factors are also important by the side of willingness like fun learning (Moyer, 2001) [23]. Teachers need to use language that can express funny feeling, using graphs like cartoons and body language that can create a fun atmosphere for students (Moyer, 2001) [23]. In addition, teacher's joke practices can also play a positive role regarding the student learning. Hence, it is argued that fun learning strengthens the relationship between teacher's willingness and student interest (Bonderup Dohn, 2011) [5].

2.4 Teacher's Ability

In accordance with the teacher's ability perspective, various aspects define a good teacher in terms of knowledge, experience and creativity (Beizhuizen *et al.*, 2001). On the similar note, teacher's ability of having pedagogical knowledge which refers to the clear understanding of the concept that being taught and the effective communication skills to evaluate the student is important in describing the

teacher’s worthiness (Shulman, 1987). Based on this view, a good teacher is described as the individual who able to keep order and give clear instructions (Beishuizen *et al.*, 2001; Murphy *et al.*, 2004). Because the effective communication and clear instruction are become more helpful in developing student’s interest. Knowledge, skills and understanding of what work methods are clearly described the level of a good teacher under the ability perspective (Ramsden, 2003) [26]. Moreover, teacher’s ability is also measured on the amount of fun learning that he/she deliver to students in fostering the interest among students (Patrick, Hisley, & Kempler, 2000) [24].

Hypothesis

H1: There is a significant relationship between teacher’s willingness and student’s interest.

H2: There is a significant relationship between teacher’s ability and student’s interest.

H3: There is a significant relationship between fun language and student’s interest.

H4: There is a significant moderating effect of fun learning between the relationship of teacher’s willingness and student’s interest.

H5: There is a significant moderating effect of fun learning between the relationship of teacher’s ability and student’s interest.

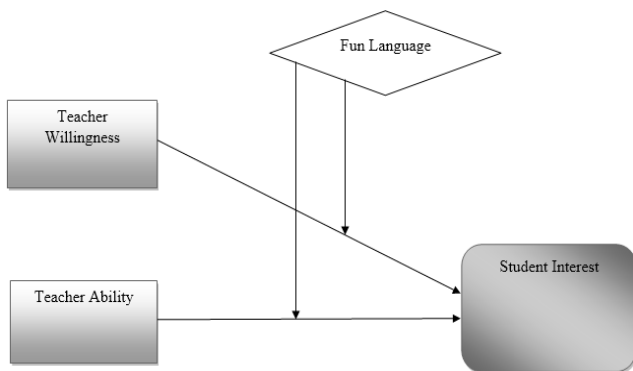


Fig 1: Theoretical framework

3. Research Methods

The current study is based on teacher’s willingness and his/her ability working in Malaysia school to create

student’s interest with the help of fun learning techniques. Data was collected from the respondents-teachers. Moreover, by considering the problem and objectives of research, quantitative research techniques were employed in the research methodology is most crucial element of every research and it is based on research problem, objective and nature of the study.

Data was collected through self-visit to the school teachers. However, the 5- point Likert scale was used to conduct survey. Moreover, random sampling techniques were employed to collect the data sample. Therefore, to cover the whole area this sampling technique is appropriate, “sample having less than 50 participants will observed to be a weaker sample; sample of 100 size will be weak; 200 will be adequate; sample of 300 will be considered as good; 500 very good whereas 1000 will be excellent.” Therefore, in current study 300 sample sizes was selected.

Hence, 300 questionnaires were distributed among the teaching staff of Malaysian schools. From these 300 questionnaires, 238 valid questionnaires were accumulated. Finally, Smart PLS 3 was used as a statistical tool. Response rate is given in below Table 1.

Table 1: Response Rate

Response	Frequency/Rate
Total questionnaires distributed	300
Total questionnaires returned	245
Total Useable questionnaires	238
Total questionnaires excluded	07
Total response rate	79.33%

4. Research Analysis and Results

In analysis section, first reliability and validity were examined. To check the reliability, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability was determined. Hair and Lukas (2014) stated that composite reliability and Cronbach alpha should be 0.7. Table 2 shows that Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability is higher than 0.7. Additionally, factor loading, and average variance extracted (AVE) was investigated for external consistency. Factor loading should be more than 0.5 (Hair *et al.*, 2010) and AVE should be more than 0.5 (Hair & Lukas, 2014). Results are shown in Table 2 and Figure 2. Moreover, discriminant validity is shown in Table 3

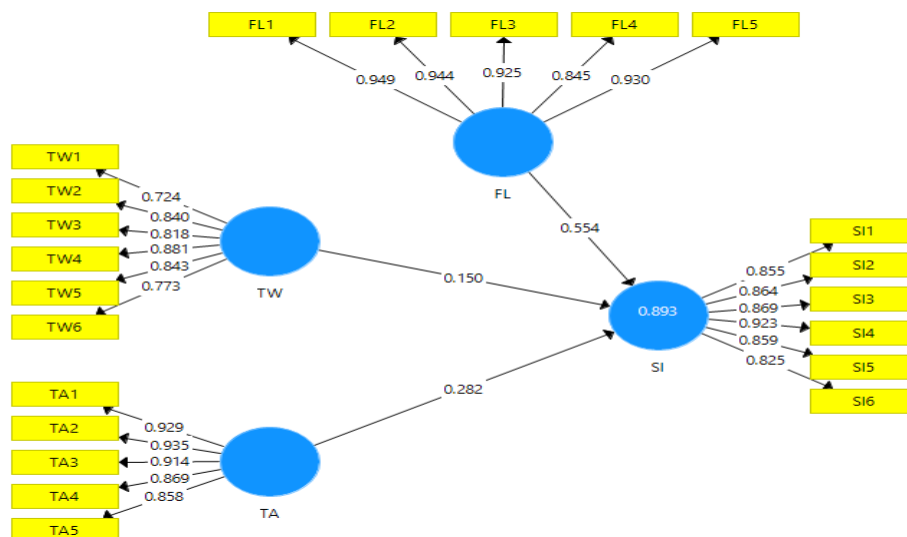


Fig 2: Measurement model assessment

Table2: Factor loading, composite reliability, VAE

Variables	Items	Factor Loadings	Cronbach alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Teacher Willingness	TW1	.724	.898	.922	.664
	TW2	.840			
	TW3	.818			
	TW4	.881			
	TW5	.843			
	TW6	.773			
Teacher Ability	TA1	.929	.942	.956	.813
	TA2	.935			
	TA3	.914			
	TA4	.869			
	TA5	.858			
Fun Learning	FL1	.949	.954	.965	.845
	FL2	.944			
	FL3	.925			
	FL4	.845			
	FL5	.930			
Student Interest	SI1	.855	.933	.947	.751
	SI2	.864			
	SI3	.869			
	SI4	.923			
	SI5	.859			
	SI6	.825			

Table 3: Discriminant Validity

	FL	SI	TA	TW
FL1	0.949	0.897	0.838	0.800
FL2	0.944	0.876	0.816	0.787
FL3	0.925	0.852	0.811	0.805
FL4	0.845	0.785	0.685	0.777
FL5	0.930	0.848	0.804	0.807
SI1	0.733	0.855	0.745	0.757
SI2	0.761	0.864	0.743	0.735
SI3	0.776	0.869	0.751	0.730
SI4	0.831	0.923	0.835	0.793
SI5	0.873	0.859	0.766	0.759
SI6	0.834	0.825	0.756	0.720
TA1	0.796	0.802	0.929	0.770
TA2	0.822	0.812	0.935	0.763
TA3	0.758	0.760	0.914	0.716
TA4	0.726	0.744	0.869	0.737
TA5	0.774	0.859	0.858	0.778
TW1	0.700	0.624	0.541	0.724
TW2	0.727	0.692	0.608	0.840
TW3	0.621	0.648	0.604	0.818
TW4	0.734	0.786	0.724	0.881
TW5	0.677	0.701	0.692	0.843
TW6	0.756	0.755	0.711	0.773

After measurement model assessment, PLS bootstrapping was performed to check the hypotheses. The 1.96 threshold level of t-value was considered to accept or reject the hypothesis. Table 4 shows the results of direct hypothesis.

From Table 4, it is evident that all relationships have t-value above 1.96. Therefore, all the direct hypotheses H1, H2 and H3 are supported. PLS bootstrapping is shown in Figure 3.

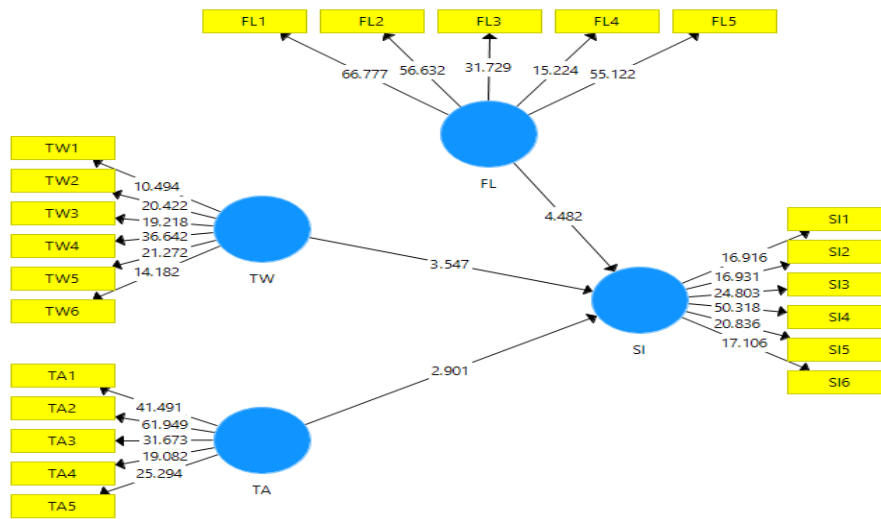


Fig 3: Structural Model Assessment

Table 4: Direct hypotheses results

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ((O/STDEV))	P Values	Decision
FL -> SI	0.554	0.561	0.124	4.482	0.000	Supported
TA -> SI	0.282	0.281	0.097	2.901	0.004	Supported
TW -> SI	0.150	0.144	0.042	3.547	0.001	Supported

Moderation Effect

Moreover, Table 5 and Figure 4 shows the moderation effect. T-value for moderation effect is more than 1.96 which confirms the H4 and H5. Thus, fun learning

moderates the relationship between teacher’s willingness and student’s interest. Moreover, fun learning moderates the relationship between teacher’s ability and student’s interest.

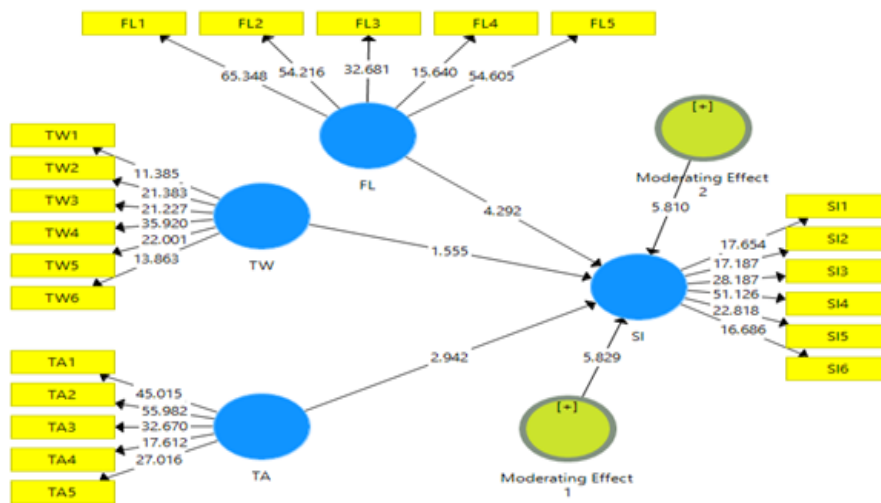


Fig 4: Moderation Effect

Table 5: Moderation effect

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ((O/STDEV))	P Values	Decision
TW* FL-> SI	0.351	0.361	0.114	3.065	0.003	Moderation
TA* FL-> SI	0.342	0.341	0.096	3.498	0.001	Moderation

Table 6 demonstrates that R² value is 0.893. According to Chin (1998), this R² value is strong. It indicates that three set of latent variables (teacher’s willingness, teacher’s ability, fun learning) are expected to explain 89% of variance in student’s interest.

Table 6: R-Square

Latent Variable	Variance Explained
Student Interest	.893

Cohen (1988) determines that effect size (f^2) 0.02 is small, 0.15 is moderate and 0.35 is considered as strong. However, in this study teacher’s willingness (TW) has moderate $f^2= 0.24$, teacher’s ability has strong $f^2= 0.57$. On the other hand, fun learning has small effect in Table 6.

Table 7: Effect Size (f^2)

Variable	(f^2)	Effect Size (f^2)
Teacher Willingness	0.24	Moderate
Teacher Ability	0.57	Strong

5. Findings

This study examines the effect of teacher’s ability and willingness on student’s interest in learning. Further, moderating role of fun learning in Malay Language was examined. It is found that teacher’s willingness and teacher’s ability have a significant relationship with students’ interest with t-value 3.547 and 2.901, respectively. The positive β -values of 0.150 and 0.282 are found for these direct relationships between teacher’s willingness and teacher’s ability with student’s interest. The positive β -value shows a positive relationship between these two variables and student’s interest. It demonstrates that teacher’s willingness; teacher’s ability has a significant positive relationship with student’s interest. Improvement in these two elements will automatically enhance the students’ interest in learning. Additionally, teacher’s willingness has moderate effect 0.24, however, teacher’s ability has strong effect 0.57, but fun learning shows 0.08 a small effect. Moreover, t-value and β -value for the relationship of fun learning and student’s interest are 4.482 and 0.554, respectively. It indicates that increase in fun learning could enhance student’s interest in learning. Nevertheless, moderating role of fun learning between teacher’ willingness and student’s interest found significant t-value 3.065 with β -value 0.351. On the other hand, moderation between teacher’s ability and student’s interest found t-value 3.498 and β -value 0.342. All these values depict that fun learning had a moderating role and it enhanced the positive effect of teacher’s willingness and ability on student’s interest. Figure 5 shows that fun language enhances the positive relationship of teacher willingness and student interest. Moreover, Figure 6 shows that fun language enhances the positive relationship of teacher ability and student interest.

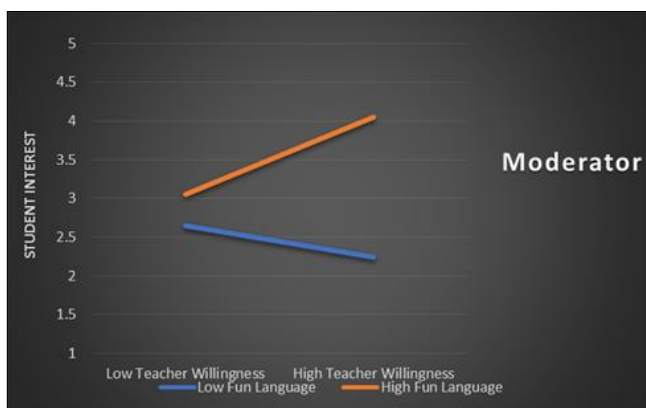


Fig 5. Moderation effect 1

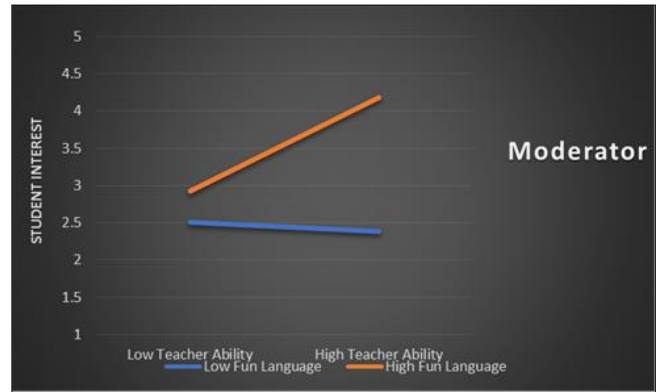


Fig 6: Moderation effect 2

6. Conclusions

Teacher’s willingness and ability have a well-defined role for teachers to create interest for students to learn new knowledge. Hence, it has been concluded that teacher’s ability as well as teacher’s willingness play the fundamental role in creating fun learning in local Malay Language for students. In this way, students ultimately develop interest in learning when they don’t have to experience the long-established interesting teaching methods. Moreover, teacher’s willingness in the form of passion in teaching via fun learning in Malay Language has been observed as the great predictor in developing and sustaining student’s interest. Further, it’s also been concluded that fun learning put a strong effect in enhancing student’s creativity. It is recommended to the teachers to focus on fun language to build the student learning interest.

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