

# IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILL BY USING THINK-PAIR-SHARE STRATEGY AT THE SECOND SEMESTER OF SYARIAH CLASS A AT LANGUAGE CENTER OF UIN SUSKA RIAU

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**Abstrak:** Kemampuan berbicara mahasiswa pada mata kuliah bahasa Inggris fakultas Syariah kelas A semester dua di pusat bahasa UIN Suska Pekanbaru rendah. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan seberapa jauh think-pair-share strategi dapat meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara mahasiswa dan faktor-faktor apa saja yang mempengaruhi perubahan kemampuan berbicara mahasiswa setelah penerapan strategi ini. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian tindakan kelas yang dilaksanakan dalam dua siklus. Peserta penelitian adalah 25 orang mahasiswa fakultas Syariah kelas A semester dua di pusat bahasa UIN Suska Pekanbaru. Instrumen yang digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data adalah tes berbicara, lembar observasi, catatan lapangan dan panduan wawancara. Data dianalisis secara kualitatif dan kuantitatif. Hasil dari penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kemampuan berbicara mahasiswa dengan menggunakan strategi think-pair-share lebih meningkat dibandingkan sebelum menggunakan strategi ini. Hal ini bisa dilihat pada nilai rata-rata mahasiswa di siklus pertama yang hanya 62.4, naik menjadi 71.68 di akhir siklus kedua. Selain itu, faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi perubahan keterampilan berbicara mahasiswa dengan melalui penerapan think-pair-share yaitu motivasi mahasiswa, materi pembelajaran yang menarik membuat mahasiswa lebih semangat dalam belajar, aktifitas dikelas membuat mahasiswa lebih aktif dan kreatif pada pelajaran berbicara dan kerja kelompok membuat mahasiswa lebih mudah dalam melatih kemampuan berbicara dan membuat mereka lebih percaya diri dalam penampilan berbicara.

**Key Words:** speaking skill and think-pair-share strategy

## INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of the important skills in English that must be learnt by students in language learning. The students who are able in speaking mean that they are able to share their ideas and opinions to listeners through speaking. Brown (2000:255) defines that "speaking or conversation is collaborative forms as participants in this term are

engaged in a process of negotiation of meaning". The crucial thing in speaking is how to deliver the ideas well and make the listener understand of what the speaker says. They can get a job easily. The students can also increase their knowledge and self confidence if they can communicate with foreigners in English well. Bailey

(2003:48) says that “speaking is a process of producing verbal utterance which is done to deliver meaning”. It can be concluded that speaking is a process of sharing idea and opinion in oral language for communication in the society.

In order to be able to speak well, there are some components of speaking that should be realized by students and lecturer. According to Cohen (1994:266), there are some important components in speaking skill.

- (1) fluency; smooth flow of speech with the use of rhetorical devices to mark discourse pattern.
- (2) grammar; control of complex and simple construction.
- (3) pragmatic competence; use of conversation devices to get the message across and to compensate for gaps.
- (4) pronunciation; degree of influence of native-language phonological features.
- (5) sociolinguistic competence; use of appropriate social registers, cultural references, and idioms.
- (6) vocabulary; breadth of vocabulary and knowledge of vocabulary in field of interest or expertise.

In English syllabus of Language Center of UIN Suska Riau, speaking is one of the four English skills that are taught in integrated system. It means that teaching speaking cannot be separated from reading, writing and listening. All of the students from all faculties in UIN Suska must take this subject from the first semester up to third semester. The students’ learnt English through some topics written on their text book provided by language center.

Then, the lecturer taught the students by integrating four language skills. The lecturer asked the students to read text on the book and answer the questions related to text. Then they were asked to write summary about the text after reading it and report to the whole class.

The lecturer made group discussion in teaching. The lecturer divided the class into a group of 5 or 6, and then the lecturer gave them some tasks to be done. This technique did not apply well since the lecturer and students could not achieve the learning objectives. Not all students did the task during group discussion. The active students took over the discussion and task while the others students were silent and chit chat with the other.

Through that teaching and learning activities, the students' improvement in English did not increase well.

Based on students' score in oral examination of Syariah class A who were at the first semester, the percentage of the result in speaking test showed that 2 or the 8% got A, 9 or 36% got B, 13 or 52% got C, and 1 or 4% got D. From this percentage it can be concluded that the students' speaking skill was low.

Based on the researcher's observation during teaching and learning process, the researcher found that many students had low speaking skill. The weaknesses of the students' speaking skill are shown by the fact that many students used pauses when they spoke because they were lack of vocabulary. Besides, when the lecturer asked students to speak in front of classroom, many of them were less confident to express their ideas during speaking performance because they felt shy if they made mistake.

To solve this problem, the lecturer should think more about the way to teach the students in speaking skill. She should consider the strategy that could be applied to improve the students' speaking skill. Since it related to the components of teaching and learning process, the lecturer should select an appropriate strategy that was suitable with the students' condition. Davies (2000:85) explains "activities that develop the ability to participate effectively in interaction in classroom and outside classroom. Those activities are problem-solving discussion and debates, group projects, and role-

plays". Other activities in speaking are explained by Richard (1997:98). He explains that there are a number kinds of activities focus in speaking, such as giving feedback, conversation, pair work, role play, and group work and class activities.

Therefore, in this research, the researcher used Think-Pair-Share to overcome the students' problem in speaking skill. Kenny, et al (2005) stated "Think-Pair-Share helps students develop conceptual understanding of a topic". This strategy is developed by Lyman (1981) in Slavin (2005: 257). This strategy is an effective way to change learning circumstance in the classroom. It gives more time to the students to think, to respond, and to help each other. Students think through three distinct steps:

- a. Think: Students think independently about the question that has been posed, forming ideas of their own.
- b. Pair: Students are grouped in pairs to discuss their thoughts. This step allows students to articulate their ideas and to consider those of others.
- c. Share: Students pairs share their ideas with a larger group, such as the whole class. Often, students are more comfortable presenting ideas to a group with the support of a partner. In addition, students' ideas have become more refined through this three-step process.

Kenney, et al (2005) stated “it is a learning strategy to encourage student classroom participation. The superiority of this strategy is to optimize students’ participation to the others in the class”. Think-Pair-Share strategy encourages students to speak and motivate them to practice English in the classroom, even with limited vocabulary and basic level of speaking. Think-pair-Share strategy encourages students’ confident and reduce the pressure that the students feel.

Think-Pair-Share strategy also prepares the lecturer to facilitate their students to speak up. Ledlow (2001) stated the procedure of Think-Pair-Share:

after asking a question, tell students to think silently about their answers, give them anywhere from 10 seconds to five minutes to work individually. Then ask them to pair up with a partner to compare or discuss their responses. Finally, call randomly on a few students to summarize their discussion or give their answer. The random calls are important to ensure that students are individually accountable for participating.

In implementing Think-Pair-Strategy the lecturer would help the students to improve their speaking skill, because through Think-Pair-Share strategy the students become actively involved in thinking about the concepts presented in the lesson. It helps students to feel comfortable. Through this strategy, the students are motivated to speak more fluently and more active

in verbal communication. The students can learn and express themselves through spoken language and language expression.

Therefore, the purposes of this research are (1) to find out the extent to which Think-Pair-Share strategy can better improve students’ speaking skill at the second semester of Syariah class A of UIN Suska Riau and (2) To find out the factors that influence the changes of the students’ speaking skill at the second semester of Syariah class A of UIN Suska Riau by using Think-Pair-Share strategy.

## **METHOD**

This research was a classroom action research. According to Gay and Airisian (2000:593),

Action research is a type of practitioner’s practice; action implies doing or changing something. Practitioner research means that the research is done by practitioners about their own practice. Action research is a process in which individual or several lecturers collect evidence and make decisions about their own knowledge, performance, and effects in order to understand and improve them.

Based on the statement above, researcher concluded that classroom action research is one of the ways to solve the teaching problem in a form of action which is done in the class. Then, according to Zainil (2008:1) “classroom action research is a research that is conducted in the

classroom by a lecturer and a collaborator in order to improve teaching and learning process”.

This research was conducted to improve the students’ speaking skill by using think-pair-share strategy at the second semester of syariah class A at language center of UIN SUSKA Riau. This research was done in two cycles in cyclic process which involved four steps for one cycle. It was done by admitting the model that is suggested by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988:22-23). The cycling process involved in this research consisted of planning, action, observation and reflection. It was conducted in two cycles. Each cycles consisted of four meetings. Three meetings were for teaching and learning process and one meeting more was for the test. The researcher worked collaboratively with other English lecturer to get better result.

The location of the research was Language Center of State Islamic University Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau. It is located on Jl. K.H. Ahmad Dahlan No. Pekanbaru. The participants were second semester students in Syariah class A at language center of UIN Suska Riau. There were 25 students as the participants in this class, and researcher was their lecturer in teaching and learning process. In conducting this research, the researcher was also helped by a collaborator. The collaborator was the researcher’s colleague in teaching.

There were four instruments in this research; speaking performance test, observation checklist, field notes and interview. The data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively.

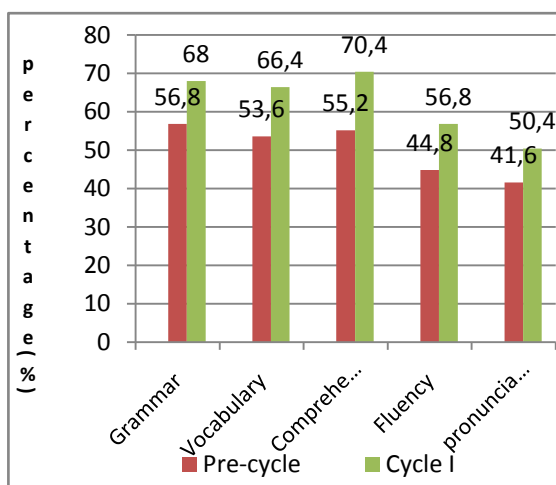
## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. The extent to which think-pair-share strategy improve the students’ speaking skill at the second semester of Syariah class A at language center UIN SUSKA Riau.**

At the beginning of the treatment in cycle one, the lecturer explained in detail about Think-Pair-Share strategy and the procedures of using this strategy. After that, she checked the students’ understanding about her explanation by asking questions. Then, the lecturer gave a topic to the students and asked them to think about the topic individually. After that, the lecturer divided them into pair, and asked them to make conversation related to the topic. During the students discuss in group, the lecturer lead students to analyze their conversation and assisted the students who have problem. Besides, the lecturer guided students to practice their conversation and help them on vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar and fluency and comprehension. Then, the students’ performed their conversation in front of the class.

To find out the extent of improvement on the students’ speaking skill, the percentage score of each indicator in cycle I was compared with the percentage score of each indicator before conducting this research which was regarded as the Pre-cycle. The improvement of students’ speaking skill could be seen by the result of the students’ speaking performance test in the following graph:

Diagram 1: The comparison of students’ speaking test result between Pre-cycle and cycle I



From the above diagram and the percentage score of the students' speaking test at cycle 1, it can be seen from the diagram that their percentage score in grammar increased 11.2 points, from 56.4 in the pre-cycle to 68 in cycle I. Their percentage score in vocabulary increased 12.8 points, from 53.6 to 66.4 at the end of cycle I. Their percentage score in comprehension increased 15.2 points, from 55.2 in pre-cycle to 70.4 at the end of cycle I. Their percentage score in fluency increased 12 points, from 44.8 in pre cycle to 56.8 in cycle I. Then, their percentage score in pronunciation increased 8.8 points. It was 41.6 as the starting point and improved to 50.4 at the end of cycle I. In conclusion, all indicators of the speaking skill showed improvements after the researcher use Think-Pair-Share at the end of cycle I.

However, among those indicators, there were two indicators that needed more improvement. The two indicators were pronunciation and fluency. It indicate that the students' speaking skill still low. It was also

referred by the data from observation checklist and field note, most of students could not pronounce the word very well, because they were still influenced by their mother tongue. It caused students still less on their pronunciation.

Furthermore, the researcher concluded that the cycle had to be continued in order to get the better result. She needed to revise the plan, efforts and activities for second cycle.

In second cycle, she had to increase the students' interest, the students' activeness and finally the students' ability in speaking skill through Think-Pair-Share strategy.

Based on the reflection done by them at the end of cycle 1 and the problems found in the previous cycle, the researcher and the collaborator did a revision. Some revisions were designed toward teaching and learning process to overcome the problems found in cycle 1. The revised plan focus more on problems and weaknesses found in the previous cycle that needed to be solve in this cycle 2.

In conducting this cycle, the researcher still helped by the collaborator. The researcher and the collaborator jointly kept observing the strengths and the weaknesses of the activities done by both the researcher and the students during the teaching and learning process. In cycle 2, the researcher focused her teaching procedure to improve students' pronunciation and fluency. Especially, to improve students' pronunciation the lecturer used E-dictionary program. Then, to improve students' fluency the lecturer gave them much time to practice and memorize about their

conversation before they were going to perform in front of the class.

In the second cycle, the teacher reviewed her explanation, and asked students to sit in their own group. Then as usual, the teacher gave a topic to the students and asked them to make a conversation related to the topic. During students discuss in their group, the teacher lead students to analyze their conversation and helped students who have problem. Besides, the teacher guided students to practice their conversation in and out of classroom and helped them on vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar and fluency and comprehension. Especially to improve students' pronunciation, the teacher checked and corrected the students' pronunciation by using E-dictionary program. In this case, the students paid attention to the correct pronunciation and then exercise to practice it.

After conducting cycle 2, it was found that there was an improvement of students' speaking skill that can be seen on diagram 2.

Diagram 2: Percentage of students' speaking test per indicator in cycle 2

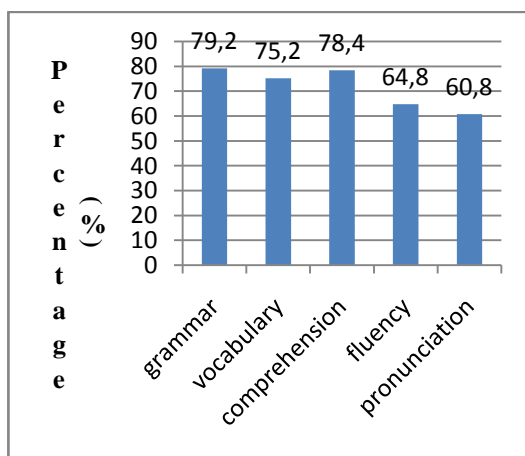


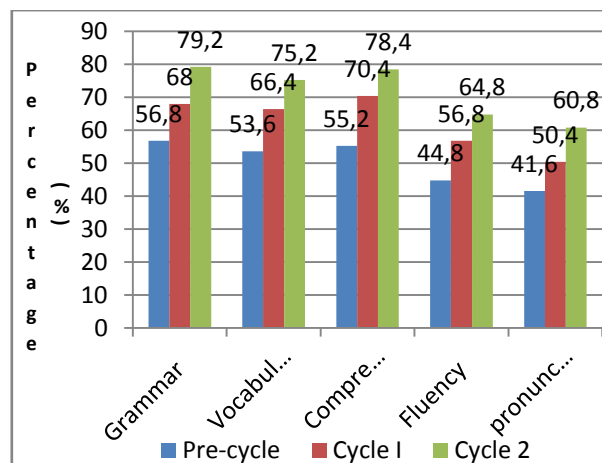
Diagram above shows the percentage score of the students' speaking skill per indicator in cycle 2. It was shown that, the students' score

increased. Their percentage score in grammar was 79.2. Their percentage score in vocabulary was 75.2. Their percentage score in comprehension was 78.4. Their percentage score in fluency was 64.8, and their percentage score in pronunciation was 60.8.

The results show that the use of Think-Pair-Share improves each indicator of students' speaking skill. Here, the total of the students' mean was 71.68 or they got B for their speaking competence. The students gave significant improvement on their speaking competence that made the researcher decide to stop the research in the second cycle because it has been proved from the data that filled Think-Pair-Share could give better improvement on the students' speaking skill.

Moreover, to know the improvement of the students' speaking skill, the percentage score of speaking test 2 on cycle 2 was compared with the percentage score of each indicator in pre-cycle test and test 1 on cycle 1. The extent of improvements for each indicator is displayed in the following diagram 3.

Diagram 3: The comparison of students' speaking test result between Pre-cycle, cycle I and cycle 2



From the above diagram and the percentage score of the students' speaking test at cycle 2, it shows the students' improvement on their speaking skill per indicators at the end of cycle 2. It can be inferred from the diagram that their percentage score in grammar increased 11.2 points, from 68 in the cycle I to 79.2 in cycle 2. Their percentage score in vocabulary increased 8.8 points, from 66.4 to 75.2 at the end of cycle 2. Then, their percentage score in comprehension increased 16 points, from 70.4 in cycle I to 78.4 at the end of cycle 2. Their percentage score in fluency increased 8 points, from 56.8 in cycle I to 64.8 in cycle 2. Their percentage score in pronunciation increased 10.4 points. It was 50.4 in cycle I and improved to 60.8 at the end of cycle 2.

From the result of the pre-test, test 1 on cycle 1 and test 2 on cycle 2, it showed that there was improvement in speaking skill indicators. The percentage score of students speaking test improved from cycle to cycle. The result of speaking test 1 was better than pre- test, and the result of speaking test 2 at the end of second cycle was better than test 1 at the end of first cycle.

## **2. The Factors that influenced the improvement of students' speaking skill by using Think-Pair-Share strategy.**

Using Think-Pair-Share as the strategy in solving the teaching and learning problems in speaking had proved that there were significant improvements on students speaking skill during two cycles. The improvement was concluded through the data gathered from the result of the

speaking tests, observation, and interview.

This research also revealed that there were some factors that influenced the improvement of students' speaking through Think-Pair-Share strategy. The factors involved the students' motivation, material, classroom activity.

### **a. Students' motivation**

The first factor that influenced the changes of students' speaking skill was students' motivation. It was found that the students were enthusiastic and interested in teaching and learning process. It indicated that they were motivated through the activities that brought through the strategy used.

The students' motivation in learning improved from one meeting to others. The field notes results noted that the students asked some question related to the lecturer's explanation. They participated in their pair discussion. It could be seen that they paid attention to the lecturer's explanation, responded while being asked, provided their ideas about the topic given, and perform their performance.

Those activities happened since they were motivated and interested in learning process. As a result, because of their high motivation in learning and teaching process, their speaking skill was better. In addition the result of interview also showed that Think-Pair-Share strategy was motivated students to speak in English. Several interview results showed that the students like to the topic discussed in the class, which encouraged them to be motivated in doing speaking. The results of



interview could be seen in the following:

*Lecturer: Are you really motivated in teaching English with this strategy?*

Student 8: yes, miss, this strategy makes us more confident to talk in front of the class

Student 12: yes, miss, because before we perform, we practice in our group first.

Student 15: it makes me interested in speak English miss.

Student 4: Yes, I am. Because we can help our friend and also myself, and we can share our idea together.

The results of interview above indicated that the students' motivation had crucial effect on their speaking skill improvement. If the students had better motivation, they would have better results on their speaking skill. It was supported by Kaniyem (2010) who revealed the use of cooperative learning model Think-Pair-Share strategy has a positive effect on improvement of students' learning interest in teaching process.

The second factor that influenced the changes of students' speaking skill was the materials used during the teaching. The materials were interesting to be used in teaching speaking skill. The class became comfortable and the students feel confident where the lecturer motivated them to communicate each other which an interesting material.

From their interviewed result also showed that materials provided on the research were clearly to be understood. The interview results revealed that material presented was

really interesting for the students. By having interesting materials, the students had willingness to have discussion and used English in speaking class. This finding is supported by Ur (2009:79) "learners are eager to speak because they are interested in the topic and had something new to say about it". The interview result can be seen in the following:

*Lecturer: What do you think about the material used in this activity?*

Student 9: The materials were good and interesting

Student 20: All the material interesting. It really helpful in helping us to speak more in the classroom.

Student 19: Yes, it is interesting, Miss. The material is close to my environment.

*Lecturer: Is teaching material difficult for you to understand?*

Student 12: no, miss, the materials were easy to understand and had lot of variation.

Student 15: No, it is not difficult, Miss. I feel enjoy to learn.

The last factor that influenced the improvement of students' speaking skill was the classroom activities. The variation activities done by the researcher could lead the students to become more active in the classroom. They did not feel bored during the teaching and learning process. The variations of activities also made the classroom atmosphere more effective in improving the students' ability in speaking skill.

Using pair work as one of classroom activity for teaching speaking influence the improvement of the students' speaking skill. It was better to overcome the students' difficulty in creating their own comprehension. Through pair work, the students could share their knowledge and idea in creating their own conversation. Then, they could speak in front of the class. The result of interview could be seen in the following.

*Lecturer: What do you think about classroom activity?*

Student 20: I like the activity, Miss. It is really fun to do the task in group

Student 15: In group we not only work alone, but we must be work together, to finish our assignment.

Student 10: Working with group was really enjoyable. We can practice the conversation together

Student 3: The activities make me happy and enjoy speaking.

Through group activities, the students got much opportunity to speak and challenging to enable themselves to practice English. From their activity showed that they participated actively during the teaching and learning process. It made them speak more in the classroom and got a lot of practices from their conversation. It is supported by Bailey (2003:49). He states "one of the principles for teaching speaking is; by designing classroom activities that involved guidance and practice in conversation". For this reason, the researcher used pair work as well as

group work activity to explore the students' speaking skill.

Using pair work as one of classroom activity for teaching speaking influence the improvement of the students' speaking skill. Through pair work, the students can share their knowledge and idea in creating their own conversation. It was an effective strategy used to assist students in thinking more deeply, as well as allow students opportunity to practice in communicating their thoughts and ideas with pair. Atkinson (2009) state that Think-Pair-Share is helpful because its structures of discussion. Students follow all process because each must report to a partner and then partners must report to the class.

The result of this research showed that the implementation of Think-Pair-Share strategy in teaching learning of speaking was effective in improving the students' speaking skill itself. Moreover, students were active and creative in the classroom especially in term of sharing ideas. And then, the students' opinions toward the implementation of Think-Pair-Share strategy in speaking skill were positive too.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings of the research, it can be concluded that Think-Pair-Share strategy improved students' speaking skill at the at the second semester students of Syariah class A at Language Center of UIN Suska Riau Pekanbaru. As follows:

1. The students' speaking skill is better improved through Think-Pair-Share strategy. It is proved that Think-

Pair-Share can be used as the media to explore the students' speaking skill, because it gives the students such a fun learning atmosphere and allows the students to have the language experience. As the result, the students are motivated and stimulated to learn in order to speak English well and they can improve their speaking skill eventually.

2. The factors that influence the changes of students' speaking skill at the second semester students of Syariah class A at Language Center of UIN Suska Riau in this research as in the following:

First, think-pair-share has a positive impact on students' motivation. The students are more interested by applying this strategy. It was seen through the students' involvement in every step of learning process by using think pair share strategy.

Second, the use of appropriate and interesting materials is another factor that gives valuable contribution to the successful application of think-pair-share. The students become more enthusiastic when they were given interesting materials. The students speak more with their friends because of the materials given by the lecturer are interesting.

Third, classroom activity is the last important factor that supports the teaching and learning process by using think-pair-share. The various activities done in the class can lead the students to be more active in speaking. They don't feel bored during the teaching and learning process and they enjoy studying in the class. Pair work and engage in discussion make the students

feel free to practice and share their opinion with their friends.

For this reason, the researcher became active and creative to find out the appropriate teaching media to solve their students' problems in their classroom.

## **SUGGESTION**

Based on the findings and the discussion of this research, some suggestions can be given as the followings:

1. It is suggested to other lecturer, the implementation of Think-Pair-Share strategy is possible to deal with teaching and learning problems, particularly in improving the students' speaking skill.
2. Other researchers as the classroom lecturers may give the students enough guidance and be a good model to motivate and to stimulate them to speak actively and to construct their self confident in practicing English.
3. It is expected that further researcher may conduct action research at different skills and the level of students, at different places and situation by implementing the other strategy suitable with their class condition and their students' need.

**Note: This Article was written from the writer's thesis at Pasca Sarjana of Padang State University guided by Prof. Dr. M. Zaim, M. Hum and Dr. Desmawati Radjab, M.Pd**

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