

Students' Perceptions of the Use of YouTube as A Digital Platform in Vocabulary Mastery

**Persepsi Mahasiswa terhadap Penggunaan YouTube
sebagai Platform Digital dalam Penguasaan Kosakata**

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ABSTRACT

More studies on YouTube videos used to improve students' English vocabulary need to be conducted, as previous studies on YouTube mostly focused on improving students' English speaking skills. This survey study investigated how students felt about using YouTube as a digital platform for English vocabulary mastery. It involved 36 students of the English Department of Universitas Malang, East Java, Indonesia. The researcher collected data by distributing an online questionnaire to the students of the 2021 cohort. Having done the Likert scale analysis, the researchers found that students had positive perceptions of using YouTube, as the videos were enjoyable and helpful to improve their vocabulary mastery. Students also found that watching YouTube helped them increase the number of new vocabulary items they learned and improved their motivation in learning English. Based on the research results, it is recommended that English teachers and students select more suitable YouTube videos from channels made by professional native speakers of English, for example, BBC Learning English, EnglishClass101, and Learn English with Bob the Canadian. Moreover, since this study was solely based on data from a questionnaire, it is recommended that future researchers consider adding interviews and/or focus group discussions as additional instruments. In so doing, they will obtain more in-depth findings and discussions on the role of YouTube in improving students' English competence.

Keywords: learning media, perceptions, videos, vocabulary mastery, YouTube

INTISARI

Penelitian ini mengkaji strategi ketidaksopanan dalam permainan *Devil May Cry 3: Dante's Awakening*, khususnya Mission 13, menggunakan kerangka Culpeper (1996, 2005, 2011). Dari 48 tuturan tidak sopan yang dianalisis secara kualitatif, strategi sarkastik/pura-pura paling dominan (43,75%), disusul ketidaksopanan negatif (22,92%), terang-terangan (18,75%), positif (12,5%), dan menahan kesopanan (2,08%). Tuturan ini membangun konflik dan identitas karakter, tampak dari perlawan Dante, agresi Vergil, dan ejekan Jester. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ketidaksopanan menjadi alat naratif untuk menciptakan ketegangan, konflik kekuasaan, serta keterlibatan emosional pemain. Temuan ini mengisi celah kajian media pragma-interaktif dengan menyoroti fungsi ganda kekasaran sebagai pendorong konflik, pengembangan karakter, dan keterlibatan pemain dalam wacana digital. Kajian ini merekomendasikan perlunya eksplorasi lebih dalam terhadap konstruksi teks interaktif dalam media digital.

Kata kunci: media pembelajaran, persepsi, video, penguasaan kosakata, YouTube

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most significant aspects of learning English is expanding vocabulary mastery. People can communicate their ideas, emotions, feelings, and desires with sufficient vocabulary. Bouville (2008) states that it is easier for people to explain themselves in English if they have enough English words to use. Vocabulary means words with meaning, and the function of language is learned to become a part of people's understanding when reading or writing something. Wegerif (2015) states that thought is impossible to express without words. It means words are essential for communication, learning, and thinking. Words are a part of vocabulary that allows us to say, hear, read, and write almost anything. Consequently, acquiring vocabulary is crucial for someone who wishes to master English.

Vocabulary is a necessary aspect of English learning and requires knowledge of many parts. It refers to the number of words, lists, and meanings in a language that someone must know and use in communication (Hornbyin et al., 2020). In English learning, most students usually need assistance understanding and expressing their ideas due to their limited vocabulary. As a result, vocabulary is recognised as a crucial component in English language mastery. With limited vocabulary, expressing thoughts in oral or written forms will be challenging for students (Fatimah & Masduqi, 2021; Masduqi & Fatimah, 2022; Masduqi, Fatimah, & Subiyanto, 2024).

Juhana (2014) argues that most learners quickly find English vocabulary learning dull. Teachers need to use suitable methods, strategies, techniques, and materials to stimulate students' interest in learning English vocabulary, especially when teaching young learners. Furthermore, competent teachers will only be effective if they choose an appropriate method, and the best strategy will only be effective if the teachers know how to use it (Lelawati et al., 2018; Rahmadhani, 2015). One of the effective ways to increase students' vocabulary mastery is by using suitable videos on *YouTube*.

Several studies have investigated the use and application of *YouTube* in the teaching-learning process of English. Some of them were related to the use of *YouTube* videos, as they provide students with learning materials that are creative and enjoyable. The videos significantly impacted their English as they are easy to access, entertaining, and rich in various cultures and languages. Putri et al. (2018) stated that English learners at Indonesian universities had favourable opinions toward using *YouTube* regarding its cognitive, emotional, and conative components as well as how it could facilitate their English skills. Meanwhile, Almurashi (2016) said that learning English through *YouTube* positively improved the participants' English skills and changed the learning environment for the better. In another study, Kabooha and Elyas (2015) investigated the impact of using *YouTube* video clips during reading activities in Saudi EFL classes. They found that the students obtained positive results from the use of *YouTube* in facilitating their learning by choosing suitable, enjoyable content that potentially increased their motivation to study English. In Medoukali's (2015) study, watching *YouTube* videos helped students improve their reading comprehension abilities.

Reviewing the previous studies above, the writers decided to investigate on a more personal level, focusing on students' perceptions of how *YouTube* videos help students master English vocabulary. Here, the writers believe that their perceptions of *YouTube* as a medium of learning to increase English vocabulary mastery vary and are necessary to investigate. The researchers are also interested in raising this issue, as nowadays, most students use smartphones with an internet connection to access various websites and social media. Instead of doing useless activities, through this study, they are involved and encouraged to explore the advantages of a social media platform with educational and entertaining channels like *YouTube* in order to improve their English competence, especially their vocabulary mastery. Therefore, the research problem in this study is "What are students' perceptions of the use of *YouTube* as a digital platform to improve their English vocabulary mastery?"

METHODS

In this study, the researchers used a survey research design with a descriptive quantitative approach. According to Creswell (2014), a survey research design is the quantitative research practice in which researchers conduct surveys on samples or entire populations to describe people's attitudes, opinions, behaviours, or characteristics. Furthermore, Fraenkel and Wallen (1993) state that the descriptive method explains, analyses, and classifies test interviews and sends out questionnaires, observations, and information in various ways.

The population of this research was 120 students of the 2021 academic year of the English Language Education (ELE) Study Program at Universitas Malang, East Java, Indonesia. Accordingly, a sampling technique was used to select the participants. Sugiyono (2017) states that purposive sampling is a technique in which the researcher considers specific factors when choosing a sample. Here, the researchers selected 120 students who met the following criteria:

1. Students of English Language Education (ELE) from the academic year 2021.
2. Students who have YouTube accounts.
3. Students who regularly use YouTube.
4. Students who use YouTube to learn English, particularly vocabulary.

As the total population in this study is 120 students, the researchers followed Arikunto's theory (2013) that recommends taking a sample of 10%-30% or more if the total population is more than 100. Accordingly, the researchers selected 30% of the population in this study for a total sample of 36 students.

To obtain data from the selected respondents, the researchers used an online questionnaire in Google Forms. The questionnaire was adapted from the studies of Slavin (1995) and Nelson-Smith (2008). The researchers took several questions from Slavin (1995) about the students' opinions about the use of YouTube and student motivation for using YouTube. Then, the researchers also picked several questions from Nelson-Smith (2008) about the content of students' perceptions concerning YouTube in their vocabulary skill development. The questionnaire with both types of questions then needed to be validated by an ELT expert at the university.

In the validation process, the first researcher made and submitted a blueprint for the questionnaire and a validation sheet to the validator. The blueprint of the questionnaire skeleton contained 20 questions. After the questionnaire was approved, the first researcher distributed the research consent and questionnaire to the respondents with a brief explanation of the research objectives and procedures for filling out the questionnaire.

The questionnaire used a Likert scale that gave four options to the respondents, expressing how much they agreed or disagreed with the statements provided. The perception has a scale of 4-3-2-1. Scale 4 shows a positive opinion of the item description with a score of 4 (strongly agree), scale 3 shows a positive view of the item (agree), scale 2 demonstrates a negative view of the item (disagree), and scale 1 indicates a negative idea of the item description (strongly disagree).

After collecting the data from the participants, the data was aggregated into a computer for statistical analysis (Altman et al., 1985). Here, the researchers carried out several procedural steps. First, the researchers collected information from the questionnaires and then performed a percentage analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaires using Google Forms. Afterwards, the data collected in the form of Google was elaborated into paragraphs. The Likert scale was used to classify students' responses into positive and negative categories. If the student agreed with the statements in the questionnaire, the classification became positive. On the other hand, if a student disagreed with a statement in the questionnaire, it was changed to a negative category.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the researchers present the study results based on the students' response patterns to the questionnaire items. After presenting the results in a table, the researchers discussed the findings in relation to previous studies/theories that were relevant to the current study.

1) YouTube as a Medium to Improve Vocabulary Mastery

Students responded positively to the use of YouTube to improve their English vocabulary mastery. They perceived the usefulness of YouTube in three aspects: being authentic vocabulary materials, improving vocabulary mastery, and motivating them to practice their vocabulary. Therefore, these three aspects supported the improvement of students' vocabulary. This is discussed further in the following sections.

Table 1. The Students' Perceptions of YouTube as a Medium to Improve Vocabulary Mastery

Items	Statements	1	2	3	4
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
frequency/percentage					
1	YouTube is an effective medium to improve my vocabulary skills	0 0.0%	1 2.8%	18 50%	17 47.2%
2	YouTube is an interesting medium to use in learning vocabulary	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	18 50%	18 50%
3	YouTube improves my ability to think critically by giving me more vocabulary	0 0.0%	1 2.8%	22 61.1%	13 36.1%
4	Learning vocabulary using YouTube is very efficient	0 0.0%	1 2.8%	25 69.4%	10 27.8%

According to the first claim, YouTube is an effective medium for improving my vocabulary skills. 50% of students agreed with the statement, and 47.2% strongly agreed. While 0% of students strongly disagreed with the statement, 2.8% disagreed. It indicates that the students thought utilising YouTube to improve their vocabulary was beneficial.

According to the second claim, YouTube is an interesting medium to learn vocabulary. 50% of students either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Meanwhile, 0% of students disagree with the statement, and 0% strongly disagree. Students can choose the vocabulary learning videos that are best for them by watching various engaging films on YouTube, despite the visuals or techniques used.

In the third statement, YouTube improves my ability to think critically by giving me more knowledge, so that my vocabulary increases. If the vocabulary increases, it will be easy to express thoughts. 61.1% of students agreed, and 36.1% of students strongly agreed. While 0% of students strongly disagreed with the statement, 2.8% disagreed. Students agree that YouTube helps improve critical thinking by providing a more meaningful and beneficial vocabulary.

The last statement is about learning vocabulary using YouTube, which is very efficient. According to the data in the table, 27.8% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement, and 69.4% agreed. 2.8% of the students disagreed with the statement, while 0% of the students said they strongly disagreed. It is indicated because learning vocabulary through YouTube is a very effective method.

Based on the results above, the percentage of agreement with all four statements in Table 3.1 is higher than the percentage of disagreement. With all the statements above stating that they agree more than disagree, it indicates that YouTube influences increasing vocabulary. YouTube is an effective and efficient medium for increasing vocabulary. In addition, statement 4 (69.4%) has the highest agreement rate. Most respondents in this study agree that YouTube is an efficient medium for learning vocabulary. Similarly, According to Berk (2009), YouTube videos can suit many learning styles, including linguistic, visual, musical, and emotional intelligence, and gain students' attention.

Watching videos helps the students actively respond to both sides of the brain, aiding in growing and increasing their understanding. From these statements, we now know that using YouTube videos can help students improve their vocabulary knowledge because the pictures in the video make it easier to understand every word. Because of this, YouTube media is quite effective for learning. Additionally, Khalid and Muhammad (2012) backed up these findings by claiming that YouTube learning is more successful than courses based on textbooks in helping learners solve their challenges, so that student learning can become more efficient.

2) YouTube in Developing Vocabulary Skills

Here, the students had positive responses on the use of YouTube in relation to their English vocabulary mastery.

Table 2. The Students' Perceptions of YouTube to Master English Vocabulary

Items	Statements	1	2	3	4
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
frequency/percentage					
5	YouTube videos increase the number of new words you learn	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	13 36.1%	23 63.9%
6	YouTube improves my ability to understand and evaluate my vocabulary	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	22 61.1%	14 38.9%
7	YouTube videos help you guess the meaning of unfamiliar words	1 2.8%	1 2.8%	20 55.6%	14 38.9%
8	YouTube can develop knowledge with known vocabulary	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	21 58.3%	15 41.7%
9	YouTube provides opportunities for the intentional learning of vocabulary	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	24 66.7%	12 33.3%
10	Vocabulary from YouTube allows me to express my ideas clearly and openly	0 0.0%	2 5.6%	19 52.8%	15 41.7%
11	YouTube provided opportunities for deepening my word knowledge	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	22 61.1%	14 38.9%

12	Repeated exposure provided by YouTube helps me learn vocabulary better	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	22 61.1%	14 38.9%
13	YouTube can help me to start learning vocabulary	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	23 63.9%	13 36.1%
14	YouTube can help me to be more careful about using proper spelling and vocabulary	0 0.0%	1 2.8%	20 55.6%	15 41.7%
15	YouTube helps me think and be creative through sufficient vocabulary	0 0.0%	1 2.8%	24 66.7%	11 30.6%
16	YouTube can encourage me as a student with a low interest in vocabulary	1 2.8%	0 0.0%	20 55.6%	15 41.7%

The students' reactions to using YouTube to help them increase their vocabulary skills are shown in Table 3.2. The data presented showed that for statement 5, 36.1% and 63.9% of students agreed and strongly agreed. Then, no one stated that they disagreed or strongly disagreed. It is shown that students feel helped by the presence of YouTube to enhance their vocabulary knowledge. The YouTube videos cover various topics, including education, culture, economy, business, and lifestyle. It motivates students to listen to multiple sources, especially videos from YouTube, to learn new words frequently.

The sixth statement aims to determine whether YouTube can improve students' ability to understand and evaluate their vocabulary. 61.1% of students agreed, and 38.9% strongly agreed with the statement. Meanwhile, 0% of students disagree and strongly disagree with the statement. Using YouTube, learners can learn more about and evaluate the vocabulary they have learned.

The seventh statement is to find out whether YouTube videos help students understand the meaning of unfamiliar words. According to the survey, 55.6% of respondents agreed, and 38.9% of respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. However, 2.8% of students disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. Students will be able to guess terms unfamiliar to them when watching a brief video on YouTube by observing the body language of the person in the video or the plot.

According to the eighth statement, YouTube can develop knowledge with known vocabulary. 41.7% of students strongly agree with this statement, while 58.3% of students agree. There were no students who disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. YouTube can help develop knowledge with known vocabulary by allowing learners to listen to native speakers and practice their listening skills.

In the ninth statement, YouTube provides opportunities for intentional vocabulary learning. 33.3% of students strongly agreed with this statement, while more than half of the students, as much as 66.7%, agreed. Meanwhile, no students disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. YouTube provides opportunities for the intentional learning of vocabulary because it is a platform that offers a wide range of videos on various topics. Watching videos on YouTube can help learners improve their vocabulary by exposing them to new words and phrases in context.

The tenth statement determines whether vocabulary from YouTube allows students to express their ideas clearly and openly. According to the questionnaire results, 41.7% strongly

agreed, and 52.8% agreed with this statement. However, 5.6% indicated that they did not agree, and no one stated that they strongly disagreed with this statement. YouTube is a platform that allows people to share their ideas and opinions with the world. It provides a space for people to express themselves and connect with others who share similar interests. According to Forbes (2020), video allows you to combine words with a tone of voice and body language, which makes it easier to convey your message and connect with your audience.

The eleventh statement aims to determine whether YouTube provided opportunities to deepen students' word knowledge. According to the survey, 61.1% agreed, and 38.9% of respondents strongly agreed that the statement was true. No one showed disagreement or strong disagreement with the statement. It means YouTube is a great platform for learning new things. It provides a wide range of educational content to help students deepen their knowledge of various topics, including vocabulary. Students can find many channels that focus on teaching new words and informative videos that can help them improve their vocabulary and comprehension skills.

The twelfth statement is intended to determine whether the repeated exposure provided by YouTube helps students learn vocabulary better. According to the survey, 61.1% agreed, and 38.9% of respondents strongly agreed that the statement was correct. Meanwhile, no one disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Repeated exposure to a topic can help us learn better because people who watched a video repeatedly could recall more information than those who watched it only once. In addition, the spacing effect is another way to improve learning and maximise retention. The most effective technique to successfully establish memory in the brain is repeated exposure to information at well-planned times.

The thirteenth statement is about how YouTube can help students learn vocabulary. 36.1% of students strongly agreed with the statement; 66.7% of students agreed. Meanwhile, 0% of students disagreed, and 0% strongly disagreed with the statement. It is because, on YouTube, there is access to various learning videos, so students can choose according to their interests.

The fourteenth statement is that YouTube can help students be more careful about using proper spelling and vocabulary. The questionnaire shows that 41.7% strongly agreed, and 55.6% agreed. However, 2.8% stated they disagreed, and nobody said they strongly disagreed with the statement. YouTube can help students improve their spelling by providing many videos to help them learn and remember spelling. Students can find videos that teach them how to spell specific words, videos that provide tips and tricks for improving their spelling, and videos that offer spelling games and quizzes to help them practice their skills.

The fifteenth statement is intended to determine whether YouTube helps students think and be creative through sufficient vocabulary. Most students (66.7%) agreed with the statement, including 30.6% who strongly agreed. While 0% of students strongly disagreed with the statement, 2.8% disagreed. Watching videos on YouTube can help students learn complex concepts and gain new vocabulary and punctuation skills because there are many opportunities to be had through YouTube.

The last statement aims to discover how YouTube can encourage students with low vocabulary interest. According to the survey, 55.6% of respondents agreed, and 41.7% strongly agreed with this statement. However, no one disagreed; only 2.8% said they strongly disagreed. YouTube can be an excellent resource for students who want to improve their vocabulary. For students not interested in learning a foreign language, many interesting films on YouTube can help in word learning and vocabulary development.

The results above show the percentage of agreement with all statements in Table 3.2 regarding vocabulary skill development. YouTube has various impacts, such as increasing vocabulary, learning unknown languages, helping to improve thinking skills, and increasing learning motivation. Similarly, Kabooha and Elyas (2018) support this research finding by

stating that most students found that YouTube can enhance their comprehension of English vocabulary mastery. Tarantino (2011) confirms the same finding. Furthermore, YouTube gives students access to information and education worldwide, allowing them to communicate meaningfully in the target language.

In addition, YouTube is a useful tool for learning vocabulary because it is quick to access, motivating, cosy, and exciting. Another effective tool for helping students learn vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency is YouTube. Another study by Alwehaibi (2013) indicates that students are motivated to study because of the exciting and interesting environment created using videos in the classroom. Furthermore, students find several benefits from using YouTube to enhance their vocabulary abilities and have a positive view of YouTube's contribution to the growth of vocabulary skills. According to Alimemaj (2010), YouTube directly motivates and deeply inspires students because it is a technology that works with current popular culture.

3) Motivation for Using YouTube to Improve Vocabulary

Table 3. The Students' Perceptions on The Motivation of Using YouTube to Improve Vocabulary

Items	Statements	1	2	3	4
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
frequency/percentage					
17	I feel motivated to use YouTube to learn vocabulary	0 0.0%	1 2.8%	19 52.8%	16 44.4%
18	I feel comfortable sharing my ideas on learning vocabulary using YouTube	0 0.0%	2 5.6%	18 50%	16 44.4%
19	I feel too shy to speak English because of my vocabulary	8 22.2%	18 50%	7 19.4%	3 8.3%
20	I do not feel confident expressing my opinion by using my vocabulary	14 38.9%	11 30.6%	6 16.7%	5 13.9%

The students' responses to the argument for using YouTube to increase vocabulary are shown in Table 3.3. In statement 17, it was apparent from the data that 52.8% and 44.4% of students agreed and strongly agreed with the statement. Then, nobody expressed disagreement or strong disagreement. The fact that students become excited about studying in class by using YouTube proves that using YouTube material in teaching vocabulary to students is very participatory.

The eighteenth claim is about how comfortable it is to share students' opinions about learning vocabulary using YouTube. According to the survey, 50.8% of respondents agreed, and 44.6% strongly agreed with this statement. However, 5.6% stated they disagreed, and nobody said they strongly disagreed with the statement. There are many reasons why people are comfortable sharing their ideas on learning vocabulary using YouTube. One reason is that YouTube is a free platform that anyone with an internet connection can access. Another reason is that YouTube provides various videos on various topics, including vocabulary learning. Additionally, YouTube videos can be paused, rewound, and replayed as many times as needed, which makes it easier for learners to understand and remember new words.

The nineteenth statement aims to determine whether students are shy about speaking English because of their vocabulary. According to the survey, 8.3% of respondents strongly agreed, and 19.4% agreed with this statement. 22.2% strongly disagreed with the statement, while 50% said they disagreed. It suggests that the students do not support the statement. Because of their vocabulary, most students are not shy about speaking English. It is because using YouTube improved students' capacity for learning new words, and the participants had positive opinions about using YouTube in their courses.

The last statement aims to find out whether students do not feel confident expressing their opinions in using their vocabulary. 16.7% of students agreed, and 13.9% of students agreed very strongly. In contrast, 30.6% of students disagree with the statement, and 38.9% strongly disagree. Some learners did not agree with this statement, which means they felt confident expressing their opinions using vocabulary. Because there are various learning resources, YouTube can be a great resource for learning a new language and improving students' confidence in expressing their opinions.

From the results above, the percentage of agreement with the seventeenth and eighteenth statements in Table 3.3 is more significant than the percentage of disagreement. Students are inspired to use YouTube to learn vocabulary for a variety of reasons. One of the reasons is that YouTube provides a more engaging and interactive learning experience for students. Students can watch videos that are specifically designed to teach vocabulary in a fun and interesting way. It can help students stay motivated and interested in learning new words and phrases. According to a study by Mokodompit et al. (2021), students feel comfortable sharing their thoughts on vocabulary acquisition on YouTube since it is an interactive platform that helps them learn at their own pace and in their own time. The study also found that students are more motivated to know when to use technology in the classroom. Deng and Yuen (2011) support this finding by arguing that YouTube is an internet-based, fully educational tool that encourages students to study because of the videos and pictures it provides to users.

In addition, the learners might feel more confident speaking English with more vocabulary because they can express themselves more efficiently and accurately. This finding is also supported by a research paper by Juhana (2012); the fear of making mistakes, being dismissed, and being judged are some things that lower one's self-confidence. However, when students have a good grasp of vocabulary, they feel more confident in expressing their opinions.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the researchers found that most students used YouTube as a digital platform to improve their vocabulary mastery. The survey results show that the students had positive perceptions of using YouTube as the videos were enjoyable and helpful to improve their vocabulary mastery. Moreover, students found that watching YouTube helped them increase the number of new vocabulary items they learned and improve their motivation in learning English.

The researchers offer recommendations for students, teachers, and future researchers. First, students need to be more selective in choosing YouTube videos to improve their English vocabulary by subscribing to relevant YouTube channels, especially those created by native speakers of English, which discuss English language education, for example, BBC Learning English, EnglishClass101, and Learn English with Bob the Canadian. Moreover, the teachers also need to choose YouTube videos of English teaching and learning created by professional teachers. Teachers will get more suitable materials to assist their students in choosing the best learning resources, especially for studying English vocabulary. At last, since the study only used a questionnaire as the sole research instrument, it is recommended that future researchers consider adding interviews and/or focus group discussions as additional instruments. In so

doing, future researchers will potentially obtain more in-depth findings and discussions on the role of YouTube in improving students' English competence.

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