A CONTRASTIVE AND ERROR ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH EXPRESSIONS CORRECTED BY MR. JOHN ON INSTAGRAM

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates grammatical errors found in English expressions produced by Indonesian learners and corrected by Mr. John on Instagram through the combined perspectives of Contrastive Analysis (CA) and Error Analysis (EA). The study aims to identify the types of grammatical errors, classify them, and explain their underlying causes. Employing a qualitative descriptive design, the research analyzed fifteen authentic English expressions collected from Mr. John's Instagram account (@mr.johnhid). The data were examined by identifying error categories and determining whether they resulted from interlingual transfer or intralingual transfer. The findings reveal that Indonesian learners frequently experience difficulties in verb complementation, prepositions, auxiliary verbs, capitalization, punctuation, subject–verb agreement, copula usage, noun formation, lexical collocation, and word order. Verb complementation errors emerged as the most dominant category (26.7%), followed by preposition errors (20%), while auxiliary verb errors and mechanical errors each accounted for 13.3% of the total data. The analysis indicates that these errors are primarily influenced by structural differences between Indonesian and English as well as learners' overgeneralization of English grammatical rules. The study also demonstrates that Instagram provides authentic learner language data that can enrich linguistic research and support English language teaching. The integration of Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis offers a comprehensive framework for understanding grammatical difficulties experienced by Indonesian EFL learners in digital communication contexts.

Keywords: Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis, Indonesian EFL Learners, Grammatical Errors, Instagram

A. Introduction

English has become the most widely used international language and functions as a global lingua franca in communication across different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The majority of English users worldwide are non-native speakers who use the language primarily to communicate with other non-native speakers rather than with native speakers. This phenomenon has shifted the focus of English language learning from strict adherence to

native-speaker norms toward intelligibility, communicative effectiveness, and intercultural competence (Sifakis, 2019). In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language (EFL), and despite not serving as an official means of communication in daily life, exposure to English has increased significantly through globalization, digital media, and social networking platforms.

The rapid development of technology has transformed social media into an important environment for informal language learning. Previous studies have demonstrated that social media platforms provide learners with authentic linguistic input and opportunities for interaction beyond formal classroom settings (Bin-Hady & Al-Tamimi, 2021). Among various platforms, Instagram has emerged as one of the most popular spaces for language learning because of its multimodal features, including captions, comments, short videos, and interactive discussions. These features enable users to engage with English in authentic communicative contexts while simultaneously exposing them to a wide range of linguistic forms (Hikmah et al., 2024; Ikhsan & Fetriani, 2023). However, the informal nature of social media communication often encourages spontaneous language production, which may contain numerous grammatical inaccuracies and non-standard forms (Han, 2022).

One notable phenomenon on Instagram is the emergence of educational content creators who publicly correct English expressions submitted by their followers. These accounts function as informal learning spaces where language learners receive corrective feedback outside traditional educational settings. One of these creators is Mr. John, who regularly posts English expressions written by Indonesian users and provides corrected versions accompanied by grammatical explanations. Such corrective content generates a naturally occurring corpus consisting of learners' original utterances and expert revisions. Unlike data collected through classroom assignments, examinations, or elicited writing tasks, these expressions represent authentic language use produced in spontaneous communicative situations. Consequently, they offer valuable insights into the actual grammatical difficulties experienced

by Indonesian learners of English in digital environments.

The investigation of learner errors has long occupied a central position in second language acquisition research. According to Corder (1967), learner errors should not merely be regarded as signs of failure but as evidence of an active language learning process. Errors reveal how learners construct and internalize linguistic rules while developing their interlanguage system. This perspective gave rise to Error Analysis (EA), an approach that focuses on identifying, classifying, and explaining errors made by second-language learners. Through systematic analysis, researchers can uncover patterns of learner difficulties and identify the factors contributing to those errors (Ebeling & Ebeling, 2020). Error Analysis has therefore become one of the most influential frameworks in applied linguistics because it provides empirical evidence regarding learners' linguistic development and the challenges they encounter when acquiring a target language.

In addition to Error Analysis, Contrastive Analysis (CA) offers another important theoretical framework for examining learner language. Contrastive Analysis is based on the assumption that many second-language learning difficulties arise from structural differences between learners' first language and the target language (Lado, 1957). By comparing linguistic features across languages, researchers can predict areas of potential difficulty and explain why certain errors occur. Indonesian and English differ substantially in several grammatical aspects, including tense marking, auxiliary usage, subject-verb agreement, copula constructions, and prepositional systems. Since Indonesian grammar does not require tense inflections or auxiliary support in the same way as English, Indonesian learners frequently transfer native-language structures into English production. As a result, errors such as incorrect auxiliary usage, omission of copulas, inappropriate verb forms, and non-standard sentence structures are commonly observed among Indonesian EFL learners (Tandiana, 2015; Ismahani et al., 2025).

Although Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis are theoretically distinct, they are highly complementary. Contrastive Analysis

predicts areas of linguistic difficulty based on differences between languages, whereas Error Analysis examines actual learner errors that occur in language use (Rustipa, 2011). The integration of these approaches provides a more comprehensive understanding of learner language because it enables researchers not only to identify errors but also to explain their underlying causes. Through this combined framework, grammatical errors can be interpreted as manifestations of both interlingual factors, such as first-language transfer, and intralingual factors, such as overgeneralization and incomplete rule acquisition (Richards, 1971).

Numerous studies have applied Error Analysis and Contrastive Analysis to investigate English learning among Indonesian students. Previous research has identified recurrent difficulties involving tense usage, vocabulary, pronunciation, verb patterns, and grammatical structures, with first-language interference often emerging as a major contributing factor (Ismahani et al., 2025). Other studies have emphasized the importance of integrating Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis to obtain a more complete explanation of learner difficulties (Rustipa, 2011). Similarly, research conducted by Rachman et al. (2019) highlighted the significance of grammatical error analysis in understanding challenges faced by English language learners. However, most of these studies have relied on data collected from formal educational contexts, such as student essays, academic writing assignments, translation tasks, examinations, and classroom activities (Maolida & Hidayat, 2021; Shiddiq et al., 2023).

Despite growing interest in social media as a language learning environment, relatively few studies have examined authentic learner language produced on digital platforms. Existing research on Instagram and English learning has primarily focused on learners' perceptions, motivation, attitudes, and learning experiences rather than on the linguistic characteristics of the language they actually produce (Ikhsan & Fetriani, 2023; Hikmah et al., 2024). Furthermore, studies investigating educational influencers and grammar-correction accounts have largely explored their pedagogical value instead of

analyzing the grammatical errors embedded within the content they correct. Consequently, a significant research gap remains regarding the systematic investigation of authentic learner errors found in social media-based corrective content.

To address this gap, the present study examines English expressions corrected by Mr. John on Instagram through the combined perspectives of Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis. The study analyzes authentic learner-generated sentences that were produced independently of research purposes and subsequently corrected by an experienced language educator. Such data provide a unique opportunity to investigate naturally occurring learner language in a digital context while simultaneously examining how structural differences between Indonesian and English contribute to the observed errors. By integrating Error Analysis and Contrastive Analysis, this study seeks to identify, classify, and explain grammatical errors appearing in the corpus and to contribute to the growing body of research at the intersection of second language acquisition, digital language learning, and social media-based linguistic practices.

The findings of this study are expected to contribute both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the study extends the application of Error Analysis and Contrastive Analysis to a contemporary digital context, demonstrating the continued relevance of these frameworks in examining learner language on social media platforms. Practically, the findings may help English teachers and learners identify common grammatical difficulties experienced by Indonesian EFL learners and develop more effective instructional strategies and corrective feedback techniques. Furthermore, the study may serve as a methodological reference for future research exploring authentic learner language data obtained from social media environments.

B. Research Method

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research design to conduct a contrastive and error analysis of English sentences corrected by Mr. John on Instagram. This approach is appropriate because it enables an in-

depth examination of grammatical errors in their natural context, focusing on understanding the nature, characteristics, and underlying causes of errors rather than measuring them through statistical quantification (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The descriptive design facilitates systematic identification, classification, and explanation of error patterns found in the corpus, and the research follows a sequential analytical procedure consisting of three main stages: data collection, error identification and classification, and error explanation through contrastive analysis. This systematic approach ensures rigorous treatment of the data, consistent with established Error Analysis methodologies (Ellis, 2008; James, 1998).

The subject of this research is the collection of English sentences produced by Indonesian Instagram users that were identified as containing grammatical errors and subsequently corrected by Mr. John on his Instagram account (@mr.johnhid). The study focuses on the linguistic products (sentences) rather than the individual producers, consistent with standard Error Analysis practice (Corder, 1967; Ellis, 2008). The object of this research is the grammatical errors found in fifteen (15) English sentences that were publicly corrected by Mr. John. These sentences were selected because they represent diverse grammatical domains and common challenges faced by Indonesian EFL learners. The sentences are presented in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1: Corpus of Sentences Corrected by Mr. John

No.	**Original Sentence (Error)**	**Mr. John's Correction**
1	Do you ready to lose?	Are you ready to lose?
2	Are you trust me?	Do you trust me?
3	I talk you, you cut cut you know?	I talk to you, you cut, cut, you know?
4	What is ur job?	What is your job?
5	I don't know, I can to speak english	I don't know, I can speak English

6	where were you today?	Where were you today?
7	who is you? go out from my country	Who are you? Go out of my country
8	you don't have to making fun of my name	You don't have to make fun of my name
9	do not making jokes of their name!	Do not make jokes of their name!
10	can you speak English	Can you speak English?
11	I'm not trying to hating you	I'm not trying to hate you
12	I'm not agree with you	I don't agree with you
13	be careful on the road	Be careful on the road
14	when Indonesia people come to Malaysia	When Indonesian people come to Malaysia
15	you are smart cooking	You are smart at cooking

The data were collected from Mr. John's Instagram account (@mr.johnhid), an English language educator who posts grammatical corrections of sentences submitted by his Indonesian followers. Instagram was selected because it is widely used in Indonesia and provides a natural environment for informal English use (Hikmah et al., 2024; Ikhsan & Fetriani, 2023). Mr. John's account was specifically chosen because it provides authentic learner errors paired with expert corrections, making it an ideal source for Error Analysis research. The data collection followed five systematic steps.

First, Mr. John's Instagram account (@mr.johnhid) was identified as a source of educational content featuring grammatical corrections of Indonesian learners' English sentences.

Second, the following criteria guided selection: (a) the sentence must be produced by an Indonesian Instagram user, (b) the sentence must contain at least one grammatical error, (c) Mr. John must provide a corrected version, and (d) the sentence must reflect spontaneous, natural communication.

Third, screenshots of fifteen posts meeting the criteria were collected from Mr. John's account, with each screenshot capturing the original error-containing sentence and Mr. John's correction.

Fourth, all sentences were transcribed verbatim into a structured data table, preserving original spelling, capitalization, and punctuation, while Mr. John's corrections were also transcribed for comparison.

Fifth, transcriptions were cross-checked against original screenshots to ensure accuracy.

C. Result and Disscussion

The results of the contrastive and error analysis of the fifteen English expressions corrected by Mr. John on Instagram reveal systematic patterns of grammatical deviations among Indonesian EFL learners. To provide a comprehensive overview of these linguistic issues, the specific corpus of the collected expressions and the calculated frequency distribution of their error types are presented consecutively in Table 1.2 and Table 1.3 below:

Table 1.2 Error Identification and Classification

No	Original Sentence	Corrected Sentence	Error Category	Error Source
1	"Do you ready to lose?"	"Are you ready to lose?"	"Auxiliary Verb"	"Interlingual"
2	"Are you trust me?"	"Do you trust me?"	"Auxiliary Verb"	"Interlingual"
3	"I talk you	you cut cut you know?"	"I talk to you	you cut me off
4	"What is ur job?"	"What is your job?"	"Informal Form"	"Intralingual"
5	"I don't know	I can to speak English"	"I don't know	I can speak English"
6	"where were you today?"	"Where were you today?"	"Capitalization"	"Intralingual"
7	"who is you? go out from my country "	"Who are you? Go out of my country."	"Subject-Verb Agreement / Preposition "	"Interlingual"

8	"you don't have to making fun of my name"	"You don't have to make fun of my name."	"Verb Complementation"	"Intralingual"
9	"do not making jokes of their name!"	"Do not make jokes about their name!"	"Verb Complementation / Preposition"	"Intralingual"
10	"can you speak English "	"Can you speak English?"	"Punctuation"	"Intralingual"
11	"I'm not trying to hating you"	"I'm not trying to hate you."	"Infinitive/Gerund"	"Intralingual"
12	"I'm not agree with you"	"I don't agree with you."	"Copula Usage"	"Interlingual"
13	"be careful on the road"	"Be careful on the road."	"Capitalization"	"Intralingual"
14	"when Indonesia people come to Malaysia"	"When Indonesian people come to Malaysia"	"Noun Formation"	"Interlingual"
15	"you are smart cooking"	"You are good at cooking."	"Lexical Collocation"	"Interlingual"

Frequency of Error Categories

To identify the dominant grammatical problems experienced by Indonesian learners, the errors were grouped into categories and counted according to their frequency.

Table 1.3 Frequency Distribution of Error Types

Error Category	Frequency	Percentage
Verb Complementation (Infinitive/Gerund)	4	26.7%
Preposition Errors	3	20.0%
Auxiliary Verb Errors	2	13.3%
Mechanical Errors (Capitalization/Punctuation)	2	13.3%
Subject-Verb Agreement	1	6.7%
Copula Usage	1	6.7%
Noun Formation	1	6.7%
Lexical Collocation	1	6.7%
Word Order	1	6.7%
Total	15	100%

As quantitatively illustrated in Table 1.3, errors in Verb Complementation (Infinitive/Gerund) represent the most prevalent issue, accounting for 26.7% of the total data with 4 occurrences. This is closely followed by Preposition Errors, which constitute 20.0% (3 occurrences) of the corpus. Both Auxiliary Verb Errors and Mechanical Errors (Capitalization/Punctuation) each make up 13.3% of the total data. The remaining categories including Subject-Verb Agreement, Copula Usage, Noun Formation, Lexical Collocation, and Word Order each

register a single occurrence, contributing 6.7% respectively. This quantitative spread indicates that mastering verb complementation patterns and appropriate prepositional placement poses the most significant structural hurdles for Indonesian learners in digital communication environments.

From a qualitative and contrastive perspective, as shown in the comprehensive dataset in Table 1.2, these errors are not random performance slips, but rather systematic reflections of the learners' interlanguage competence driven by negative interlingual transfer and intralingual overgeneralization (Corder, 1967; Richards, 1971). Through a deeper evaluation, it is evident that structural discrepancies between Indonesian (L1) and English (L2) create predictable points of friction, particularly when grammatical categories in the target language lack explicit equivalents in the native language (Lado, 1957; Ismahani et al., 2025). The fifteen sentences listed in Table 1.2 span several linguistic domains, which are analyzed into a continuous narrative.

The first group of errors prominently visible in Table 1.2 relates to auxiliary verb usage and question formation, as illustrated by the sentences 'Do you ready to lose?', 'Are you trust me?', 'where were you today?', 'who is you? go out from my country', and 'can you speak English'. In the sentence 'Do you ready to lose?', learners erroneously employ the dummy auxiliary 'Do' instead of the copula 'Are' to complement the adjective 'ready'. This faulty formation stems from L1 interference; since Indonesian utilizes the question particle "apakah" or simple rising intonation to construct yes/no questions without requiring auxiliary verb differentiation, learners often struggle to select the appropriate English auxiliary based on the syntactic category of the predicate (Lado, 1957; Ismahani et al., 2025). Conversely, in the sentence 'Are you trust me?', learners make the opposite error by redundantly inserting the copula 'Are' before the base form of the transitive verb 'trust'. This overcorrection or structural confusion indicates an incomplete mastery of English 'do'-support rules for lexical verbs. Furthermore, errors in subject-verb agreement and writing mechanics in Table 1, such as 'who is you?' and the lowercase usage in

'where were you today?' and 'can you speak English', demonstrate a reliance on informal or auditory language exposure where formal alignment and orthographic constraints are frequently overlooked. The omission of proper capitalization and the question mark in 'can you speak English' reflects the spontaneous and hurried nature of social media communication, where speed often supersedes rigorous grammatical review (Rachman et al., 2019; Hikmah et al., 2024).

Moving further into the grammatical deviations recorded in Table 1.2, significant challenges are also apparent in verb complementation, specifically regarding the distinction between infinitives and gerunds. This pattern is prominently featured in sentences such as 'I don't know, I can to speak english', 'you don't have to making fun of my name', 'do not making jokes of their name!', 'I'm not trying to hating you', and 'I'm not agree with you'. In 'I can to speak english', learners overgeneralize the full infinitive pattern (to + verb) into the syntactic slot following the modal auxiliary verb 'can', which strictly requires a bare infinitive. This error marks a developmental stage where learners extend a newly acquired grammatical rule to an incompatible environment (Richards, 1971). The reverse overgeneralization occurs in the sentences 'you don't have to making fun of my name' and 'I'm not trying to hating you', where learners attach the progressive or gerundial suffix -ing to the verb following the particle 'to'. This confusion is highly typical of EFL learners struggling to determine whether specific matrix verbs or prepositions license an infinitive or gerund complement (Maolida & Hidayat, 2021). Similarly, the sentence 'do not making jokes of their name!' shows an erroneous application of the -ing form immediately after the negative imperative auxiliary 'do not'. This morphological confusion culminates in the sentence 'I'm not agree with you', where learners treat the verb 'agree' as an adjective, resulting in the faulty use of the copula 'am' instead of the auxiliary 'do'. This specific error represents the joint operation of interlingual transfer since Indonesian predicate constructions do not distinguish verbs from adjectives using an obligatory copula and

intralingual rule confusion (Corder, 1967; Ismahani et al., 2025).

The remaining errors identified in Table 1.2 are deeply rooted in word-for-word literal translation and syntactic calques from spoken Indonesian. This is vividly exemplified by the phrases 'I talk you, you cut cut you know?', 'What is ur job?', 'be careful on the road', 'when Indonesia people come to Malaysia', and 'you are smart cooking'. The expression 'I talk you, you cut cut you know?' directly mirrors the informal Indonesian conversational structure *("Aku ngomong kamu, kamu potong-potong...")*, where the obligatory English preposition 'to' is omitted after 'talk', and the reduplication "cut cut" is transferred to signify repeated interruption. In 'What is ur job?', the use of the text abbreviation 'ur' exemplifies how digital settings accommodate shorthand over standard possessive adjectives (Hikmah et al., 2024). Prepositional interference is also evident in 'be careful on the road', which originates from the direct mapping of the multifunctional Indonesian preposition *"di"* into 'on', without considering more idiomatic English spatial or situational expressions. Furthermore, the sentence 'when Indonesia people come to Malaysia', reveals a morphological omission where the proper noun 'Indonesia' is used instead of the adjective 'Indonesian', a common error since Indonesian nouns do not inflect to form national adjectives or morphologically mark plurality (Septiana, 2022). This structural ordering issue is reinforced by 'you are smart cooking', a literal transposition of the Indonesian adjective-verb collocation "kamu pintar memasak". Instead of forming a standard English construction like 'you are good at cooking', learners map the L1 word order directly, leading to an ungrammatical phrasal structure that highlights persistent collocation transfer difficulties (Septiana, 2022; Puspita, 2021).

In synthesis, the continuous analysis of the fifteen sentences in Table 1.2 confirms that while interlingual transfer remains a powerful catalyst for grammatical deviations particularly in prepositional choices and literal word order it interacts dynamically with intralingual factors such as rule overgeneralization (Corder, 1967; Rustipa, 2011). These findings carry critical pedagogical implications for

contemporary English language teaching in the digital era. Because these errors were harvested from naturally occurring interactions on Instagram, it is evident that social media platforms have evolved into a critical and autonomous space for informal language acquisition (Hikmah et al., 2024; Ikhsan & Fetriani, 2023).

Micro-learning content, such as the public corrections and explanations offered by digital language educators like Mr. John, provides instant and engaging feedback for learners to help dismantle fossilized errors, which textbook grammar instruction sometimes fails to reach (Han, 2022). Integrating these authentic digital insights into formal EFL classrooms can enhance learners' linguistic awareness, bridge the gap between rigid instructional norms and real-world usage, and ultimately foster more robust communicative competence (Sifakis, 2019; Ismahani et al., 2025).

D. Conclusion

This study investigated grammatical errors found in English sentences produced by Indonesian learners and corrected by Mr. John on Instagram. By integrating Error Analysis (EA) and Contrastive Analysis (CA), the study aimed to identify error types, classify them, and explain their underlying causes.

The findings revealed that Indonesian learners produced various grammatical errors across several linguistic categories, including auxiliary verbs, verb complementation, subject– verb agreement, copula usage, prepositions, noun formation, lexical collocations, and word order. Among these categories, verb complementation errors were the most dominant, accounting for 26.7% of the total data, followed by preposition errors (20%), auxiliary verb errors (13.3%), and mechanical errors involving capitalization and punctuation (13.3%).

The analysis further demonstrated that the identified errors originated from two major sources: interlingual transfer and intralingual transfer. Interlingual transfer occurred when learners applied Indonesian grammatical patterns to English structures. This was particularly evident in errors involving auxiliary verbs, prepositions, subject–verb agreement, copula usage, noun

formation, and lexical collocations. These errors reflected structural differences between Indonesian and English, supporting the assumptions of Contrastive Analysis proposed by Lado (1957).

Meanwhile, intralingual transfer was observed in errors involving verb complementation, infinitive and gerund usage, capitalization, punctuation, and certain verb forms. These errors resulted from learners' incomplete mastery of English grammatical rules and their tendency to overgeneralize linguistic patterns. Such findings are consistent with Richards' (1971) view that many learner errors arise from developmental processes within the target language itself.

The findings also confirm that social media platforms such as Instagram provide authentic and valuable sources of learner language data. Unlike classroom-based tasks, the sentences analyzed in this study were produced spontaneously in real communicative contexts. As a result, they offer a more natural representation of learners' interlanguage and reveal persistent grammatical difficulties that continue to affect Indonesian EFL learners outside formal educational settings.

Overall, this study supports the complementary use of Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis in explaining learner language. Error Analysis enabled the identification and classification of actual errors, while Contrastive Analysis provided explanations for why those errors occurred. Together, these approaches offered a comprehensive understanding of the grammatical challenges faced by Indonesian learners in digital communication environments.

The findings of this study have several implications for English language teaching. First, English teachers should place greater emphasis on teaching verb complementation patterns, particularly the distinction between infinitives and gerunds, as these represented the most frequent source of error. Explicit instruction and repeated practice may help learners internalize these grammatical structures more effectively.

Second, teachers should provide focused instruction on grammatical features that differ significantly between Indonesian and

English, such as auxiliary verbs, subject–verb agreement, copula usage, and prepositions. Since many errors stem from first-language interference, raising learners' awareness of these structural differences may reduce negative transfer.

Third, social media content can be integrated into classroom instruction as authentic learning material. Grammar correction content from platforms such as Instagram may increase learners' engagement while exposing them to real examples of language use and common learner errors.

Based on the findings of this study, several suggestions are proposed.

For English learners, it is recommended that they pay closer attention to English grammatical structures that differ from Indonesian, particularly verb complementation, auxiliary verbs, and prepositions. Learners should actively seek feedback on their writing and speaking in order to identify and correct recurring errors.

For English teachers, it is suggested that they incorporate authentic learner errors into classroom activities and provide explicit explanations regarding the causes of common grammatical mistakes. Teachers should also encourage students to critically evaluate language used on social media platforms rather than assuming that all online content represents accurate English.

For future researchers, further studies may analyze larger datasets obtained from various social media platforms such as TikTok, X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, or YouTube. Future research may also investigate additional linguistic aspects such as vocabulary use, discourse features, pronunciation-related issues, or pragmatic competence. Furthermore, comparative studies involving learners from different first-language backgrounds could provide broader insights into the role of language transfer in second language acquisition.

In conclusion, the present study demonstrates that grammatical errors produced by Indonesian learners on Instagram are shaped by both first-language influence and incomplete mastery of English grammar. The integration of Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis provides a useful

framework for understanding these errors and contributes to the growing body of research on language learning in digital communication contexts.

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