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Brand Name Language: Is it True That Foreign Brand Names are More Quali ied, Luxurious and Modern?

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to see whether product brand names that use foreign languages, especially English, are perceived as higher quality, more luxurious, and more modern than product brand names that use local languages by consumers in developing countries. The population in this study were residents of Banten Province, Indonesia. Data collection using a questionnaire distributed via google form and collected as many as 275 respondents' answers. The analysis method uses paired sample mean difference test. The results showed that foreign brand names that use foreign languages are perceived as higher quality, more luxurious, and more modern than brand names that use local languages. Therefore, giving product brand names whose markets are consumers in developing countries, using foreign language brand names, especially English, will be preferred by consumers.

Keywords: Brand Name, Foreign Language, Quality, Luxurious, Modern

JEL Classification: M31

1. INTRODUCTION

The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) based on the 2020 Population Census recorded that Indonesia's population in September 2020 was 270.20 million people. Since Indonesia held its first Population Census in 1961, the population has continued to increase. The SP2020 results compared to SP2010 showed an increase in the population of 32.56 million people or an average of 3.26 million every year. In the last 10 years (2010-2020), Indonesia's population growth rate was 1.25% per year. Indonesia is categorized as a middle-income country (World Bank, 2022) with a per capita income of IDR 62.2 million or US\$ 4,349.5 (BPS, 2022). The large population, although still categorized as a middle-income country, and still categorized as a developing country, is certainly a potential market for various types of products offered. Those who can offer better value to consumers will be the winner. Consumer preferences for the various products available are influenced by many variables. Among the many variables that influence consumer choice is brand name. As a developing country, consumer behavior in purchasing also always refers to products from developed countries. Consumers in Indonesia consider that brands of products from abroad are better than local products, and consider domestic product brands to have a lower image (Sulhaini et al., 2019; Sutisna et al., 2020).

Consumer brand choice of product brands is influenced by many variables, ranging from price, product quality, brand image, price, and advertising (Adnan et al., 2019; Sudaryanto et al., 2019) and of course, the brand name matters too (Bulle and Cengel, 2020). The brand name is one aspect that is taken into consideration in deciding to buy a product (Shehzad, 2014). The brand name contains certain values felt by consumers, such as feelings of pride, feelings of security, and feelings of luxury (Han et al., 2010). Therefore, in giving brand names, companies need to be careful and consider brand names from various aspects, ranging from ease of pronunciation, (Kim, 2017) and ease of remembering (Khurram et al., 2018) to the brand language used.

Giving brand names using certain brand languages will have a different impact. Consumers in developing countries, tend to judge

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that brand names that use foreign languages are better than brand names with local languages (Ergin et al., 2014) Research on how consumers in developing countries tend to prefer brand names with foreign languages, especially English as an international language has been widely done. However, the aspects that are the reason why consumers in developing countries prefer foreign brands have not been done. In addition, this study wants to see whether brand names using foreign languages differ in perception between the categories of consumer products and shopping products. Therefore, this study will reveal what aspects are the reasons for consumers to judge that brands in foreign languages, especially English, are perceived better than brand names using local languages.

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW

The brand name is an important part of a product. Brand names are advised not to be too complicated, not difficult to pronounce, easy to remember, and simple because brands are the basis for developing brand awareness and brand image (Soto et al., 2009). The brand name contains several meanings such as brand image, quality symbol, product characteristics, and product quality (Kohli and LaBahn, 1997; Wang, 2012). The brand image includes several aspects such as brand territory that show competence, brand quality that shows how high quality the product is offered, product differentiation, and brand personality (Kapferer, 2008). Brands also have two types of benefits: functional benefits and symbolic benefits. Functional benefits of product brands relate to product performance, physical justification, the effectiveness of use, value for money, availability, and habit reliability. Meanwhile, symbolic benefits are in the form of compatibility with lifestyle, can express themselves, can show self-identity, helping order and structure life, social acceptance, feeling prestige, and show likes and dislikes (del Rio et al., 2001). The brand name is the foundation for consumers' Foreign Brand and Local Brand Perception.

Foreign brands, especially in developing countries, are often perceived as better product brands (Yu et al., 2022; Kashi, 2013) and can be used as social status (Millan and Mittal, 2017) and symbols of luxury (Inwon et al., 2022). Therefore, consumers in developing countries prefer foreign brands for purchasing their products (Yu et al., 2022). Many consumers from developing countries feel cool when using products whose brands come from abroad. Products labeled with foreign brands can make consumers make product choices.

The reason consumers choose foreign brands is that foreign brands have product features that local brands do not have, good product quality, and a positive brand image (Momen et al., 2022). Large product variations, different colors, shapes, and sizes are the main product features that attract consumers to buy foreign products (Haque et al., 2015). Consumers in developing countries perceive that products originating from abroad have premium quality compared to local products. Meanwhile, according to Khashi (2013), consumer purchasing behavior toward foreign brands is due to seeking uniqueness, perceived quality, and emotional value. Apart from product features and product quality, foreign brands are preferred by consumers also because of brand image.

Foreign brands are valued more highly by consumers from developing countries. Research by Dao and Heit (2018) conducted in Vietnam shows that consumers rate Sony and Honda brands better than local brands. Brand image has three dimensions, namely affective and conative cognitive components. Country image and product confidence A study on Indonesian consumers conducted by Sulhaini et al. (2020) found a very surprising situation. The research respondents were 233 young students in Mataram Lombok Indonesia. The results revealed that young people have negative emotions and a passive hatred for domestic brands, and therefore a reason for them to worship foreign brands more.

Meanwhile, foreign brands are perceived by consumers in developed countries as less qualified, or in other words, consumers in developed countries perceive their domestic brands as better than brands from abroad (, Ahmed and d'Astous, 2008; Bilkey and Nes, 1982; Samiee, 1994).

2.1. Phonetic Symbolism and Brand Names

A common method of categorizing vowel sounds is to distinguish front versus back mentions. This distinction refers to where the tongue is positioned when a word is spoken. Consider tee, tin, and toot. When saying tee, the tongue is more towards the front of the mouth than when saying tin. Conversely, when saying toot, the tongue is more towards the back of the mouth than it is when saying tin (Klink, 2000). Yorkson and Menon (2004) studied a phenomenon known as sound symbolism, where the sounds of a word convey meaning. In particular, brand names are made up of individual sounds called phonemes and it was analyzed how the phonetic structure of these brand names influences consumers' evaluation of the product and its attributes. The results show that consumers use the information they gather from the phonemes in brand names to infer product attributes and evaluate brands. The analysis also shows that the phonetic effect of brand names manifests automatically while it is uncontrollable, unconscious, and effortless. Lowrey and Shrum's (2007) experimental results show that brand names are preferred when their vocal sounds have attributes that have positive connotations.

Making a brand name must be in line with the attributes contained in the product. For example, the brand name of ice cream must contain meaning, sweet, cream, and rich flavor. In other words, the brand name must contain the symbolic meaning of the product category. For example, a snack brand name would be more suitable if the brand name contains the meaning of taste, crispy, crunchy, and savory. Still according to Yorkson and Menon (2004), creating a successful brand name depends not only on creating a name that fits the product category, but a name that phonetically matches the positioning of the brand in the product category. The congruence between the product category and the brand name affects consumers' memories, preferences, and conclusions (Lowrey et al., 2003). Brand perception can be enhanced by matching product attributes with sound symbols. The better the match between the sound symbol and the product attribute, the more positive the perception of the brand.

From the above explanation, it appears that the easier the brand name is to pronounce, the more preferred it will be by consumers. Meanwhile, the more the brand name matches the product characteristics or product attributes, the more favored it will be by consumers compared to the brand name whose sound symbol does not match the product attributes.

2.2. Language of Brand Name

Language is part of the culture (Ahimsa-Putra, 2011) and every culture produces cultural artifacts in the form of goods (Oktaviany et al., 2019). Language as part of culture is also a means of communication both interpersonal and between entities. Language has become very broad in its dimensions in human life activities, including in terms of product brand naming. Product brand names are one of the cultural artifacts. Language is very important in business and marketing activities. Language becomes a strategic tool for managing impressions on target consumers to build brand equity (Luna et al., 2018), therefore language becomes a very important tool in building brand positioning. One of the important functions of language is brand naming. Brand naming is both an art and a science (Luna et al., 2018). In consumers in developing countries, the use of local language is less preferred, and prefers nonlocal brands (Batra et al., 2000). Therefore, marketers need to pay attention to this aspect of language use for brand names so that their marketing strategies can be successful. Even for local products, when naming their product brands in foreign languages, especially English, consumers will be preferred (Citra and Syahlani, 2008). The results of research by Soto et al. (2009) on Jeans, Cameras, and Mouthwash brands show that jeans products with English brand names are more hedonic. Even for all product categories, the use of brand names in English. The results of this study are different from the results of research conducted by Diantanti et al. (2018) which states that the use of product brand names using foreign and local languages does not affect attitudes towards products and purchase intentions. The respondents even suggested that when branding local products, they should use brand names based on the characteristics of the product origin.

3. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

3.1. Language of Brand Name and Quality Perception

Product brand names using foreign language names, especially English, are perceived to have better quality (Porto and da Silva Soyer, 2018). Consumers consider that product brands that are in foreign languages have better quality than brands that use national languages. This is shown by the results of the research (Yu et al., 2022). Which found that consumers in developing countries prefer foreign brands, and product quality is a moderating variable for the effect of decision focus (buying for others or themselves) on consumer choice. In other words, when consumers decide to buy products for others, they will choose foreign brands over national brands. Consumers in developing countries such as Bangladesh also perceive that foreign brands are better than domestic brands in particular they consider that foreign brands have more brand value, and better product features (Momen et al., 2022). However, in some groups of consumers who have a high level of entrocentrism, they consider that the quality of domestic product brands is better than the quality of foreign brand products, even though objectively the quality of foreign product brands is better than domestic product brands. The perception that domestic brand products are better than foreign products when in fact the opposite is true, is referred to as domestic product quality syndrome. This bias occurs because consumers have a high ethnocentric spirit (Bakti et al., 2020). The results of other research related to foreign branding show that strategies that combine foreign branding and experiential value produce better product quality perceptions (Azzahra and Balgiah, 2017). Therefore, around the world, many apply product brand naming using foreign languages to create better quality perceptions. Brands from developing countries use many foreign brand strategies to attract consumer interest (Zhou et al., 2010). The effect of this has an impact on the likelihood of purchase. Domestic products that are labeled abroad (incongruent) result in a decrease in consumer purchase interest, especially for hedonic products, and utilitarian products, the incongruity between domestically made but foreign branded products (for example, made in Indonesia given an English brand name) does not have a significant effect on consumer purchase interest (Melnyk et al., 2012).

H1: Product brand names that use foreign languages are preferred over brand names using national languages.

H2: Product brand names that use foreign languages are more qualified than brand names that use national languages.

3.2. Language of Brand Name and Modernity

Mandal (2001) states that globalists promote English as synonymous with economic growth, technology, and modernity. English becomes a means of globalization and modernity (Paolo, 2012). In Indonesian society, English is very important and English is a requirement for many things, for example, applying for a job, as a symbol of education, modernity, and technological progress (Gunarwan, 1998; Lauder, 2008). English for Indonesians has functioned as an identity of modernity for educated urban people and for those who aspire to be part of urban modern society (Lowernberg, 2007) Therefore the use of English for product brand names will be able to imply a sense of modernity to consumers. Brand naming is very important because it will have an impact on brand value. Consumers will make the brand name as a reference in assessing a product. Product brand names that use foreign languages are considered to have better quality, cutting-edge technology, and reliability, are more modern and have a contemporary appeal compared to product brands with local languages (Gupta and Verma, 2017). This research also produces findings that by buying foreign brands, there is a feeling of superiority in consumers. They consider foreign brands to be of higher quality, more durable, and safer. The pronunciation of brands using foreign languages and therefore sounding foreign creates the illusion of reputation and status. Among the foreign languages used as brand names, the use of Italian is the most preferred, and English is next. Consumers perceive that local product brand names are perceived as selling counterfeit products (Gupta and Verma, 2017).

H3: Foreign Language Brand Names are perceived as more modern than national brand names.

3.3. Language of Brand Name and Luxury

Luxury is an elusive cultural concept (Ott, 2018). At one time, certain products could be categorized as luxury goods, motorcycles in the 1970s were included in luxury goods. Mobile

phones in the mid-1990s were categorized as a luxury. Even soap in medieval times was considered a luxury (Chevalier and Mazzalovo 2008). This is what is referred to as the concept of luxury, where these goods go above and beyond what is needed in life (Sombart, 1913). The concept of luxury is different from luxury brands. Looking back at the examples above, today the three products are still considered luxury goods, but it is no longer determined by the type of product, but by the brand and type of product. Harley and BMW brand motorcycles are currently included in luxury goods. iPhone cell phones and Samsung with its S-type are included in luxury goods. Jo Malone Blackberry and Jo Loves Pomelo bath soaps are currently included in luxury goods. The luxury is obtained from the distinction based on the brand. Luxury can also differ from one individual to another. For the lower class, eating at a fast food restaurant is a luxury, but for the middle class, it is an ordinary thing. Therefore, what is considered a luxury and what is not, will depend on the individual and the context. Something that is initially considered a luxury by someone at some point will turn into something ordinary (Virgneron and Johnson, 2004).

Luxury can also come from the country of origin (COO) of a product's brand name. External brands are perceived as more luxurious than domestic brands (Kinra, 2006). Even for unknown brand names, as long as they do not use national or domestic brand names, they are perceived to show more luxury (Meng and Clark, 2007). The perceived origin of the brand name has a strong impact on perceived luxury, and subsequently, the willingness to pay a premium price, regardless of whether the brand is fictitious and only sounds as if it comes from a certain country, or a real brand (Krupka et al., 2014).

H4: Foreign Language Brand Names are perceived as more luxurious than national brand names.

4. RESEARCH METHODS

This research is a comparative study that compares differences in mean scores. Data were collected online and obtained from 275 respondents from the Banten Province area. After checking, 228 respondents completed the questionnaire. Respondents were given two fictitious product brand names using the Indonesian language (national) which are categorized as convenience goods (Kotler and Keller, 2012) namely MURNI for mineral water and BENING for bath soap brands, and two foreign brands namely PURE for mineral water and FRESHLIFE for bath soap. As for the shopping goods category (Kotler and Keller, 2012), respondents were given two brand names using the Indonesian language (national), namely SERASI for clothing and DENIS for shoes, and two foreign brand names, namely YOUTHFUL for clothing and BERTOLINI for shoes. For the overseas brand names, respondents were asked to rate three aspects, namely: (1) product quality; (2) product modernity; (3) product luxury. The method of analysis used is paired sample mean difference test to see whether the respondents' perceptions of the various product brand names are significantly different or not based on the aspects of quality, modernity, and luxury.

5. RESEARCH RESULTS

From data processing, the characteristics of respondents were obtained, namely based on gender, 66.7% of men and 32.9% of women, and those who did not fill in their gender as much as 0.4%. The age of the majority of respondents is <25 years old as much as 64%, then 26-40 years old 21.5%, and more than 40 years old as much as 14.5%. When viewed from the education of respondents, 35.1% have secondary education, 47.4% have undergraduate education and 17.5% have postgraduate education.

5.1. Overseas Brand Names and National Brand Names

In this study, as explained above, respondents were asked several questions regarding brand names that use foreign languages and brand names that use local languages. The following are the brand names that use foreign languages and local languages (Table 1).

To see whether brand names using foreign languages are rated better than brand names using national languages, a paired t-test was conducted as presented in Table 2.

Table 2 explains that the average local brand value score (3.6593) is smaller than the average overseas brand name score (4.1296). This means that respondents rate overseas brand names better than local brand names. The t Sig value of 0.000<0.05 indicates that overseas brand names are rated better than local brand names, and therefore Hypothesis number 1 can be accepted. Furthermore, it is necessary to investigate further, what aspects make foreign brand names better than local brands.

5.2. Foreign and Local Brand Name Quality

To see more about the differences in respondents' assessment of foreign and local brand names, a paired mean difference test was conducted between foreign brand names and local brand names. The following are the processing results (Table 3).

Table 3 shows that the local brand names Murni, and PURE in terms of quality do not appear to be different from the foreign brand names DENIS and Bertolini (4.4693 vs. 4.4561 and 3.8465 vs 3.8684). Meanwhile, the local names Bening and Serasi appear to be rated as less qualified than the foreign brand names Freshlife and Youthful (3.4956 vs. 4.1842 and 3.5683 vs. 4.0396). After testing the sig value for the brand name Murni versus Pure sig value is 0.907 > 0.05, for the brand name Bening versus Freshlife sig value is 0.000 < 0.05, for the brand name Serasi versus Youthful sig value, is 0.000 < 0.05 and for the brand name Denis versus Bertolini sig value is 0.814 > 0.05. Thus, hypothesis number 2 is accepted for two local brand names (Bening and Serasi) versus two overseas brand names (Freshlife

Table 1: Foreign and local brand name pairs

Product type	Overseas brand name	Local brand name
Convenience goods	Pure	Pure
Convenience goods	Freshlife	Clear
Shopping goods	Youthful	Serasi
Shopping goods	Bertolini	Denis

Table 2: Average difference between foreign and local brand names

Pair	Mean	n	SD
Local brand name	3.6593	227	1.24634
Overseas brand name	4.1296	227	1.11396

SD: Standard deviation

Table 3: Average quality of Foreign and local brand names

Brand Pair	Mean	n	SD
Pair 1			
Perceived quality of pure brand name	4.4693	228	1.51466
Perceived quality of pure brand name	4.4561	228	1.44588
Pair 2			
Perceived quality of bening brand name	3.4956	228	1.58878
Perceived quality of freshlife brand name	4.1842	228	1.37994
Pair 3			
Perceived quality of serasi brand name	3.5683	227	1.57369
Perceived quality of youthful brand name	4.0396	227	1.45833
Pair 4			
Perceived quality of denis brand name	3.8465	228	1.48060
Perceived quality of bertolini brand name	3.8684	228	1.55381

SD: Standard deviation

and Youthful). Whereas two local brand names (Murni and Denis versus two overseas brand names (Pure and Bertolini) do not support hypothesis number 2.

5.3. Foreign and Local Brand Name Validity

Another aspect that can differentiate the assessment of foreign and local brand names is luxury. Just like the differences based on quality, this study used four pairs of fictitious foreign and local brand names. The results show the average respondents' assessment of the four pairs of brand names as follows (Table 4).

Table 4 shows the respondents' perceptions of the luxury of overseas and local brand names. The average perception of respondents for the overseas brand names Pure, Freshlife and Youthful is higher than the brand names Murni, Bening, and Serasi. Meanwhile, the local brand name Denis and the overseas brand name Bertolini appear to be no different. After significance testing, it was found that the sig value for the difference between the local brand names Murni, Bening, and Serasi versus the overseas brand names Pure, Freshlife, and Youthful was 0.000 < 0.05. This means that the overseas brand names represented by Pure, Freshlife, and Youthful are perceived as more luxurious than the three local brand names Pure, Bening, and Serasi. Therefore hypothesis number 3 is supported by the research data. As for the pair of local brand names Denis versus Bertolini, the significant value is 0.285 > 0.05, which means that there is not enough evidence to say that foreign brand names are considered more luxurious than local brand names. For the Denis versus Bertolini brand name pair that shows no difference in perception, it is very likely due to respondents' perception of the Denis brand name as a domestic brand name. From the descriptive statistics of the perception of certain brand names as foreign-origin brand names, the average score of the Denis brand name as a foreignorigin brand name of 3.48 far exceeds the perception of the Pure, Bening, and Serasi brand names (2.7719, 2.6053, 2.6344). Thus,

Table 4: Average luxury of foreign and local brand names

Brand Pair	Mean	n	SD
Pair 1			
Perceived luxury pure brand name	3.8684	228	1.55097
Perceived luxury pure brand name	4.3070	228	1.46998
Pair 2			
Perceived luxury bening brand name	3.4035	228	1.60791
Perceived luxury of freshlife brand name	4.1886	228	1.40623
Pair 3			
Perceived luxury of serasi brand name	3.4693	228	1.54633
Perceived luxury of youthful brand name	4.0658	228	1.44505
Pair 4			
Perceived luxury of denis brand name	3.8114	228	1.50899
Perceived luxury of bertolini brand Name	3.9211	228	1.53172

SD: Standard deviation

Table 5: Average modernity of foreign and local brand names

Brand Pair	Mean	n	SD
Pair 1			
Perceived modernity pure brand name	3.8553	228	1.50802
Perceived modernity pure brand name	4.4123	228	1.45905
Pair 2			
Perceived modernity bening brand name	3.3421	228	1.61124
Perceived modernity of freshlife brand	4.3377	228	1.31577
name			
Pair 3			
Perceived modernity serasi brand name	3.4956	228	1.57205
Perceived modernity youthful brand name	4.2061	228	1.43172
Pair 4			
Perceived modernity denis brand name	3.8333	228	1.46270
Perceived modernity bertolini brand name	3.9386	228	1.52677

SD: Standard deviation

the reason why there is no difference in the perception of luxury for the brand names Denis and Bertolini is because respondents give the same assessment of the two brand names, which have a luxurious impression.

5.4. The Modernity of Foreign and Local Brand Names

The final aspect assessed was the modernity of the brand name. Processing the data using comparative statistics, it appears that three fictitious foreign brand names and their pairs show different results. As for one overseas brand name and its counterpart, the results do not appear to be different as follows (Table 5).

Table 5 shows that the foreign brand names (Pure, Freshlife, and Youthful) have a greater mean value of perceived modernity than the three local brand names (Murni, Bening, and Serasi). As for the brand names Denis and Bertolini, respondents' perceptions do not appear to differ in terms of the luxury aspect. The significance test results for the difference in perceptions of the brand names Murni, Bening, and Serasi versus Pure, Freshlife, and Youthful have a significance value of 0.000 <0.05 which indicates that the foreign brand names are perceived as more modern than the local brand names. As for the Denis and Bertolini brand names, there is no difference in the perception of modernity (0.294 > 0.05) from the respondents. Again, specifically for the brand names Denis and Bertolini, they are perceived to be no different

in the aspect of modernity because respondents consider both brand names to be from abroad, so they are equally perceived as modern brand names.

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results show that all research hypotheses are accepted, although several pairs of foreign and local brand names show no difference in quality aspects, namely the Pure and Pure pair and the Bertolini and Denis pair. For the Bertolini and Denis pair, the results were not significantly different because the majority of respondents considered that both brand names were from abroad. For the Pure and Purni brand name pair for mineral water products, the absence of differences in perception from respondents is very likely due to the convenience goods product category. For consumer goods products, consumers no longer prefer brand names based on quality. Consumers consider that the quality of global and local brand products is no longer too different (Siswati et al., 2020). The results of this study are in contrast to those conducted by Fahmi and Chairy (2020) which show that local brands (Murni) will be preferred by consumers over foreign brand names (Pure). As for the aspects of luxury and modernity, all pairs of brand names analyzed show significant differences in perception, that foreign brand names are perceived better than local brand names. This is in line with research conducted by Soto et al (2009) which shows that brand names using foreign languages, especially English, are better than local languages for hedonic, hybrid, and functional products. Thus the results of this study strengthen previous findings conducted (Porto and da Silva Soyer, 2018; Yu et al., 2022), as well as having better product features (Moment et al., 2022). English for Indonesians has become a symbol of modernity (Gunarwan, 1998; Colluzi, 2011). Meanwhile, product brand names that use foreign languages, especially English, are considered to show more modernity than local languages (Gupta and Verma, 2017). Another aspect of foreign brand names is luxury. The results of this study strengthen previous studies on the perception of foreign brand names which show that foreign brand names are considered to show more luxury (Kinra, 2006; Meng and Clark, 2009; Krupka et al., 2017).

Thus, giving brand names that use foreign languages, especially English in developing countries, will affect consumer perceptions. The use of brand language is very important to increase consumers' positive perceptions of the brand name of the product offered. In developing countries, the use of foreign languages or appearing to come from abroad is an important aspect considered in entering the market.

Brand names that use foreign languages, especially English, are considered better than brand names that use local languages. In addition, brand names using foreign languages, especially English, are considered more qualified than brand names using local languages. Brand names that use foreign languages, especially English, are considered to show more luxury than brand names with local languages. Finally, brand names using foreign languages are considered more modern than brand names using local languages.

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