



THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HOT CHAIR GAME IN TEACHING SPEAKING SKILL AT THE SECOND SEMESTER OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS

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ABSTRAK

Speaking merupakan komponen penting dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris dalam konteks EFL, namun banyak mahasiswa mengalami kesulitan dalam mengekspresikan ide secara lisan akibat keterbatasan kosakata, rendahnya rasa percaya diri, dan kecemasan berbicara. Penelitian ini berfokus pada penggunaan *Hot Chair Game* sebagai strategi pembelajaran interaktif untuk meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara mahasiswa semester dua Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di IKTL. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain deskriptif kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi kelas, catatan lapangan, dan respon reflektif tertulis mahasiswa selama empat kali pertemuan pembelajaran. Data dianalisis secara deskriptif kualitatif dengan fokus pada pola kemampuan berbicara mahasiswa, interaksi kelas, dan keterlibatan belajar selama proses pembelajaran. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan *Hot Chair Game* menghasilkan peningkatan dalam kemampuan mengingat kosakata, kelancaran berbicara, serta kemauan mahasiswa untuk berpartisipasi dalam aktivitas lisan. Selain itu, mahasiswa menunjukkan peningkatan rasa percaya diri dan penurunan kecemasan berbicara, yang ditandai dengan meningkatnya respon sukarela serta interaksi lisan yang lebih berkelanjutan di kelas. Meskipun masih ditemukan beberapa kendala seperti keterbatasan kosakata dan penggunaan bahasa ibu secara sesekali, mahasiswa secara bertahap mampu beradaptasi dalam situasi berbahasa Inggris. Secara keseluruhan, hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *Hot Chair Game* merupakan strategi alternatif yang efektif dan menarik dalam meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara di perguruan tinggi karena mampu mendorong partisipasi aktif, mengurangi kecemasan, dan meningkatkan kompetensi komunikatif dalam konteks EFL.

Kata Kunci: *Hot Chair Game, Keterampilan Berbicara, EFL, Pembelajaran Berbasis Permainan, Pengajaran Komunikatif*

ABSTRACT

Speaking is a crucial component of English language learning in EFL contexts, yet many university students encounter difficulties in expressing their ideas orally due to limited vocabulary, low confidence, and speaking anxiety. This study focuses on the use of the *Hot Chair Game* as an interactive learning strategy to enhance the speaking skills of second-semester students in the English Education Study Program at IKTL. The research employed a descriptive qualitative design. Data were collected through classroom observations, field notes, and students' reflective written responses over four instructional meetings. Data were analyzed through descriptive qualitative analysis focusing on patterns of speaking performance, classroom interaction, and learning engagement. The findings reveal that the *Hot Chair Game* resulted in observable improvements in students' vocabulary recall, speaking fluency, and willingness to participate in oral activities. In addition, students demonstrated increased confidence and reduced speaking anxiety, as indicated by more frequent voluntary responses and sustained oral interaction during classroom activities. Although some challenges remained,



such as limited vocabulary mastery and occasional reliance on their native language, students gradually adapted to English-speaking situations. Overall, the results indicate that the Hot Chair Game is an effective and engaging alternative strategy for improving speaking skills in higher education, as it fosters active participation, reduces anxiety, and enhances communicative competence in EFL classrooms.

Keywords: *Hot Chair Game, Speaking Skill, EFL, Game-Based Learning, Communicative Teaching*

INTRODUCTION

English plays a significant role in global education, professional communication, and technological development, making it an essential subject in EFL contexts such as Indonesia. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language at various educational levels, including higher education. Among the four core language skills, speaking is frequently regarded as the most demanding for EFL learners. This is because speaking requires learners to integrate linguistic knowledge with real-time communication skills in authentic social interactions. In addition, language learning success is closely related to the effectiveness of instructional strategies that support skill development, including in English reading and other language competencies, as emphasized by Zuhriya and Musyarofah (2026), who highlight the importance of structured strategies such as chunking in facilitating learners' comprehension and overall language learning process.

Speaking requires not only linguistic competence but also pronunciation, fluency, confidence, and spontaneous communication skills (Thornbury, 2005), while recent studies highlight the significant influence of anxiety and motivation on EFL learners' speaking performance (Chen, 2024; Wu, 2024). Recent studies also emphasize that speaking competence is strongly influenced by affective factors such as anxiety and self-confidence, which significantly affect learners' willingness to communicate (Sun, 2024; Amalia et al., 2024). In line with this, Dewaele et al. (2023) stress that foreign language anxiety, enjoyment, and boredom play a crucial role in determining learners' academic achievement and overall language learning success. Many EFL students experience speaking anxiety, fear of making mistakes, limited vocabulary, and low self-confidence when required to speak in English (Daflizar, 2024).

These challenges were also identified among second-semester students of the English Education Study Program, where limited confidence and anxiety frequently hindered active classroom participation. Such conditions indicate that effective speaking instruction should not only develop linguistic competence but also address learners' emotional and psychological barriers. Furthermore, the integration of media and technology in language learning, such as digital storytelling, has been shown to positively influence students' engagement and perception in speaking activities. As reported by Sari and Setyawan (2025), technology-based instruction can create more engaging speaking experiences and support learners' confidence development.

Initial classroom observations revealed that students tended to remain passive during speaking activities. Only a small number of students actively participated, while others avoided eye contact, relied on written notes, or switched to the first language. Ideally, speaking instruction should provide sufficient opportunities for meaningful interaction, spontaneous communication, and learner-centered participation (Richards, 2021). However, in reality, Traditional instructional practices that prioritize grammar instruction and textbook exercises often restrict opportunities for authentic speaking practice. This gap between ideal



communicative learning conditions and classroom reality indicates the need for more interactive and student-centered instructional strategies.

Game-based learning has been widely recognized as an effective approach to creating an engaging and low-anxiety learning environment that supports language acquisition (Plass et al., 2020; Hwang et al., 2023). Games provide meaningful contexts for language use, encourage active participation, and reduce learners' fear of speaking. One interactive game that can be applied in speaking instruction is the Hot Chair Game. This game requires students to describe vocabulary items without directly mentioning them, thereby promoting spontaneous speech, vocabulary retrieval, and collaborative interaction.

However, previous studies on game-based learning in speaking classes have mostly focused on primary and secondary education, while empirical research examining the effectiveness of the Hot Chair Game in tertiary EFL education remains scarce, particularly within Indonesian higher education settings. This indicates a clear research gap in the implementation of this strategy among higher education students, particularly in the Indonesian context. Moreover, limited research has explored how this strategy influences affective factors such as confidence and speaking anxiety at the university level. Addressing this gap is essential to provide evidence-based instructional alternatives for higher education speaking classrooms.

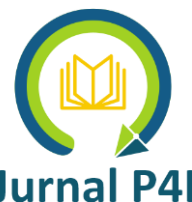
Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in the investigation of the Hot Chair Game as a speaking learning strategy for second-semester university students at IKTL. This study aims to describe its implementation and analyze its impact on students' participation, vocabulary development, fluency, and confidence in speaking English. The findings are expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to the development of innovative speaking instruction strategies in EFL higher education contexts.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design. The qualitative approach was chosen because the study aimed to describe and analyze the implementation of the Hot Chair Game in teaching speaking skills, including its strengths, weaknesses, students' reactions, and possible solutions to overcome the identified limitations. In this study, the researcher observed how the game was implemented in the classroom, how the lecturer facilitated the teaching and learning process, and how students responded to the use of the Hot Chair Game in speaking activities.

The participants of this study were 24 second-semester students of the Indonesian Language Program at IKTL in the 2025 academic year. The class consisted of 18 female and 6 male students aged between 18 and 20 years old, with English proficiency levels ranging from elementary to pre-intermediate. The instruments used in this study included classroom observation with field notes and interview guidelines to support the data collection process.

The researcher acted as a non-participant observer in observing the teaching process conducted by Ms. Christiyanti Abel, S.S., M.Pd., in the General English course, with a specific focus on the implementation of the Hot Chair Game in teaching speaking skills. The observation was conducted over four meetings, each lasting approximately 90 minutes. During these sessions, the researcher documented how the Hot Chair Game was applied, identified its advantages and disadvantages in speaking instruction, recorded students' reactions during learning activities, and explored possible solutions to address the weaknesses encountered. The researcher first obtained permission from the lecturer, prepared the research instruments, and then conducted systematic classroom observations. After data collection, the data were



analyzed using qualitative data analysis techniques, including data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The implementation of the Hot Chair Game in teaching speaking skills was conducted over two instructional meetings focusing on countable and uncountable nouns in the first session and environmental vocabulary in the second session. During these meetings, the learning process was organized into three main stages, namely pre-activity, while-activity, and post-activity, in order to ensure structured classroom instruction. In the pre-activity stage, the teacher introduced the lesson material and explained the rules of the game to prepare students for participation. The while-activity stage served as the core of the learning process, where students actively engaged in the Hot Chair Game either individually or in groups by giving and responding to verbal clues in English. This stage emphasized spontaneous speaking practice, vocabulary use, and interactive communication among students. Meanwhile, in the post-activity stage, the teacher provided feedback, corrected students' language use, and concluded the lesson to reinforce learning outcomes. The following table presents a detailed description of the implementation process of the Hot Chair Game in speaking instruction across both meetings.

1. Implementation of Hot Chair Game in Countable and Uncountable Noun Material

To provide a clearer overview of the learning process, the implementation of the Hot Chair Game is presented in a structured form based on each stage of classroom activities. The following Table 1 presents a summary of the teaching and learning process conducted during the two meetings, highlighting the sequence of activities and the roles of both the teacher and students in applying the Hot Chair Game as a speaking learning strategy.

Table 1. Implementation of Hot Chair Game in Teaching Speaking Skills

Phase	Activities (Day 1 & Day 2)
Pre-Activity	Teacher opens the lesson, greets students, explains countable and uncountable nouns, provides examples, and introduces Hot Chair Game rules.
While-Activity (Day 1)	Students participate in Hot Chair Game individually. One student sits on the "Hot Chair" while others give English clues about nouns (e.g., apple, rice). The seated student guesses the word and makes sentences.
While-Activity (Day 2)	Students are divided into two groups. Group members give clues about environmental vocabulary. The Hot Chair students guess the word and earn points.
Post-Activity	Teacher gives feedback, corrects pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary, and concludes the lesson.

As presented in Table 1, the implementation of the Hot Chair Game was conducted in two main meetings focusing on countable and uncountable nouns as well as environmental vocabulary. In the pre-activity stage, the teacher introduced the lesson, explained the material, and provided clear instructions regarding the rules of the game. During the while-activity, students actively participated in guessing and describing vocabulary through structured gameplay. In Day 1, the activity was conducted individually, where students sitting on the Hot Chair had to guess words based on peer clues and construct sentences afterward. In Day 2, the

activity was modified into group competition to increase interaction and participation. In the post-activity stage, the teacher provided feedback and reinforcement of language accuracy. Overall, the game created an interactive and communicative learning environment that supported speaking practice.

2. Advantages of Hot Chair Game in Teaching Speaking Skills

To support a more systematic presentation of the research findings, the advantages of the Hot Chair Game in teaching speaking skills are summarized in a structured form. Table 2 presents the key benefits identified during the implementation of the game, highlighting its contribution to students' speaking development in terms of confidence, participation, fluency, vocabulary acquisition, classroom atmosphere, cooperation, and material comprehension.

Table 2. Advantages of Hot Chair Game in Teaching Speaking Skills

No	Advantages	Description
1.	Enhancing Students' Confidence	The Hot Chair Game encourages students to speak in front of their classmates, helping them become more courageous and confident in using English orally.
2.	Increasing Student Participation	The activity involves all students in giving clues, asking questions, or guessing words, making the learning process more active and interactive.
3.	Improving Speaking Fluency	Students speak spontaneously during the game, which helps improve their fluency in English.
4.	Expanding Vocabulary	Students use various new words and expressions to explain concepts, which enriches their vocabulary.
5.	Creating a Fun Learning Atmosphere	The game makes learning more enjoyable and engaging, creating a relaxed classroom environment.
6.	Developing Cooperation and Interaction	Students collaborate and interact with classmates to give clues and guess answers correctly.
7.	Supporting Material Comprehension	Students understand the lesson more easily because they are actively involved in explaining and guessing words.

As illustrated in Table 2, the findings show that the Hot Chair Game provides several pedagogical benefits in teaching speaking skills. It significantly improves students' confidence by encouraging them to speak in front of peers in a supportive environment. The game also promotes active participation, as all students are involved in giving clues and guessing words. In addition, students demonstrate improved fluency due to spontaneous speaking practice, while their vocabulary is enriched through repeated exposure to target words. The game also creates a fun and enjoyable classroom atmosphere, which reduces learning tension and increases motivation. Furthermore, it fosters collaboration among students and supports better comprehension of learning materials through active engagement.

3. Weaknesses of the Hot Chair Game in Teaching Speaking

In addition to its advantages, the implementation of the Hot Chair Game in teaching speaking skills also reveals several limitations that need to be considered in classroom practice.

Table 3 presents a structured summary of the main weaknesses identified during the learning process, which are related to student participation, classroom management, time allocation, and the scope of speaking practice activities.

Table 3. Weaknesses of Hot Chair Game in Teaching Speaking Skills

No	Weaknesses	Description
1.	Not All Students Are Actively Speaking	In this game, only a few students sit on the Hot Chair and guess the word, while others may remain passive or give limited clues, resulting in uneven participation.
2.	Shy Students May Lack Confidence	Shy or less confident students may feel pressured when speaking in front of the class, leading to nervousness or fear of making mistakes.
3.	The Classroom Can Become Noisy	Students often speak simultaneously while giving clues, which can make the classroom noisy and difficult to control.
4.	Focus May Shift to Winning the Game	Students may focus more on winning or scoring points rather than understanding the learning material.
5.	Requires Good Time Management	The game may take a long time, especially in large classes, because each student needs a turn.
6.	Limited Vocabulary Practice	The activity tends to focus on specific vocabulary, limiting opportunities for more complex or extended speaking practice.

As presented in Table 3, despite its advantages, the Hot Chair Game also presents several limitations. Participation tends to be uneven since only selected students actively take turns in speaking roles, while others remain less involved. Shy students often experience anxiety when required to speak in front of the class. Additionally, the classroom environment can become noisy due to simultaneous group interactions. Another challenge is that students may focus more on winning the game rather than achieving learning objectives. The activity also requires careful time management, especially in large classes, and it may not sufficiently support extended speaking practice such as structured dialogue or long presentations.

4. Students' Reactions During the Implementation of the Hot Chair Game in Teaching Speaking

To gain a clearer understanding of students' responses toward the learning process, their reactions during the implementation of the Hot Chair Game are systematically presented. Table 4 summarizes the students' attitudes and behaviors observed throughout the activity, including their enthusiasm, participation level, emotional responses, collaboration, and competitive spirit during the speaking learning process.

Table 4. Students' Reactions Toward Hot Chair Game

No	Students' Reactions	Description
1.	Enthusiastic and Motivated	Most students show high enthusiasm because the learning is conducted in the form of a game. They become more motivated to participate and speak in English.

No	Students' Reactions	Description
2.	More Active in Speaking	Students tend to be more active in giving clues or descriptions to their peers sitting on the Hot Chair. This helps them practice speaking skills and vocabulary use.
3.	Enjoyable Learning Atmosphere	The game creates a relaxed, enjoyable, and engaging classroom environment where students appear happy and actively involved.
4.	Improved Cooperation	Students demonstrate teamwork by helping their group members guess the correct word.
5.	Some Students Feel Nervous	Some students, especially those on the Hot Chair, feel nervous or shy when speaking in front of the class.
6.	Inter-Group Competition	Students show competitive spirit between groups to earn points and win the game.

As shown in Table 4, students' responses toward the implementation of the Hot Chair Game were generally positive. Most students showed high enthusiasm and motivation during the learning process because the game-based approach made speaking activities more enjoyable. Students became more active in contributing ideas and giving clues, which increased their speaking practice. The classroom atmosphere was perceived as relaxed and enjoyable, supporting a low-anxiety learning environment. The game also promoted cooperation among students in group activities. However, some students still experienced nervousness, particularly when required to sit on the Hot Chair. In addition, competitive dynamics between groups were observed, which in some cases increased student engagement.

5. Strategies to Overcome the Weaknesses of the Hot Chair Game in Teaching Speaking

In order to address the challenges identified during the implementation of the Hot Chair Game, several instructional strategies were applied to improve the effectiveness of the learning process. Table 5 presents the strategies used by the teacher to overcome the weaknesses of the game, particularly in terms of student participation, classroom management, speaking performance, and time efficiency during speaking activities.

Table 5. Strategies to Overcome Weaknesses

No	Strategies	Description
1.	Organizing Player Rotation Regularly	The teacher manages student rotation so that all students have equal opportunities to participate, either as clue givers or players on the Hot Chair. A turn list can be prepared to ensure fairness.
2.	Providing Example Sentences	The teacher provides sentence patterns to guide students in giving complete clues, encouraging them to speak in full sentences instead of single words.
3.	Establishing Clear Game Rules	Clear rules are set to maintain classroom order, such as speaking turn-taking, group participation rules, and the requirement to use English during the game.



No	Strategies	Description
4.	Dividing Students into Small Groups	The class is divided into smaller groups so that more students can actively participate in speaking and the game becomes more manageable.
5.	Linking the Game to Post-Game Discussion	After the game, the teacher conducts a discussion to deepen students' understanding and develop their extended speaking skills through guided questions.
6.	Managing Game Time	A timer is used to limit response time (e.g., 30–60 seconds per word) to ensure the activity runs efficiently and does not take too much class time.

According to Table 5, several practical solutions were implemented to minimize the weaknesses of the Hot Chair Game in speaking instruction. Role rotation ensured equal participation among students, allowing each learner to experience speaking opportunities. The provision of sentence patterns helped students produce more structured and complete utterances. Clear classroom rules were established to maintain order and reduce noise levels during the activity. In addition, dividing students into small groups increased participation efficiency, especially in larger classes. Post-game discussions were conducted to extend speaking practice beyond the game context and deepen understanding of the material. Finally, the use of time management strategies, such as timers, helped maintain lesson effectiveness and prevent excessive time consumption.

Discussion

Speaking is one of the essential skills in English language learning because it allows students to express ideas, opinions, and information orally. Recent studies define speaking as a productive language skill that involves the ability to communicate ideas effectively in real-life interaction (Gunawan, 2025; Aftinia et al., 2025). Therefore, teachers need to employ teaching methods or techniques that encourage students to actively participate in speaking activities in the classroom. The importance of interactive speaking instruction is also emphasized in recent studies, where Yulianingsih et al. (2025) highlight that it significantly enhances learners' communicative competence, confidence, and classroom engagement. In addition, the effectiveness of structured speaking activities is supported by empirical findings, as Sa'adah et al. (2024) report that guessing games significantly improve students' speaking ability through repeated exposure and active verbal production. Furthermore, Yuliyanto et al. (2025) found that the use of Bamboozle in EFL classrooms significantly improves students' speaking skills by increasing interaction, engagement, and spontaneous oral production in communicative activities.

One technique that can be used in teaching speaking is the Hot Chair Game. This game involves a student sitting on a chair with their back to the whiteboard while other students provide clues about a specific word or vocabulary without mentioning the word directly. The student on the chair then attempts to guess the word based on the clues provided by their classmates. This activity encourages students to use English actively through the processes of describing and explaining vocabulary. The effectiveness of this technique in improving speaking performance and vocabulary acquisition has been confirmed by Syahroni and Wahono (2024) through their study on interactive guessing activities.



In practice, the use of the Hot Chair Game has several advantages. One of its main benefits is increasing students' motivation to learn. Learning presented in the form of a game creates a more enjoyable and engaging classroom atmosphere. Recent studies in game-based language learning highlight that interactive games significantly enhance students' motivation and increase their active participation in classroom communication activities (Aminah & Shofiyuddin, 2025; Aftinia et al., 2025). Moreover, the game also helps students remember vocabulary more effectively because they use the words in meaningful communicative contexts. This is supported by Ardayati and Ramasari (2024), who found that communicative guessing games substantially improve vocabulary mastery, motivation, and active participation among young EFL learners. Strengthening this argument, Aftinia et al. (2025) emphasize that game-based learning not only improves speaking performance but also develops learners' self-efficacy, which contributes to greater confidence in oral communication.

Another advantage of the Hot Chair Game is that it can improve cooperation among students. In this game, students work together in groups to provide accurate clues so that their teammates can guess the correct word. A growing body of research in collaborative language learning highlights that group interaction in speaking activities plays an important role in developing students' communicative skills and vocabulary acquisition (Homayouni, 2022; Aminah & Shofiyuddin, 2025). Further support is provided by Homayouni (2022), who confirms that collaborative group work and peer interaction positively contribute to speaking development, vocabulary learning, and learner autonomy. In addition, Aminah and Shofiyuddin (2025) report that board game based speaking activities significantly enhance student participation and motivation through collaborative interaction in classroom settings.

However, the use of the Hot Chair Game also has some weaknesses. One of the challenges is that not all students can participate actively, especially in large classes. Some students may only observe while others dominate in giving clues. In addition, the classroom can become quite noisy because students often speak simultaneously while providing clues to their peers. Another weakness is that some students may feel nervous or lack confidence when they have to sit on the Hot Chair and guess words in front of the class. These challenges are consistent with findings by Syahroni and Wahono (2024), who noted that anxiety, uneven participation, and classroom management remain significant concerns in implementing Hot Seat activities.

Based on classroom observations, students' reactions to the use of the Hot Chair Game in teaching speaking are generally positive. Most students show high enthusiasm during the activities. They appear more active in giving clues to their teammates and make efforts to explain the given words in English. This indicates that the use of games in learning can increase students' participation in speaking activities. Similar findings are reported by Aeni et al. (2024), who found that game based speaking activities significantly increase learners' enthusiasm, motivation, and engagement in EFL classrooms. Supporting this perspective, Yulianingsih et al. (2025) also note that students generally perceive question based or interactive speaking games positively, particularly in terms of enjoyment, engagement, and classroom interaction.

To overcome the weaknesses of the Hot Chair Game, teachers can implement several strategies. Teachers can organize a rotation system so that each student has the opportunity to participate in the game. In addition, students can be divided into smaller groups to ensure more equitable participation. Teachers should also establish clear rules for the game, such as taking turns giving clues and using simple English sentences. The importance of scaffolding and structured classroom management is also emphasized in recent studies, where Homayouni



(2022) and Gunawan (2025) suggest that peer support and smaller collaborative groups are effective in maximizing participation and reducing speaking anxiety.

With proper classroom management, this game can serve as an effective strategy to enhance students' speaking skills. Overall, the implementation of the Hot Chair Game in teaching speaking has a positive impact on student engagement in oral activities. The game not only increases students' motivation to learn but also helps them develop communication skills through peer interaction. In general, contemporary game based learning research consistently supports the integration of interactive speaking games as practical strategies for improving fluency, vocabulary, confidence, and communicative competence in EFL contexts, as confirmed by Gunawan (2025) and Syahroni and Wahono (2024).

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Hot Chair Game in teaching speaking has proven to be an effective and engaging method to improve students' oral skills. The game offers several advantages, including increasing students' confidence, enhancing participation, improving speaking fluency, enriching vocabulary, creating a fun learning environment, fostering cooperation, and helping students better understand the lesson material. However, the game also has some weaknesses. Not all students participate actively, shy students may feel nervous, the classroom can become noisy, students may focus more on winning than learning, time management can be challenging in large classes, and the game primarily practices limited vocabulary.

Observations show that students generally respond positively to the game. Most students are enthusiastic, motivated, actively provide clues, and enjoy interacting with their peers. Some students, particularly those sitting on the Hot Chair, may feel nervous, but the overall atmosphere is engaging and collaborative. To address these conditions and overcome the weaknesses of the implementation, teachers can apply several solutions, such as organizing regular player rotation, providing example sentences, establishing clear game rules, dividing students into smaller groups, linking the game to post-game discussions, and managing game time effectively. With these strategies, the Hot Chair Game can maximize student participation and maintain its effectiveness as a speaking activity.

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