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"When Four Elephants Fight in a Tourist Capital": Linguistic Space Sharing Among Nyanja, Bemba, Tonga and Lozi Languages in Livingstone, Zambia

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Abstract:
This study investigated sociolinguistic patterns of language use in Livingstone urban, Zambia. It was motivated by the fact that four geographically recognised regional official languages by government linguistic zoning have converged in a single space where one of them, Tonga has traditionally been predominant in line with government prescription. The three languages which have extended their tentacles to Livingstone, which is Zambia's tourist capital, are: Nyanja (zoned for Lusaka and Eastern Province), Bemba (zoned for Northern, Luapula, Muchinga, Copperbelt and parts of Central provinces) and Lozi (zoned for Western Province). The main objective of the study was to investigate how these languages share the available linguistic space in both formal and informal domains in the urban setting of Livingstone. The specific domains were: the markets, churches, learning institutions, health centres and community gatherings. The study employed primarily the qualitative approach with limited aspects of quantitative data in form of frequency tables. The data were collected from the observation of the speech behaviour exhibited by the speakers and listeners in the respective speech domains. In addition, in each of the speech domains, interviews were conducted using interview guides. The study found that the four languages were used in different speech domains and that each was more dominant than the others in specific domains. For example in market places and schools the use of Nyanja appeared to be more dominant while that of Bemba was more dominant in Pentecostal churches. The use of Tonga and Lozi was more prominent in the Seventh Day Adventist congregations. At funeral gatherings, the ethnic group to which the bereaved family belonged dictated the choice of language to use. However, in some instances, the speakers used English, especially when dealing with the representatives of the company or department where the deceased used to work. The understanding was that these, though attending an informal programme, were actually on formal duty where whatever they said was conveyed in English the national formal language. If any of the languages was used other than the four, translation was provided for into the bereaved family's language.

Keywords: Elephants, tourist, Livingstone, linguistic space, bemba, lozi, nyanja, tonga, Zambia

1. Introduction

In the years, the intensity of migration has not only remained an exceptional social phenomenon but also a norm (O'Reilly, 2007).One of the most noticeable macro-effects of modern migration is the confluence of linguistic diversities and the formation of new centres of multilingualism all around the world. In this sense, Hymes (1992) notes that urban areas have created perfect enabling environments for the interaction of language and cultural varieties resulting from and within urban mobility. Being a multidimensional process, migration leads to considerable shifts in social life, politics, and economy and, of course language involving contact and use. Kashoki (1978) shows that there are seventy-three ethnic groups spread across Zambia who speak related tongues; for administrative purposes, and as matter of policy, Banda (2006) reports that the Zambian government has demarcated the country into seven linguistic zones. Each zone has been allocated a specific language and it is, therefore, expected that only such languages would be used in such zones. The seven official languages used for local administration are Bemba, Nyanja, Tonga, Lozi, Luvale, Lunda and Kaonde. Tonga is the designated regional official language for Southern Province where Livingstone Town is located, Nyanja for Eastern and Lusaka, Lozi for Western while Bemba is lingua franca for Luapula, Copperbelt, Muchinga and Northern Provinces. Although these languages are officially zoned, in practice one hears them spoken outside their official boundaries (MOE, 1966).

The linguistic zoning of Nyanja, Lozi and Bemba presupposes the general understanding that these languages would be spoken in their respective places without crossing the linguistic boundaries as highlighted above. However, since language cannot be containerized and is always in motion, as argued by (Blomaert, 2010) in the theory of Sociolinguistics of Globalization, these languages have crossed their linguistic boundaries and have since converged in some places. One of such places is Livingstone urban area. How these four major languages are utilized in a predominantly Tonga area is the phenomenon investigated in this study.

The linguistic landscape of Livingstone urban is such that there are twelve (12) languages that one would hear being spoken. These include: Tonga, Lozi, Nyanja, Bemba,Toka-leya, Shona, Ndebele, Luvale, Lunda, Kikaonde, Subiya and Lenje (Census Report, 2010). However, the research was only interested in the four because they were the most frequently heard in the public domain as well as on account of their regional official statuses in the country.

2. Statement of the Problem

Livingstone is the tourist capital of Zambia and as such many people of different ethnic backgrounds from abroad and within have visited the place. Others have acquired pieces of land and settled there in order to take advantage of the lucrative economic opportunities. The physical migration of people was accompanied with the migration of languages from other historical and geographical jurisdictions to be in contact with Tonga the indigenous language for the area. The major migrated languages are Nyanja, Bemba, and Lozi which have the status of regional official languages in other provinces of Zambia. While it is known that Tonga, Nyanja, Bemba and Lozi with the status of regional official languages (elephants) in the country are now in contact in Livingstone, it is not known how these four share linguistic space an area which should predominantly be Tonga speaking. Therefore, the statement of the problem, simply put as a question is, "What are the sociolinguistic patterns of language use in the tourist capital of Livingstone urban?"

3. Research Questions

The following were the questions that guided the research.
- What are the language domains in which Bemba, Nyanja, Tonga and Lozi are used?
- What is the frequency of use of each of the four languages in the domains identified above?

4. Literature Review

A lot of studies have been carried out in Africa concerning language use. Cooper and Carpenter (1976) conducted a study in Ethiopian market places. The aim of the study was to establish the patterns of language use among the sellers and the buyers in market places. The study employed the qualitative language approach and administered fifty questionnaires to the respondents. The findings of the investigation showed that the sellers in markets abandoned their mother tongue and committed themselves to the language of the buyers. The explanation for this held that using the buyer's language worked as a way of advertising the merchandise and made the buyer feel at easy and as though part of the seller. One of the recommendations of this study was to conduct a study of a similar nature in a multilingual setting which would include the formal domains of language use. The current study investigated patterns of language use in the urban area with focus on both formal and informal speech domains. This study is different from the Ethiopian study in the sense that the Ethiopian study did not involve the formal domains of language use which the current study has taken on board. It can be mentioned that the current study fills up the gap of taking up the formal domains which were not considered in the earlier investigation. In addition, it can also be mentioned that while the earlier study involved only two languages, the current one occurs in a multilingual setting involving four regional official languages coming in one place.

Cooper and Nahum (1976) investigated the use of language by witnesses, prosecutors and Judges in Ethiopian Courts of Law. The research employed a qualitative research design and used simple observation to collect data. The findings showed that the judges and the prosecutors used the same language whenever they addressed witnesses in any given case. However, the research also found out that the judges and prosecutors committed to the use of the witness's language if they saw the witness using other languages. The current study is different from the earlier one because it takes into account the informal domain of language use which the earlier one did not do. In addition, it can also be mentioned that the context of Ethiopia is far much different from that of Zambia, so it was envisaged that conducting a study of a similar nature in Zambia would present interesting results.

Whiteley (1976) studies patterns of language use in the rural districts of selected towns in Kenya. He selected for his investigation the homestead domain, trade area domain, church domain and work places. The researcher employed the qualitative research design and used simple observation as tool for data collection. One of the findings of this undertaking is that each of the speech domains displayed specific constraints that varied from one domain to the other. The research also found out that the use of language varied with age, educational background, sex and also the heterogeneity of the research participants. The current study is different from that conducted by Whiteley because while Whiteley's study was carried out in rural settings, the present one was undertaken in an urban setting. According to the earlier proposition made by Kashoki (1978), the rural setting does not attract more convergence of people to cause heterogeneity. Moreover, the study by Whiteley was focused on two languages spoken in Kenya while the current study considers four major languages occurring in a single geographic space.

Another study in Kenya was conducted by Gorman (1976). This study investigated the patterns of language use among school going children and their parents. The objective was to establish the pupils' use of language in each of the major language groups in Kenya in their first year in government run and aided secondary schools. The research administered fifty questionnaires to participants in each of the given schools. Besides this, the research also conducted

interviews using unstructured interview schedules to some of the parents and pupils. The findings of this research are that the pupils preferred using English when speaking to older brothers, sisters and friends. However, the study discovered that in some homes, the use of English was restricted by guardians. The current study is different from that of Gorman in that while that of Gorman considered the use of language in a school system, the present one investigates patterns of language use in different domains that are either formal or informal in an urban set up. The study reported in this article was conducted in Zambian setting while that by Gorman was conducted in a Kenyan setting.

Mugambi (2003) carried out a study on the current language situation in Kenya and the choice of English, Kiswahili and the indigenous languages in a multilingual setting. Questionnaires were used to gather data on gender and marital status, languages spoken in various contexts such as home with children, with neighbours, in the office, and so forth. The results showed that English has become the lingua franca among the educated Kenyans while Kiswahili is the national language. The study also showed that standard Kiswahili was taught as a subject in schools and universities while the non-standard form was the first language of the urban Kenyan children Kamwangamalu (2000). This meant that an urban dweller needed to master the use of more than one language in order to communicate effectively in the various speech domains. The current study is almost similar in the sense that both seem to occur in a multilingual setting. The only difference is that the former looked at which of the languages was chosen in those given domains, the current one looks more on whether or not the use of the four languages in the selected domains could be said to be patterned.

Musonda (1978) undertook a study on the use of language by University of Zambia Students in Zambia. The study indicated that English was not only the most widely spoken language among the educated Zambians but also that it was the language most frequently used by students to speak to their brothers and sisters and, within the university, to strangers and fellow students. The current study differs from that of Musonda because it focuses on how four specific languages of equal regional status share linguistic space in one setting. The study is confined to Livingstone urban yet considering various language domains that are both formal and informal.

The other study was done by Datta (1978). The study investigated the linguistic abilities and patterns of language use of the Asian population resident in Zambia. The objective was to enumerate the difference between language used in the family domain and the one used for mere communication with persons who were not members of the family domain. The findings showed that the Asians, in communicating to their houseboys, gardeners and cooks used English and Chilapalapa on the line of rail and also the dominant language especially in rural areas. For instance, Bemba in Luapula, Copperbelt and Northern Provinces, Nyanja in Eastern and Lusaka and Tonga in Southern Provinces. However, in the present study, the researcher investigates the patterns of language use in an urban area where languages have converged or come into contact.

5. Methodology

5.1. Participants

Data were collected from different domains which represented both formal and informal settings. There was no limitation as to the number of participants because the essence of the study was to understand as to which of the four languages was used or were used within the specified speech domains. The study involved both male and females participants.

Schools, markets, funeral gatherings, churches and health facilities were visited one at a time. In terms of the schools, care was taken to ensure that the learners' use of language was observed when they were learning and also when they were either on break or lunch thereby reflecting the distinction between the formal and the informal aspects of language use within the same speech domain. The interviewees were randomly selected from each of the chosen speech domain. Furthermore, primary school classroom teaching sessions in five public schools in Livingstone were observed. The schools included Zambezi, Linda East, Holy Cross, Dambwa and Shanalumba between June and July 2017. Funeral and church services were also observed.

5.2. Data Generation

The study employed the cross section survey design to generate data. The cross section survey design was selected because the researcher sought to gather data from a cross section of domains and participants at the same time. In terms of approach, the study adopted the qualitative approach. This is understood as the approach under which data are collected by non-numerical means. It is used to study conditions or processes that are hard to measure with numbers (Barbara and Ross, 1983). This approach is usually associated with case studies and participant observation. Under the given design employed in this study a number of strategies were used to collect data. These included the interview guide, observation and the survey questionnaire.

5.3. Data Analysis

After being collected the data were assembled and coded according to the respective speech domains in the study: the formal and the informal domains. The informal domains included the funeral gatherings, market places, school children during their lunch and break times and also on their way home after knocking off, people in streets or shops in town center. On the other hand, the formal domain included the health facilities, school children in their classrooms and church services in different Christian faith congregations. The data were further sub-categorized according to the research objectives and questions of the study. This was to make sure the objectives were adequately addressed and also the questions answered accordingly.

6. Results and Discussion

6.1. Language Use in Market Places

With regard to language use in market places, where different traders of different social and ethnic backgrounds converge, the study revealed that Nyanja was the language of first contact. Code switching was also noted between participants in instances where the seller noticed the buyer as being familiar with either Lozi or Tonga. Code switching occurred from either Nyanja to Lozi or Tonga or from Lozi or Tonga to Nyanja. In all cases where sellers were not certain as to which language the buyer understood, Nyanja was found to be the language of first contact. It is the case, therefore, that with regard to the market domain in Livingstone urban, Nyanja, the language initially alien to the town, has become localized. In instances where the seller was certain that the buyer understood either Lozi or Tonga or Bemba, the seller used any of these languages accordingly.

The high prevalence in the use of Nyanja is that it is seen by many traders as a neutral language to which traders that were not sure of what language the seller or the buyer spoke resorted as alternative. Everybody who is involved in the trade of some sort is expected to speak at least a bit of the language or there would be consequences in terms of loss of business. Therefore, the motivation for choosing this code is in order for the seller not to lose the prospective buyer of the merchandise. This would entail that there would be no communicative barrier between the buyer and the seller. Based on similar studies conducted in Ethiopia by Susan and Cooper (2006) and also in Kenya, the conclusion was that the language associated with trade or quick business transaction was mainly selected by the seller in order to win the buying prospects of the buyer. Therefore, in the case of Nyanja in Livingstone markets, the selection of Nyanja was in a way attracting the buyer to a conducive business transaction. It can also be said that the buyer also saw in this use of Nyanja the possibility of negotiation platform for possibly slightly reduced commodity price. The other reason why Nyanja was so prominent in the market domain is that there was a significant number of market traders that had crossed boundaries as immigrants from other places such as Lusaka, the Nyanja speaking zone.

Tonga was identified as the second most frequently used language in the market domain. This status of Tonga was attributed to the fact that the language is the lingua franca of the study area. Its prominence was therefore anticipated in the speech community. The finding renders support to Banda (2006) who renders the idea that languages have boundaries, as linguistic zones within which they can be utilized.

Lozi turned out to be the third most frequently used language in the market domain. The low utilization of Lozi in this domain is attributed to the fact that it is neither regional official language in Livingstone nor the natural language of trade. Its presence in the domain is due to the fact that in the recent past it has become one of the familiar languages for general communication by members of the public. The linguistic prevalence of Lozi in the market place is further attributed to linguistic mobility and linguistic pollination triggered by past exodus of Lozi-speaking people from Western Province (the zonal home of Lozi) through Livingstone in Zambia to work in the Saw Mills in Southern Rhodesia and mines in Johannesburg, South Africa in the colonial days. During these treks the spine of the journey was the rail line which passed through Livingstone. With time, upon return from Southern Rhodesia and South Africa, a number of Lozi-speaking people began to settle in Livingstone for economic reasons hence the partial use of the language in the market over time.

Finally, Bemba recorded the lowest frequency of use owing to the fact that the language is usually used when both the seller and the buyer have realized they can speak Bemba. Bemba was never used as first transactional language between the seller and the buyer except in the instances explained. On how two interlocutors identify themselves as capable of speaking and understanding Bemba is the subject for future research. However, it should be stated that the language is taking space in the market domain because the study revealed that there are many Bemba ethnic speakers that have migrated to Livingstone in search of business prospects resulting in the language being readily available for use.

6.2. Language Use in Funeral Gatherings

Before explaining and discussing these findings, it is considerably ideal to highlight on the idea of funeral in the African context. Magesa, (1997) opines that African funerals are community affairs in which the whole community experiences the loss and feels the grief just as the immediate members of the bereaved family.

The community usually demonstrates this pain and sorrow by sharing the physical needs of the funeral in any form (materially, financially) and also attending the funeral procession itself. It should be noted that the ultimate purpose of any activity preceding or during the funeral is to comfort, encourage and heal those who are hurting. The Christians also usually seize the opportunity to share words of encouragement from the Bible. What is clearly noted here is that the funeral houses or gatherings are a diversity of ethnic groups coming together. It is a multiplicity of languages and cultural phenomenon.

Therefore, arising from the fact that the concern of the rest of the people in attendance, including the church is to comfort and encourage, the selection of language also becomes critical. It is because of this that the language of the bereaved family is selected.

The findings that the use of the language of the bereaved family rated high was justified by what has been alluded above. The bereaved family is the centre of all that is being said and done; therefore, care was made to ensure that the family benefitted from every speech given or any announcement made.

Mbiti (1969) adds that speaking in the language of the bereaved family is just one of the many ways of getting closer and sharing in its sorrow.

It is this presence of the multiplicity of languages that leads to one speaking but accompanied by an interpreter. However, central to this is the language of the family. It can be observed that even if any other language was used by

anyone addressing the mourners, the translation score into family language still remained high. However, a few instances during the funeral the use of Tonga was noted. Tonga was usually naturally selected because of its predominance in the region. The use of Tonga did not exclude the majority of the mourners since it is the lingua franca. Nyanja was also heard being used representing a population of such group of mourners who belonged to this ethnic group. One could hear the language being spoken even by those to whom it was not mother tongue. The reason for Lozi slightly going beyond Nyanja is that Lozi, also, though not regional official language for Southern Province, is a familiar language of the community. Bemba on the other hand is used owing to the fact that Bemba was usually spoken only when there was a direct interaction with participants from the same ethnic group of Bemba or if at all the speakers, somehow felt there could be some people who only could only understand what was being said in Bemba, so at that point one would switch to Bemba. However, it should be noted that the language is taking up much space just almost as Nyanja is.

With regard to the sociolinguistic concept of languages in contact, the findings are clearly an outcome of languages in contact. What is observable here is that during this time, there is a voluntary language shift from the community's familiar language to the bereaved family's mother tongue. The other language phenomenon reviewed out of this as languages encounter is that both or all of them would be used to bring about the concept of language use or Language choice. Kashoki (1978) speaks of the possible bilingualism in the event of languages coming into contact. This bilingualism can be at two levels: societal bilingualism and individual bilingualism. The former suggests the use of two languages within the same speech community while the later entails the individual's ability to use two languages. This is only made possible when languages have moved from their designated zones (linguistic zones) to where they are not expected as is the case in the current study. When this contact occurs, however, people remain without choice but to learn how to adapt to the language situation.

6.3. Patterns of Language Use in Churches

In order to determine the language pattern in the church, questions on language use were asked to different faith groups or congregations. The research established that the use of language in churches varied from one church to the other. It was not uniform. Crucial to mention is that many languages abound in one church. For instance, in most of the Seventh-Day-Adventist(SDA) churches within the area, the research established that Tonga ranked high in terms of usage. Most of the announcements were made in Tonga or if they were made in English, then translation into Tonga followed. The second preference was Lozi, followed by Nyanja and Bemba. There are historical reasons attached to this kind of patterning of use of language in that the first converts to the SDA faith were Tonga-speaking. It was also discovered that in many churches within SDA there also was a deliberate segmentation of members according to their ethnic groups for the purpose of small group discussions. Common among these were: Lozi, Tonga, Bemba, and Nyanja. In some cases the research noted other group discussions in Ndebele, Lenje and Lamba.

With regard to the use of language in the Catholic Church it was observed that the church has specific services conducted in both English and local languages at specific times. The English mass, for instance came earlier in the morning and so all those that preferred English attended this mass. Tonga was most preferred for local language mass over Lozi which was found to be used in only in one specific parish. Bemba and Nyanja were not being used in the Catholic Church in Livingstone owing to the fact that they are not prominently used as community languages in the area.

6.4. Patterns of Language Use among the Youths

Among the youths the language situation proved different such that they mostly preferred Nyanja. In their many social interactions during lunch time it was noted that Nyanja was the transactional language among the youths in spite of them belonging to other language ethnical groups. The reason for this will be explained in the next chapter.

6.5. School Domain

Patterning to the use of language in the school domain the results that are shown are actually for both for the informal, public and formal domains. The school environment was yet another domain in which the multiplicity of languages and cultural phenomenon abound. Many schools, both private and public schools were visited and observed the language utility situation. The presentation of these findings, though showing the similar language occurrence, were presented and discussed separately for clarity sake.

6.5.1. Outside the Classroom

The research data showed that in this domain Tonga was the mostly used language and was seconded by Nyanja while Lozi took the third position and Bemba appeared last. The reason for the high score in Tonga is already so obvious by now and has been explained in other domains above which showed the similar situation. The prominence in Nyanja is what can be given attention since it is not the expected language in this domain. It is quite prominent in this domain owing to the fact that the learners find it easy to express the informal expressions in Nyanja compared to their mother tongue language. Nyanja, among the peers in school environment was treated as language of interaction regardless of the fact that neither of the participants belonged to this ethnic group.

At Linda Market, the researcher found an International Community School run by whites. It was surprising or unexpected to find learners together with some few White and Black selected teachers playing some local minor game called, 'Wider' within the school premises. As the game went on, it was observed that for most of the times, the participants used Nyanja to speak to one another. The researcher further carried out a verbal interview to ask the teachers why their learners spoke Nyanja and not Lozi or Tonga. The response was that Nyanja was their learners' language of

interaction whenever they were outside. It should also be noted that even the expatriate White Teachers were made to learn the language for this sake.

With regard to language contact, as opined by Wim (1987), he argues that when languages come in contact, many changes occur and these would range from speakers of other languages shifting to the new and abandon the other one or simply take both and use them side by side. Therefore, the fact that the presence of Nyanja occurs in this domain demonstrates the conceptual abstraction and theorization of this study. Predominantly one would have expected only the use of Tonga and Lozi among the pupils but for the mobility nature of language that now there is contact with other languages in another different linguistic zone. The languages, like Lozi was only spoken consistently only when the interaction was between those that literary knew they were fluent and ethnically Lozi, so they felt they could relate to each other in same way.

6.5.2. Inside the Classroom

The data collected and analyzed reviewed the use of Tonga was more than any other language. Lozi was second to Tonga while Bemba and Nyanja would only be heard from outside classroom as indicated earlier on informal domain of the school. The aspects of code switching from Lozi to Tonga were very prevalent as learners and teachers would endeavour to seek clarity on several matters during the learning sessions. The reason for this is owing to the language policy guidelines which emphasize the use of the familiar language of the community and so in this domain, Tonga is the regionally gazetted official language, (MOE, 1996). Therefore, the teachers could not use these languages to explain concepts except when encountered with a situation where the Nyanja or Bemba expressions were needed in order to make the learning point clearer. Nyanja and Bemba would only be used in certain instances and actually so minimally as such cases were also minimal.

6.6. Hospital Domain

The research data reviewed that the use of Tonga was prominently rated the highest followed by Lozi. Nyanja was the third in prominence while Bemba listed last. The high prominence in the use of Lozi and Tonga was accounted on the same reasons already given earlier above in other domains that Tonga a regional official language for Livingstone while Lozi was more of a familiar language to the residents.

What should be mentioned here is the reason for the low prevalence of Bemba. It is not the lingua franca for the area, so it is not expected to be highly used by the participants unless in selected instances like when the two Bemba speakers meet and only when they have identified each other.

There were also instances where some of the patients noticed some challenges in the code used by the medical personnel; the patients would quickly switch to the language they felt was closer to the officer. In most instances, the switch was from Lozi to Tonga, or Tonga to Lozi or Lozi to Nyanja. It should be mentioned that the medical personnel was always encouraged to learn the language of the local so they serve themselves the trouble of communication.

7. Conclusion

Data obtained indicated that people in Livingstone use Tonga, Lozi, Lunda, Toka-leya, Lenje, Kikaonde, Bemba, Shona, Subiya, Luvale, Ndebele and Nyanja. However, much as one would hear these languages, only four out of these were being investigated because of their regional official status in designated linguistic zones. On the other hand, the other languages like Kikaonde, Lunda, and Luvale are regional official languages but in Livingstone their prevalence was not so common as these selected four and for the rest of the other languages, they simply do not fulfill the official status. The paper set out to investigate the patterns of language use in a multilingual Livingstone urban. It has established that these languages are used in different speech domains and that they form a pattern. In each domain, languages are used differently and the frequency of use as shown in chapter four (4) varies from domain to domain owing to constantly changing situations or contexts. The results of this study were founded on the data collected from these domains identified which included: the hospital, school, markets and funeral speech domains.

In each of these, language use has been closely analyzed and concludes that languages are sharing geographical space. The speakers are at liberty to choose whichever codes they feel would fulfill their role for which they want language to perform. It has also been noted that apart from Livingstone as a city being multilingual, the speakers also are either bilingual or multilingual.

8. Recommendations

In every study there is always a suspicion made by the investigator at the beginning of the undertaking. The current study was undertaken within the ambit of a very specific set of objectives which have been successfully met. In view of the findings the study makes the following recommendations for future research:

- Another study to explore the language situation in rural Livingstone.
- Similar research is carried out in places that are of similar setting as Livingstone in order to establish whether there is similar interplay of sociolinguistic factors.
- Another study to explore whether or not the languages that have come in contact in Livingstone are languages in competition or are languages in complementation.

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