

SENTENCE STRUCTURE AND PUNCTUATION IN ADVERTISEMENT SLOGANS

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Abstract. New businesses and products get into the market every day, and advertising is essential in the process of attracting customers. Advertisers analyse clients' behaviour and are trying to make their message as persuasive as possible. They try to use language which suggests that the product they advertise is of the highest quality. The purpose of the research is to find out what syntactic patterns and punctuation marks are most commonly applied in advertisement slogans. Advertisement slogans are mostly simple short sentences with a striking message. The main idea of an advertisement slogan is to reach the readers and affect them in a certain way by promoting the product of the advertising campaign. In order to achieve that the advertising creators use different sentence structures and punctuation marks. Two methods were applied - the analysis of theoretical references and the descriptive comparative linguistic analysis. The analysis of theoretical references gives a review of sentence structures and punctuation marks in advertisement slogans. The practical linguistic analysis was performed, 100 advertisement slogans were gathered on the internet from several different sources. Different cases of sentence structure and punctuation were defined and explained. Most frequently advertisement slogans are formed by using simple sentence structures. Declarative and imperative sentences were the most popular types of the sentence found in advertisement slogans. Declarative sentences are mostly formed by using a simple syntactic pattern. Imperative sentences are highly elliptical, the most common structure is a verb phrase. In advertisement slogans, punctuation marks can be neutral or not neutral. Neutral punctuation marks do not affect the emotional shade of the slogan. Not neutral punctuation marks not only punctuate advertisement slogans but create an emotional shade or help to emphasize the main idea of the slogan. Not in all cases do the creators of advertisement slogans obey the rules of grammar and they occasionally use punctuation as a stylistic device.

Keywords: advertisement slogans, advertising campaign, sentence structure, punctuation.

Introduction

Advertisement slogans are used in many alternative ways to advertise different items. Almost every exclusive product released to the worldwide market has its own slogan because slogans promote and generate publicity. The main function of advertisement slogans is to communicate the message of the advertising campaign. However, to create a great advertisement slogan sometimes words are not enough. Nowadays the internet language is getting more popular and developing technologies have grown the need for visual design. Also, the text in advertising occupies less space than ever before, and creators of advertisement slogans have to adapt to that. More than a few different sentence structures and punctuation cases may be used in slogans to emphasize the crucial point.

Prior to this article, there were very few linguistic works on this topic. Advertisement slogans for a long period of time and even nowadays are described as one of the main parts of advertising. That is why there is a need to analyze what syntactic patterns and punctuation rules are applied in advertisement slogans. Kazlauskaitė, Liakaitė (2009) stated that very short simple sentences and statements are usually used in advertising slogans. Such simple sentences are easily perceived, not insistent, and therefore, more effective. Kazlauskaitė, Liakaitė (2009) also stated that simple sentences are used to make the slogan easily understandable. To make a

slogan rather short and highly elliptical different forms of sentence structure and punctuation can be used. In general, all types of advertising slogans usually consist of a group of catchy words or short phrases and sentences which can be grouped into syntactic categories and structures' Huadhom and Trakulkasemsuk (2017). Sentence structure and punctuation give a better understanding of advertisement slogans and the way they were created.

Theoretical sources give in-depth explanations about sentence structure and punctuation, its classification, patterns, and forms used to create advertising texts (Bason, J., Roger, A. (2016). *University of Oxford Style Guide*. Oxford: Public Affairs Directorate.; Bowdery, R. (2008). *Basics Advertising: Copywriting: The Creative Process of Writing Text for Advertisements or Publicity Material*. Lausanne: AVA Publishing SA.;

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The article aims to unveil what kind of sentence structures and punctuation may be applied in advertisement slogans theoretically; to reveal practical cases of syntactic patterns and punctuation used in advertisement slogans by descriptive comparative linguistic analysis. **The subject matter** of the research is cases of sentence structure and punctuation used in advertisement slogans.

In order to achieve the aim, **the objectives** include investigation of sentence structures and punctuation used in advertisement slogans theoretically; the study of the most common patterns of sentence structure in advertisement slogans; the analysis of punctuation rules applied in advertisement slogans. **The methods** of theoretical analysis and descriptive comparative linguistic analysis have been applied in the research.

The theoretical background of sentence structure and punctuation in advertisement slogans

It is essential to get deeper knowledge about the parts of the sentence before analyzing sentence structure. Pažūsis, Rosinienė, and Žemaitienė (2014) state that words are grammatically connected and have a certain function in the sentence. This way words can be described as parts of the sentence. Also, parts of sentences are divided into the main and the secondary parts. Also, when analyzing sentence structure in advertisement slogans it is important to have deep knowledge about how words collaborate to make a phrase or a sentence, because sometimes the main parts of the sentence may be removed from the slogan to make it shorter. That is why it is important to define structures of phrases too when analyzing sentence structure in advertisement slogans. Straus (2008) defines a phrase as a group of words that does not have a subject-verb component. According to Radford (2004, p.38), 'Phrases and sentences are built up by a series of merger operations, each of which combines a pair of constituents together to form a larger constituent'.

Phrases

Gelderen (2010) pointed out that while analyzing phrases it is essential to know which part of the phrase is the main part. For example, if the main part of the phrase is a verb, the phrase is called a Verb Phrase (VP), or if the main word of the phrase is a noun, the phrase is called a Noun Phrase (NP). In a similar way, all kinds of phrases can be identified. Gelderen also stated that by indicating the phrases it is easier to identify sentence structure. Radford (2009) explained how to identify the main part in the phrase. Since every phrase has the main word, knowing the main word (the head) of the phrase helps to understand the structure of that sentence. For example, words *help* and *you* merged together to make a phrase *help you*. This phrase has Verb-like Phrase properties instead of Pronoun-like properties. Some advertisement slogans may be made up of phrases only. E.g., *Taste the rainbow. Open happiness.*

Clauses

A Clause is a more complicated structure compared to a phrase. According to Straus (2008), the difference between a phrase and a clause is that a clause contains a subject and verb and can be a complete sentence. There are two types of clauses, a dependent and an independent clause. An independent clause is a simple sentence and can stand on its own. A dependent clause different from an independent clause cannot stand on its own. According to Huadhom and Trakulkasemsuk (2017), dependent clauses often begin either by a subordinating pronoun or relative pronoun. In this way, the clause is unable to stand alone. A dependent clause is used together with an independent clause in a sentence. Dependent clauses can be nominal, adverbial, or adjectival clauses. It is essential to be able to define clauses in a sentence. It helps to understand what type of sentence is used as an advertisement slogan. Different types of sentences contain different sentence structures. For example, if a sentence is built from one independent clause the sentence is a simple sentence. However, a single sentence may include more than one independent clause or have an independent and dependent clause. By defining clauses in a sentence, its structure can be explained.

Ellipsis

Simple short sentences are most popular in advertising and make sentences even shorter different syntactic features may be used. According to Norušaitienė and Trapnauskienė (2008), all simple two-member sentences can be complete or incomplete – elliptical. Radford (2004) explained how incomplete sentences are formed by using ellipsis as a syntactic feature when one word or phrase is omitted from the sentence without changing the meaning of it.

Smetonienė (2009) stated that using ellipsis is one of the best ways to express the main idea of the advertisement slogan. It shortens the slogan while not changing its original idea. Advertising text creators also use elliptical sentences because of their semantical independence from context. In this way, the same advertisement slogan can be used in different advertisements.

Types of sentences

After getting to understand what basic grammar rules may be applied in the syntax of advertisement slogans, different types of sentences can be explained. It helps to easier classify slogans based on their syntactic background. Regarding their

sentence structure advertisement slogans can be classified as simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences; or as declarative, imperative interrogative, and exclamatory sentences. Classification of the sentence helps to develop a better understanding of its structure. Several theoretical sources classify slogans according to their sentence structure in the same way. Norušaitienė and Trapnauskienė (2008) expressed similar ideas that sentences according to their structure can be simple or composite (compound and complex sentences). However, there is another way to classify sentences regarding to grammatical form and functions in communication. In this way, sentences are classified into four groups of sentences: declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences. Previous researches by Vaičėnionienė (2006) and Huadhom, Trakulkasemsuk (2017) show that this way is more commonly used when analyzing advertisement slogans regarding their meaning and sentence structure.

Punctuation

Punctuation can be used in many ways and every punctuation mark has much more than one rule to describe how and when to use it. The golden rule of proper punctuation according to Bason, Roger, (2016) is to use as little punctuation as necessary while retaining the meaning of the sentence. This specific rule is noticeable in advertising too since advertising retains simple structures to point out the only main idea. Copywriters try to intentionally avoid implementing too much punctuation in their published texts. There are other common principles of punctuation in advertising texts. According to Smetonienė (2013), One of the most critical principles of advertisement slogans is compactness. This is the main reason why colon and semi-colon are rarely being used in advertisement slogans. Using a lot of punctuation marks might help to express advertisement mood, emotional tension. Some creators use a lot of punctuation marks to convey spoken language into a text. However, there are several cases where punctuation is excluded from the text. Using no punctuation in advertising is common too, it might intrigue, activate addressee memory, mood and imagination.

Punctuation does more than simply punctuating the text might: it changes the pace of reading, it offers sentence complexity and variety, and probably most important, it clarifies meaning. But when text is punctuated wrong, there is a risk to make collaboration of words more than just having clunky sentences or a slightly confusing sentence. The reality is punctuation may completely change

the meaning of the entire sentence. That is why a huge part of influential slogan success can be attributed to strategically used or avoided punctuation. The famous copywriter Suggett (2018) criticized general grammar by stating that perfect grammar is not perfect communication. 'A sentence that is structured beautifully, obeying all the laws, and bylaws, of the English language, is not what advertising is all about. In fact, in advertising, you don't even need to use real words, good sentence structure, and proper punctuation, or obey any of the rules that were drummed into you in school. Basically, when creating a slogan, propriety is not very important. The most important factor is the effect that it produces as strategic punctuation which helps to achieve that goal.' This quote creates an awareness that more advertising creators are ignoring general rules of sentence structure and punctuation.

Advertisement slogans are shortening over time too, containing fewer words, omitting obvious words out. By trying to make an advertisement slogan shorter, sentence structure might be broken, but the sentence may remain still understandable. Also, several punctuation marks may appear in the elliptical sentence, helping to develop the emotional shade of the advertisement slogan.

The research methodology

For the research methodology, 100 advertisement slogans were found on the Internet. Most of the slogans represent worldwide companies, which had several successful advertising campaigns. These slogans mainly were found on the popular slogans lists on the internet. After that their original source was found. A wide range of slogans was chosen to understand the main patterns of sentence structure and punctuation used in general.

The data analysis was carried out in the following stages. Firstly all 100 advertisement slogans sentence structure was analysed. The first part of the research defines what syntactic patterns may be used in advertisement slogans. In the second part of the research punctuation of collected advertisement slogans is analysed. The theoretical part explained grammar rules, which may be applied in the advertisement slogans. Incorrect punctuation cases will be explained too.

Results

All four types of sentences were identified in collected slogans. 44 out of 100 advertisement slogans were declarative type, 38 imperative types, 8 interrogative types, and only one case of

exclamatory type was found. Declarative sentences were most popular.

Declarative advertisement slogans. Most declarative sentences were short simple sentences, which state something. These advertisement slogans contained simple sentence structure, also in these advertisement slogans direct word order was kept. E.g., *Redbull gives you wings. It's everywhere you want to be. We try harder.* However, there are some declarative sentences in which some parts of the sentence are omitted by using ellipsis. In these slogans, obvious words are taken out to make a slogan shorter. E.g., *Good to the last drop.* In declarative sentences, most commonly, the used structure is an expanded pattern of Subject + Predicate expressed by using adjectives, adverbials, indirect objects, and other parts of the sentence, 16 cases out of 44. On the other hand, sometimes Subject + Predicate word order may be broken. For example. In the slogan *Impossible is Nothing* adjective comes first; it is followed by the predicate. When using simple declarative sentences as slogans there is no one correct way to form a sentence. Sometimes it is even better to improvise and make a sentence different from others to get more attention, and it is what advertisement slogans are about. *Impossible is nothing* is a great example, when by changing word order in a sentence it is possible to create a different image.

Imperative advertisement slogans. 38 imperative sentences as advertisement slogans were found. 36 advertisement slogans are meant to express command and 2 advertisement slogans persuade. E.g., *Think Big. Push button publishing. See what we mean. Taste the feeling. Open happiness. Make the most of now.* It can be stated that imperative sentences are used in advertisement slogans when no facts are stated, instead, the slogan tries to impact the reader to act. Verb phrase was the most popular structure across imperative advertisement slogans. 16 out of 38 imperative advertisement slogans included only verb phrases. The most common structures of the verb phrase were V+N. E.g., *Taste the rainbow. Taste the feeling. Open happiness. Smoke Chupa Chups.* V+Adv. E.g., *Think different. Eat fresh. Think small. Think big.*

Exclamatory advertisement slogan. Only one exclamatory sentence was found. It is important to analyse this one particular case because tendencies can change and more exclamatory sentences may be used as advertisement slogans. The case found is. *It's finger lickin' good!* Without additional context, this sentence would be a declarative sentence. The sentence structure, in this case, is a simple sentence structure with direct word order (Subject + Predicate + ...). Although exclamation mark at the

end of the slogan makes this sentence more expressive. This slogan is used in adverts together with eating people. With this additional context, it is clear that a sentence with the exclamatory mark is meant to express strong feelings.

Interrogative advertisement slogans. 8 interrogative advertisement slogans were found. In those advertisement slogans, only general and special questions are used. In 8 total cases that were found, 4 were general, and 4 were special questions. General questions are questions that expect a straightforward answer *Yes* or *No*. Special questions demand more specific answers. General question cases included two complete and two incomplete questions regarding their structure. General question structure - Operator + Subject + bare Inf/N/Participles + Object + Adverbials. Two slogans that are containing this structure are these. *Can you hear me now? Is it in you?* Special questions are made by using question word + general question structure. E.g., *What's in your wallet? What + is (there something) in your wallet?*

All four types of sentences were found in collected advertisement slogans. Although, it can be stated that sentences that express strong emotions, or feelings are not typically used as advertisement slogans. The most popular structures used in advertisement slogans are simple declarative sentences with direct word order and imperative verb phrases. This means that usually advertisements slogans state something or command something, persuade to make certain action. It is also important to mention, that ellipsis is commonly used in declarative and imperative slogans. In declarative sentences, subject and predicate are often removed. The main parts of the sentence can be understood from the sentence, so they are removed to make a slogan shorter. In imperative sentences, the subject is removed and the predicate becomes the most important part of the sentence.

Multi clause sentences in advertisement slogans. In 10 advertisement slogans, complex sentences were found. E.g., *Melts in your mouth, not in your hands. Like a good neighbour, State farm is here. It's everywhere you want it to be. Does exactly what it says on the tin. Live in your world, play in ours. If you want to impress someone, put him on your black list. Once you pop, You can't stop. Taste so good, cats ask for it by name.* 7 of these sentences declare a fact and 2 sentences are imperative. Some parts of the sentence may be omitted to make a sentence shorter than it should be.

The compound sentences were even less popular than complex sentences in advertisement slogans. Only 1 case included a compound sentence used as

a slogan. E.g., *Have a break, have a KitKat*. This sentence is an imperative sentence.

It can be stated that it is not common to use more than one clause in an advertisement slogan. Those sentences, which include two main clauses may be divided into two sentences by using a period. In that case, they do not form a compound. Compound and complex sentences are not popular, because of their more complicated structure. Also, it is important to notice that sentences that include more than one clause usually are longer than a simple sentence or a single verb phrase used as a slogan.

Non-standard grammatical forms

Non-standard grammatical forms may be used in advertisement slogans. However, they are not so popular, only 7 advertisement slogans were not applying grammar rules. It can be stated that advertising creators take a risk by choosing to not use proper grammar when creating advertisement slogans. Advertisement slogans may not include a clause and in this case, they do not form a sentence. Also, informal forms of words may be included in slogans. These informal forms are referred to as the spoken language. E.g., *Power. Beauty and Soul.; Innovation; Grace... Space... Pace...*

Punctuation in advertisement slogans

In advertising texts, punctuation marks can be neutral or not neutral (have an emotional shade). 47 advertisement slogans included a neutral punctuation mark. Although there are 30 cases when a neutral punctuation mark is not used. In all these cases the period which intentionally had to be used at the end of the slogan is omitted. It is important to notice that most of these slogans are presented separately from the other text of the advertising. 30 cases where the emotional shade of the slogan was impacted by a punctuation mark were found. Some advertisement slogans included neutral and not neutral punctuation marks.

Neutral punctuation in advertisement slogans

Neutral sentences include commas and the period at the end of the sentence. Although, several punctuation marks could be used instead of a period or comma could create a different emotional shade and this punctuation could not be named as neutral punctuation. In gathered advertisement slogans neutral punctuation marks were mostly used to end declarative and imperative advertisement slogans which included only one clause. E.g., *Redbull gives you wings. Just Do It. Think Different. Good to the last drop. Have it your way. At the heart of the*

image. A diamond is forever. Eat fresh. Keep going. Also, some cases included more than one neutral punctuation mark. E.g., *If you want to impress someone, put him on your black list.* Grammar rules are applied in cases where a neutral punctuation mark is put in the sentence and those sentences in most cases are correct.

There were also 30 advertisement slogans found, which do not have a neutral period at the end of the sentence. Most of the slogans included only one clause and grammatically are simple short sentences. It is important to mention, that some of these slogans may be presented differently across the internet and this research collected advertisement slogans from original adverts to retain their original punctuation. It can be stated that neutral punctuation marks are commonly ignored when creating advertisement slogans. E.g., *Drive to believe / Innovation that excites / The happiest place on earth / Stronger than dirt / Things go better with coke /.*

Emotional shade punctuation marks in advertisement slogans

Punctuation marks are meant to pause the reader. Some punctuation marks force you to pause for a longer time than the others. In this way, a period used instead of a natural comma use can implement longer and stronger pauses. It may also help to emphasize one or another part of the slogan. E.g., *Save money. Live better. / Outwit. Outplay. Outlast. / Share moments. Share life.* In these slogans, a period is used in order to make a pause and stop the reader before reading the other part of the slogan. In some cases, it separates two clauses into two sentences. In this way, simple sentence structure is retained. It is important to mention that in these cases the phrases which often rhyme together are used. A longer pause, caused by a period makes the reader stop reading after the first word or phrase and then to end up reading the rest of the slogan. In this way, the reader keeps attention to the slogan for a longer time than intentionally planned.

An apostrophe is used to demonstrate the omission of one or more letters from a specific word, possessive case, or plural lower-case letter. In advertisements slogans, this punctuation mark is commonly used. Although, it is never a neutral punctuation mark, because it makes a slogan more elliptical, or makes a slogan sound more like a spoken language. *I'm lovin' it. It's finger-lickin' good! America runs on Dunkin'*

An exclamation, a question mark, and an ellipsis create most of the emotional shades also show emotional instability, forcing the addressee to naturally think about the meaning. These punctuation marks cannot be neutral and always

contain emotional shade. E.g., *It's finger lickin good! It keeps going, and going, and going... What's in your wallet? Do you... Yahoo?* Exclamation marks are used to make a message of the slogan stronger than it would be if the neutral punctuation mark would have been used instead (*Get some nuts! (.)*). Ellipsis can be used to omit information from the slogan, so the reader would imagine what was excluded from the slogan, or it can be used at the end of the slogan to show that the action of the slogan is still going (*Do you... Yahoo?*). Exclamation marks, question marks, and ellipsis give the creator of the slogan more options to create different shades of emotion.

Some linguists offer to use as little punctuation as needed to retain the meaning of the sentence. It is the golden rule of punctuation according to Bason and Rogers (2016). Although, sometimes advertisement slogans creators get creative and use more punctuation marks than it is necessary. E.g., *They're GR-R-R-reat!* The apostrophe is used in the omitted letter place and an exclamation mark is used at the end of the sentence to emphasize the whole sentence. However, there are 3 hyphens used in this slogan, and they are creating mini pauses between the parts they punctuate. In this way, the creators want to convey the shouting effect of the spoken language.

In advertisement slogans punctuation marks are being used for two main reasons: to punctuate the sentence or to express/emphasize the emotion of the slogan. Sometimes correct usage of grammar rules may be sacrificed for it. It can be stated that punctuation is more a stylistic feature of the advertisement slogan rather than a grammatical one.

Conclusions

Sentence structure in advertisement slogans can be defined by syntactic patterns and functions of sentence parts used in the sentence. Punctuation in

advertisement slogans helps to emphasize the main idea of the slogan or makes it grammatically correct.

The most frequently advertisement slogans are formed by using a simple sentence structure. Declarative and imperative sentences were the most popular communication types found in advertisement slogans. Declarative sentences are mostly formed by using a simple syntactic pattern. Imperative sentences are highly elliptical, the most common structure is a verb phrase. In some advertisement slogans, no sentence structure can be defined. These slogans use several words that sound familiar and rhyme together.

Punctuation marks in advertisement slogans can be neutral or not neutral. Neutral punctuation marks do not affect the emotional shade of the slogan. Not neutral punctuation marks not only punctuate advertisement slogans but create an emotional shade or help to emphasize the main idea of the slogan. In some cases, creators of advertisement slogans obey the rules of grammar and use punctuation as a stylistic device. A comma and a period in most cases are neutral punctuation marks in advertisement slogans. Neutral punctuation marks apply grammar rules and are used correctly. However, in some cases, a neutral period at the end of the slogan is not used if no additional context is given together with an advertisement slogan. An exclamation mark, question mark, ellipsis, apostrophe, and quotation marks may be used in an advertisement slogan to create a different emotional shade, make a slogan sound more familiar to the spoken language. Advertisement slogans can be punctuated incorrectly. The creators of advertisement slogans use incorrect punctuation on purpose. Incorrect punctuation is used to convey the intonation of the speaker or to make a slogan sound more familiar to the spoken language.

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SAKINIO STRUKTŪRA IR SKYRYBA REKLAMINIUOSE ŠŪKIUOSE

Santrauka

Verslas vystosi, nauji produktai kiekvieną dieną patenka į rinką, todėl gamintojams būtina atkreipti potencialių klientų dėmesį į jų gaminamus produktus. Reklamų kūrėjai analizuoja pirkėjų elgesį ir imasi visų priemonių, kad patrauktų klientų dėmesį. Reklaminių šūkių kalba teigia, kad produktas yra ypač aukštos kokybės. Tai gali nulemti kliento pasirinkimą. Straipsnyje diskutuojama apie reklaminių šūkių sakinių struktūros ir skyrybos ypatumus, bei siekiama išsiaiškinti, kokios sakinių struktūros ir skyrybos taisyklės yra naudojamos ir pritaikomos reklaminiuose šūkiuose siekiant kuo didesnio efekto. Tyrimas atskleidė, kad reklaminiams šūkiams dažniausiai naudojami trumpi vientisiniai sakiniai su aiškiai išreikšta pagrindine mintimi. Reklaminiai šūkių naudojami siekiant paveikti auditoriją ir padidinti žinomumą apie reklamuojamą objektą. Šiems tikslams pasiekti reklaminių šūkių kūrėjai naudoja skirtingas sakinių struktūras ir skyrybos ženklus. Tyrimas susideda iš dviejų dalių: teorinės medžiagos analizės bei lingvistinės analizės, pagrįstos aprašymu bei palyginimu. Teorinės medžiagos analizėje apžvelgiama sakinių struktūra ir skyryba reklaminiuose šūkiuose remiantis teoriniais šaltiniais. Atlikta lingvistinė reklaminių šūkių analizė. Apibendrintos skirtingos sakinių struktūros ir skyrybos taisyklės taikytos analizuojamuose reklaminiuose šūkiuose. Remiantis lingvistinės analizės rezultatais, galima teigti, kad vientisiniai konstatuojamieji ir imperatyviniai sakiniai plačiausiai naudojami reklaminiuose šūkiuose. Konstatuojamieji sakiniai dažniausiai sudaryti naudojant vientisinio sakinių struktūrą, populiariausia imperatyvinio sakinių struktūra – veiksmazodžio frazė. Skyrybos ženklai gali būti naudojami pagal gramatikos taisykles arba kaip stilistinė išraiška. Taip pat, skyrybos ženklai gali būti neutralūs arba sustiprinti reklaminių šūkių skleidžiamą emociją.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: reklaminiai šūkių, reklaminė kampanija, sakinių struktūra, skyryba.

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