Implementation of Speaking Competency Assessment During the New Normal in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Covid-19 pandemic affects almost every aspect of life. One of them is on lecturers and students, especially in the Indonesian language course. The students' low scores in speaking skills raise concern. Many students have difficulty expressing themselves in spoken language. New normal results in the modification of many aspects of speaking in its implementation. This study examines the application of methods, media, and assessment of speaking competency, the role of teachers and students in learning the speaking competency, and the achievement of the objectives of the implementation of speaking competency assessment in the new normal era. Mixed methods were used in this study with the data in the form of Google Form, syllabus, lesson plans, interviews, and observations of the learning process. Three lecturers from three Islamic universities in Surakarta were involved in this study. Of the 479 students at Islamic universities in Surakarta, 87.4% of them answered that the learning methods used by their lecturers varied according to the teaching material. Most students (91.4%) answered that their lecturers conduct evaluations regularly and according to competency needs (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Most of them (98.7%) stated that their lecturers were active and open in explaining and overcoming student difficulties. For the role of students, 77.6% of students were more active in learning the Indonesian language in the classroom. The quantitative achievement of the objective of learning the speaking competency in the new normal is 72.8%. Meanwhile, for qualitative data, it was obtained that 97.5% of students answered they get much new knowledge and understand the Indonesian language better. Most of the students (98.5%) answered that speaking skills are very useful for them.

Keywords: Assessment, New Normal, Speaking Competency

1. INTRODUCTION

New normal is a hot topic to discuss because of the pandemic that continues to affect almost every aspect of life. This unusual condition then becomes new standards, expectations, or habits, for example, switching to work and study through the network, using face masks, and other online-based activities.

Based on Law No. 20 of 2003 that education is a conscious and planned effort to create an atmosphere of learning and the learning process so that students can actively develop their potential to have religiosity, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed by themselves, society, the nation. and the country. Therefore, teachers and students expect that learning in the new normal era could be effective. [1]

The government is now trying to make changes that apply to lecturers and students, especially the Indonesian language course. The students' low scores in speaking skills raise concern. Many students have difficulty expressing themselves in spoken language. The research findings of Leong (2017), Hulme and Olga (2018), and Cho and Chanho (2014) show that the affective aspects of motivation, anxiety, reduction of nervousness, and shame have a big contribution to difficulties in speaking despite good language skills. [2[[3][4]

Constraints in teaching-learning activities and the implementation of speaking competency

assessments in normal conditions have not been fully resolved by educators. Moreover, in this new normal, many aspects should be modified in their implementation. Therefore, this study examines the implementation of speaking competency assessment during the new normal era in higher education.

There are three problems examined. (1) How is the implementation of methods, media, and assessments of speaking competency during the new normal era in higher education? (2) What are the roles of teachers and students in learning speaking competency during the new normal era? (3) How to achieve the objectives of the implementation of speaking competency assessment during the new normal era in higher education?

Relevant theory and research studies are needed to build thinking concepts and explore variables in research. 2020 is the year when the entire world is affected by Covid-19 pandemic, causing many changes in people's lives. The Indonesian Minister of Education issued three circular letters regarding the Covid-19 pandemic. The first Circular Letter No. 2 of 2020 is concerning the prevention and response to COVID-19 within the Ministry of Education and Culture, the second Circular Letter No. 3 of 2020 is concerning Prevention of COVID-19 in the education unit, and the third Circular Letter No. 4 of 2020 is concerning the Implementation of Education Policies in the Emergency of the Spread of Corona (Covid-19) which among other things contains directions on the learning process from home. [5]

As a place where lecturers and students meet and interact, universities can be a means of spreading Covid-19. The study and work from home policy to minimize the spread of Covid-19 cannot be used permanently. Based on UNESCO data on March 19, 2020, 112 countries have implemented study from home policies, including Malaysia, Thailand, Germany, Austria, Mexico, South Africa, Yemen, and Zambia. Of these 112 countries, 101 implement a nationwide study from home policy. Meanwhile, 11 other countries, including Indonesia, are implementing study from home in certain areas. In Indonesia, this policy has been implemented by 276 public and private universities. [6]

Study and work from home influences learning conditions, lecturers, and students. Lecturers must make a lot of changes in the teaching-learning process. One of the subjects affected is the Indonesian language general course. Indonesian language learning aims to build the character and teach students to speak Indonesian properly and correctly. The Ministry of Education and Culture (2013) states that the Indonesian language subject consists of two skills,

namely language and literary skills. These aspects cover listening, speaking, reading, and writing competencies [7] [27].

These competencies require an evaluation or assessment instrument in its implementation as a benchmark for student achievement. Arends (2007) states that assessments by teachers can result in wise decisions about learning or their students. Assessments of process and outcome should be prioritized so that all students can be assessed objectively in learning, not only based on the final result. [8]

Bown (2004) explains that assessment is a method of measuring a student's knowledge, skills, and performance in each domain. He considers three things in research. First, a test is a method. Second, a test as an objective measurement. Third, a test is a measurement of a student's knowledge, skills, or performance. [9]

Assessment is often juxtaposed with other terms in the form of measurement, evaluation, and test. According to Airasian (1991:18), assessment is the process of obtaining, interpreting, and synthesizing information to help make decisions in a learning group. Banta and Palomba (2008:1) also stated that assessment can be in the form of collecting, reviewing, and using information systematically in an educational program to improve students' activities and development in learning. [10] [11]

Assessment is aimed at improving students' activities and development in learning. Barry (2008:6) stated that assessment is a systematic and intentional activity that is used by teachers and students to obtain information, analyze, and interpret, conclude, make decisions, and act. Therefore, it implies that assessment is in the form of a process of collecting, examining, and interpreting data. The process is carried out systematically with predetermined criteria and indicators. To improve and develop teaching and learning activities, educators can refer to the results of the assessment. [12]

Teachers may consider a self-assessment rubric to assess speaking competence. According to Anandi and Muhammad Azhar Zailaini (2020), the use of rubrics on speaking competence is to identify students' abilities. Furthermore, teachers and students can determine what should be improved. In the teaching-learning process, they are required to achieve learning objectives. [13]

It can be concluded that assessment is a way of measuring one's knowledge, skills, and performance in a specified domain. Students are required to understand the aspects and functions of knowledge.

Assessment is a process of obtaining, interpreting, and synthesizing information to help make decisions in a learning group.

Assessments teach students about meaningful learning. Assessment stimulates the ability of students to develop skills. This is as stated by Mueller (2005) that assessments require students to work on real-world tasks as an application of the knowledge and skills acquired in the learning process. Gulikers et al. (2007) state that an assessment requires students to use and demonstrate their competence in a combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the real world. In addition, Abdullah and Siti (2020) state that the motivation given by the teacher has a major effect on the development of the results of the student's speaking competency assessment. [14] [15] [16]

Assessment of speaking competence is one of the linguistic competencies in learning the Indonesian language. Speaking is a human behavior that utilizes physical, psychological, neurological, semantic, and linguistic factors. In general, speaking can be considered as the most important tool for human control. Oscarson (2019) states that speaking competency learning is very effective if it is realized in a theoretical framework that allows the achievement of learning targets and transparent evaluation. [17]

Everyone who speaks certainly has a goal to convey his/her thoughts and feelings effectively. Related to this, Rofi'uddin (1998) suggests that the principle of learning speaking is two-way communication with various types depending on the context. This principle needs to be supported by considering the criteria that the material has added values, adds knowledge, and is adjusted to the skill level of the student. [18]

Students' cognitive abilities may vary due to various factors. Pim (2020) states that poor language skills are partly due to problems in the acquisition of spoken language and learning vocabulary. Tarone (2005) states that speaking is the most complex and difficult competency to master. [19] [20]

Widdowson (1978) states that speaking is the movements of the speech organs to produce the sound which is perceived by the ear. Thombury (2005) adds that speaking is interactive and requires the ability to cooperate in the management of speaking turns. Harris (1974) states speaking is a coding process in which speakers communicate ideas, thoughts, and feelings that they want to share, influence, or interact with other people. In this case, the speaking situation involves the speaker placing the message with a verbal code (word or sentence) which has a content and listener structure. [21] [22] [23]

Nuraeni (2002) also mentions that speaking is the process of conveying information from the speaker to the listener that involves productive and receptive skills and understanding. This means that speaking is a productive skill of the speaker. [24]

There are positive and negative factors that affect speaking competence. According to Krishnan et al. (2019), the positive factors are having to be on time, including dressing professionally, greeting, and maintaining eye contact and high confidence. The negative behaviors include low self-esteem, being talkative, failure to provide answers, and nervousness. [25]

It can be concluded that speaking is a productive oral language competency that is closely related to listening competence. The assessment of speaking competence in learning second languages is meaningful when assessed by speaking practice assessment techniques. Speaking is a process of providing code followed by communicating ideas, thoughts, and feelings verbally. After generating ideas, thoughts, and feelings are used to share, influence, or interact with others. This speaking situation involves the speaker placing the message with a verbal code that has a content and listener structure.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 Research Design

Mixed-method research is a research approach that combines qualitative and quantitative methods. This approach not only collects and analyzes two types of data but also involves the function of the two research approaches collectively so that this research has greater strength than that of qualitative and quantitative research. The data in this study are qualitative and quantitative in the form of Google Form data, syllabus, lesson plans, interview results, and the results of observations of the learning process. The study was conducted while the program was still running to improve and develop its implementation further.

Three lecturers from three Islamic universities in Surakarta were involved in this study. As of June 20, 2020, 479 responses were received from the students from the three Islamic universities. At IAIN, three programs are being studied, namely Islamic Family Law, Islamic Financial Accounting, and Islamic Criminal Law with 201 students involved. UMS has four study programs involved, namely Psychology, English Language Education, Biology Education, and Economics and Development Studies with a total subject of 182 students. There are seven study programs at UNU involved, namely Law Science, Akhwal As-Syahsyiah, Islamic Religious Education,

Management, Sharia Economics, Accounting, and Mechanical Engineering with a total of 96 students involved as the subjects.

2.2 Instrument Validity and Reliability

The data validity was tested using source and method triangulation. Source triangulation was used to collect the data from a variety of available sources because the same or similar data will be more stable if it is extracted from different sources. Source validity was tested through in-depth interviews with informants of different statuses and roles in language learning so that their opinions could be compared to obtain valid data. Meanwhile, method triangulation was conducted by digging for the same or similar data with different methods. The data obtained through interviews and questionnaires were compared with the results of observations about the subject's activities that describe the behavior. Besides, the related documents were examined.

2.3 Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis is determined by the type of data collected based on the research objectives and the hypothesis to be tested. Thus, researchers must conduct data analysis precisely. The data were analyzed quantitatively. Two alternative types of statistics can be selected, namely descriptive and inferential statistics. In the qualitative method, data analysis describes the transcription process of interviews, field notes, and analysis of documents and other findings so that researchers can present their findings. The steps in data analysis include data collection, data presentation, data reduction, and conclusion. [26] The analysis model used is the interactive model by Miles & Huberman consisting of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions drawing/verification. These components were carried out during data collection. After collecting the data, the interaction was carried out between the components, and the analysis was carried out cyclically with interactive patterns and techniques.

3. RESULTS

Three lecturers from three Islamic universities in Surakarta were involved in this study. A total of 47 students were involved in this study. This discussion is divided into three parts. (1) The implementation of methods, media, and assessments of speaking competency during the new normal era in higher education. (2) The role of teachers and students in learning speaking competency in the new normal era. (3) Achievement of the objectives of the implementation of speaking competency assessment during the new normal era in higher education.

3.1 Learning Method

Teachers should use varied Indonesian language learning methods to adapt to the material being taught. It will make students feel not bored. universities have made a lot of changes in learning to suit the current new normal conditions. The data obtained from three lecturers of the Indonesian language course at PTI (Islamic University) A are described as follows.

Table 1 Learning Methods in PTI A

Lecturer Identity	Method
PTI A Lecturer 1	1. Bingo 2. Case Study 3. Perception Students Have 4. Contextual Learning 5. Dynamic True or False 6. Reading Guide
PTI A Lecturer 2	7. Case Study 8. Discovery Learning 9. Learning Recitation 10. Contextual Learning
PTI A Lecturer 3	11. Cooperative Learning 12. Discovery Learning 13. Discovery Learning 14. Contextual Learning

PTI A lecturer 1 uses six methods, namely Bingo, Case Study, Perception Students Have, Contextual Learning, Dynamic True or False, and Reading Guide. PTI A lecturer 2 uses four methods, namely case study, discovery learning, learning recitation, and contextual learning. PTI A lecturer 3 also uses three methods, namely cooperative learning, discovery learning, contextual learning. In choosing a method, they consider time allocation, available facilities, student conditions, and the material. From 201 PTI A students, 87.6% answered that the learning methods used by the lecturers varied according to the needs of the teaching material. Those who answered less varied are 10.0%. There is only 1% of the lecturers using the lecture method. The rest chose other options. This data shows that the learning methods used by the lecturers are quite varied and following the needs of the teaching material.

At PTI B, the syllabus and lesson plans have been determined by the campus curriculum team so that the lecturers do not develop much. The curriculum only contains three learning methods, namely lectures, questions and answers, and demonstrations. When viewed from the syllabus and lesson plans, the methods used by the lecturers are less varied, especially with the current pandemic situation that increasingly limits lecturers in developing learning methods. Of the 182 PTI B students, 87.8% answered that the learning methods used by the lecturers varied

according to the needs of the teaching material. Those who answered less varied are 7.2%. There is only 5.0% of the lecturers using the lecture method.

At PTI C, lecturers do not have a specific guide in developing syllabus and lesson plans. Thus, lecturers have the freedom to develop the syllabus and lesson plans according to the existing curriculum. PTI C lecturers 1 and 3 have similarities in the choice of learning methods, namely contextual learning, cooperative learning, discovery learning, lectures, discussions, and question and answer. The difference is that PTI C lecturer 1 emphasizes more on assignments while PTI C lecturer 2 only uses presentation, discussion, quizzes, and exercises. Of 96 PTI C students, it was revealed that 86.3% of students answered that the learning methods used by the lecturers varied according to the needs of the teaching material. Those who answered less varied are 9.5%. There is only 2.1% of the lecturers using the lecture method. The rest chose other answers.
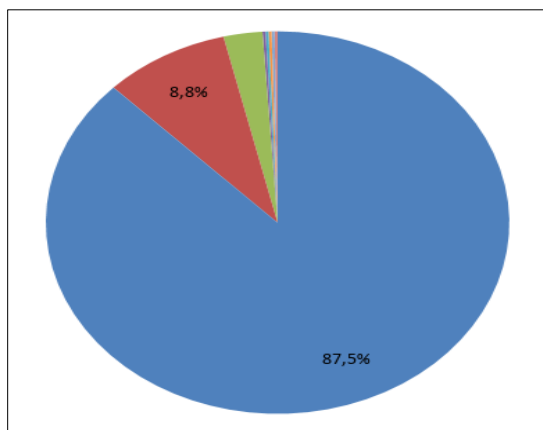

Figure 1. Learning methods used by lecturers

Of the 479 students at Islamic universities in Surakarta, 87.4% of them answered that the learning methods used by their lecturers varied according to the teaching material. Those who answered less varied are 8.8%. There is only 2.7% of the lecturers using the lecture method. The rest chose other answers.

3.2 Utilization of Learning Media

At PTI A and PTI B, six lecturers use the laptop, projectors, and other non-electronic media that support learning. However, since the pandemic outbreaks, learning has shifted to online learning. Lecturers use WhatsApp, Google Classroom, Zoom, Google Form, Google Meet, Schoology, Instagram, Youtube, etc. to support online learning. These various choices of media that can be used by lecturers are supported by the campus which provides training and debriefing for lecturers. Of 201 PTI A students, 89.1% answered that

Indonesian language learning activities had utilized the media optimally. Meanwhile, 10.9% answered less than optimal. Of 182 PTI B students, it was found that 88.4% answered that Indonesian language learning activities had utilized the media optimally. Meanwhile, 9.9% answered less than optimal. The rest chose other options.

PTI C lecturers stated that, during the pandemic in this even semester, there had not been any debriefing from the universities regarding the use of learning media. Thus, lecturers and students experience many obstacles. Most lecturers use WhatsApp group as a media. Meanwhile, PTI C lecturers 1 and 3 have used Google Classroom and Schoology. Of 96 PTI C students, 76.8% answered that Indonesian language learning activities had utilized the media optimally. Meanwhile, 22.1% answered less than optimal. The rest, 1.1%, answered no media. From a total of 479 students at Islamic universities in Surakarta, it was found that 86.4% of them answered that Indonesian language learning activities had utilized the media optimally. Meanwhile, 12.8% answered less than optimal. The rest choose other options.

3.3 Competency Evaluation by Lecturers

The syllabus and lesson plans at PTI A have been prepared by the curriculum team. However, lecturers are given the authority to develop them. In PTI A, two competencies use speaking competency assessment, namely explaining the concept of language, and composing paragraphs with good and correct Indonesian grammar. These two assessments are not following the demands of the existing material. The assessment instrument used is a rating scale. There are no criteria in the form of exact numbers in this instrument.

Of 201 PTI A students, 94.0% answered the lecturers conducted evaluation regularly and according to competency needs (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Meanwhile, 3.5% answered not regularly but according to their competency needs. The other 2.5% answered regularly but not according to their competency needs.

At PTI B, in the syllabus and lesson plans compiled by the team, speaking competency assessment is only carried out at the 9th to 12th meeting with the standard competency "Students can write a scientific work (various PKM or Student Creativity Program schemes/seminars) and present it". The assessment instrument includes a rating scale without tables. The assessment criteria are indefinite and not in accordance with the existing competency standards. Students are only considered capable of presenting

orally without any assessment criteria during the presentation.

Of 182 PTI B students, 89.5% answered that their lecturers conducted evaluations regularly and according to competency needs. Meanwhile, 7.7 % answered not regularly but according to their competency needs. The others answered regularly but not according to their competency needs.

Of 96 students of UNU Surakarta, 89.5% answered that their lecturers conducted evaluations regularly and according to their competency needs. Meanwhile, 7.4 % answered not regularly but according to their competency needs. The others answered regularly but not according to their competency needs.

At PTI C, lecturer 1 uses speaking competency assessment for the standard competency of explaining language concepts and compiling paragraphs with good and correct Indonesian grammar. Meanwhile, PTI C lecturers 2 and 3 do not include the assessment instruments in the lesson plans and syllabus. They assessed a scientific presentation in front of the class. Furthermore, there are no definite criteria for what aspects to be assessed. They emphasize more on mastering classroom conditions, fluency, understanding of the material, and teamwork. Most students (89.5%) answered that their lecturers conduct evaluations regularly and according to competency needs (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Meanwhile, 7.4 % answered not regularly but according to their competency needs. The others answered regularly but not according to their competency needs.
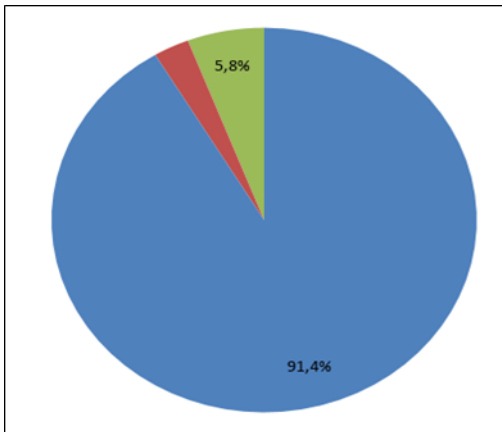

Figure 2. Lecturers conducted evaluations

Of 479 students of PTI in Surakarta, 91.4% answered that their lecturers conducted evaluations regularly and according to their competency needs. Meanwhile, 5.9 % answered not regularly but according to their competency needs. The others

answered regularly but not according to their competency needs.

3.4 Roles of Lecturers in New Normal Learning

It is undeniable that there are many differences and limitations in online learning in the new normal era. Lecturers have a role to guide and educate their students at least. This is also experienced by three Islamic universities in Surakarta. Of 201 PTI A students, 99.0% answered that their lecturers were active and open in explaining and overcoming student difficulties. Meanwhile, 3.5% of students answered that their lecturers were passive and did not respond to their needs. Of 182 PTI B students, 97.8% answered that their lecturers were active and open in explaining and overcoming student difficulties. Meanwhile, 2.2 % of students answered that their lecturers were passive and did not respond to their needs. All students in PTI C answered that their lecturers were active and open in explaining and overcoming student difficulties. This could be because PTI C is a university that has a small number of students. This makes communication and coordination between lecturers and students easier. Of 479 students at Islamic universities in Surakarta, 98.7% of them answered that their lecturers were active and open in explaining and overcoming their difficulties. Meanwhile, 1.3 % of students answered that their lecturers were passive and did not respond to their needs.

3.5 Student Active Involvement in Online Classes

The limited role of lecturers in teaching due to this pandemic will affect the role of students. Of 201 PTI A students, 87.1% of them were more active in learning the Indonesian language in the classroom while the rest were mostly passive.

Of 182 PTI B students, 97.8% were more active in learning the Indonesian language in the classroom while the other 2.2% were mostly passive. Of 96 PTI C students, 67.4% were more active in learning Indonesian language in the classroom while the other 32.6% were mostly passive. Of the 479 students at Islamic universities in Surakarta, 77.6% answered that they were more active in learning the Indonesian language in the classroom while the other 22.4% were mostly passive.

3.6 Achievement of Speaking Competency Assessment Objectives

There are three objectives of speaking competency assessment, namely quantitative, qualitative, and

usefulness achievements. From the quantitative achievement, 72.8% of students at Islamic universities in Surakarta answered that they could get maximum results with optimal processes while the other 15.9% expressed that their results were less maximal with the optimal process. 7.9% of students answered that they obtained maximum results with minimal process. The rest, 3.3%, answered that they obtained less optimal results with minimal process. The data are adjusted to the learning process and the completeness of the students' speaking competency final scores.

For the qualitative achievement, 97.5% of students answered that they could get much new knowledge and understand the Indonesian language better. The rest answered that they did not learn the Indonesian language much. There were 98.5% of students stating that their lecturers were active and open in explaining and overcoming their difficulties. The other 1.5% answered less useful. The usefulness can be seen from the use of public speaking skills that are mastered by students in the classroom and organizations.

It can be concluded that the pandemic that affects the whole world has had significant impacts, one of which is on education. Many changes are made by policymakers to executors, namely lecturers and students. Changes must be tailored to the needs of students. The structured curriculum and the expected competencies require a proper implementation and assessment process. The learning process needs to be conveyed with specific material regarding speaking competence integrated with existing material. Speaking competence must be assessed with a performance instrument with criteria tailored to the required competencies.

4. CONCLUSION

Covid-19 pandemic affects almost every aspect of life. One of the biggest impacts on the community is teaching and learning activities. Various changes should be made to adjust the existing circumstances. In Islamic universities in Surakarta, fundamental changes begin with the learning method. Of the 479 students at Islamic universities in Surakarta, 87.4% of them answered that the learning methods used by their lecturers varied according to the teaching material. The common face-to-face method must shift to the online method. Apart from methods, media development is also required. Lecturers use WhatsApp, Google Classroom, Zoom, Google Form, Google Meet, Schoology, Instagram, Youtube, etc. to support online learning. 86.4% of the students answered that Indonesian language learning activities had utilized the media optimally. The next stage is evaluation. Most students (91.4%) answered that their

lecturers conduct evaluations regularly and according to competency needs (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).

The roles of lecturers and students in the online learning process are changing. Most of the students (98.7%) stated that their lecturers were active and open in explaining and overcoming student difficulties. Meanwhile, 1.3 % of students answered that their lecturers were passive and did not respond to their needs. For the role of students, 77.6% of students were more active in learning the Indonesian language in the classroom while the other 22.4% were mostly passive.

Based on the achievement of the learning objectives of speaking competence in the new normal era, the quantitative data obtained were 72.8% of students answered maximum results with an optimal process while the other 15.9% expressed that their results were less maximal with the optimal process. Meanwhile, for qualitative data, it was obtained that 97.5% of students answered they get much new knowledge and understand the Indonesian language better. Most of the students (98.5%) answered that speaking skills are very useful for them.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Laila Fitri Nur Hidayah designed and performed the experiments, analysed the data and wrote the manuscript in consultation with Sarwiji Suwandi, Sumarwati, and Budhi Setiawan.

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