

Students Perceptions of the Benefits and Challenges of Using ChatGPT for English Speaking: A Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

The rise of ChatGPT as a tool in language learning has created new opportunities, particularly in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, for enhancing students' speaking skills. Therefore, it is important to explore EFL students' perspectives on the benefits and challenges of using ChatGPT to learn English speaking skills. To achieve the objectives of this research, the researcher used the systematic review method by reviewing 20 empirical articles published between 2023 and 2025, using Google Scholar. The findings of the analysis were classified into five main themes. The first three themes were related to the benefits of using ChatGPT to learn speaking: (1) ChatGPT might reduce students' anxiety, (2) ChatGPT might enhance students' motivation, (3) ChatGPT might enhance students' learning flexibility. Meanwhile, the other themes were related to the challenges of using ChatGPT: (4) ChatGPT may not give students authentic interaction as a human, and (5) ChatGPT poses a risk of student over-reliance. Each theme is discussed and connected to the relevant literature, accompanied by practical solutions and recommendations for future research.

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KEYWORDS

ChatGPT, EFL, Speaking.

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1. Introduction

Nearly every part of the world has been touched by AI, especially in areas with ready internet access. Many organizations, in particular academic organizations, are widely using AI technology and many educators and students also use AI to improve teaching and learning process. (OECD, 2023; Vieriu & Petrea, 2025). Currently, many types of AI are sophisticated and have a wide range of applications. One of the most famous AIs that has attracted a lot of people's attention is Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer (henceforth called ChatGPT), as this type of AI is very accessible, free, and easy to use (Baidoo-Anu & Owusu Ansah, 2023). ChatGPT offers learners convenience by providing fast, tailored feedback to meet their needs (AlGhamdi, 2024; Rahman, 2024; Anggawirya et al., 2021). Not only that, AI gives language learners a helping hand, for example, in learning English. Some studies (e.g., Yao, 2024; Moon et al., 2025; Wang, 2025). show that ChatGPT provides several features that allow students to practice their language and give students accurate feedback and offer wider access through previous conversational experiences; therefore, AI is beneficial and very helpful for students for language acquisition

Additionally, in the context of EFL speaking practices, ChatGPT makes students feel more comfortable because they are less anxious and nervous when they think they are not very good at speaking (Almineeai et al., 2025; Hayashi and Sato, 2024; Ericsson and Johansson, 2024). Moreover, the class becomes more interesting during the learning process, such as in speaking classes, because ChatGPT enables students to have conversations that are to the point (Syaripuddin et al., 2025). The responses given are concise and relevant if they are in the right direction or prompt. This increases students' interest and enthusiasm in learning, particularly through pronunciation practice, asking questions and receiving quick feedback (Fathi et al., 2024; Gutai et al., 2024; Yildiz, 2024; Yaumi et al., 2024; Adinda et al., 2025).

However, there has been a concern that many students now rely on AI-generated scripts for oral presentations and discussions, thereby avoiding the cognitive engagement that these tasks are intended to foster (Cotton et al., 2023; Lo, 2023). This dependence on pre-formulated responses leads to superficial classroom interactions, where students deliver polished but shallow contributions that lack genuine understanding or originality (Chan, 2023). Teachers face significant challenges in assessment as they struggle to distinguish authentic learning from AI-assisted output, creating inequities that disadvantage students who engage sincerely (Lund & Wang, 2023; Kasneci et al., 2023; Yaumi et al., 2023; Karubaba

& Rahman, 2025). Furthermore, the decline in students' academic thinking power becomes apparent when students prefer the accuracy generated by AI over their own pure ideas (Rudolph et al., 2023). Ultimately, all students will become AI addicts, which will reduce their ability to provide new ideas and be creative and less likely to contribute to meaningful discussions, which means they will not have the skills to discuss in the academic or professional world (Lin & Chen, 2024; Zhai et al., 2024).

With this background in mind, the author is interested in further exploring the benefits and challenges experienced by students when using ChatGPT, particularly for learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) speaking skills.

These suggestions also support the teaching and learning process to enhance classroom interactions that meet students' learning needs. Theoretically speaking, most previous studies (e.g., Ansari, Ahmad, & Bhutta, 2024; Liu, 2024; Jayasinghe, 2024) have been restricted to exploring potential and challenges of using ChatGPT in a single national setting. The present study aims to fill that theoretical gap by drawing on data collected across multiple countries (e.g., Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, China, and Iraq), offering a more globally relevant perspective on the use of ChatGPT to teach speaking.

2. Methodology

According to Mali (2025), the systematic literature review method in this article involved searching databases and journals, identifying relevant studies, locating articles, creating annotated summaries, sorting evidence, and categorizing the evidence. The approach follows the methods of Akçayır and Akçayır (2017) and Li (2012, 2018).

This study explored the benefits and challenges of using ChatGPT to learn to speak from students' perspectives. To meet the research goal, the author used the systematic review method by Albadarin and Tukiainen (2024); Almeahadi (2024); Balcı (2024) to review fifteen articles (see Table 1) relevant to the purpose of the study. To select those twenty articles, the author researched relevant articles from *Google Scholar* using the following keywords: *ChatGPT in speaking, perspectives on using ChatGPT, and benefits and challenges of using ChatGPT*.

Table 1. The Articles Reviewed in This Study

Author and Year	Article Title	Journal Name	Method	Research Goal	Context and Participant
Alsalem (2024)	EFL Students' Perception and Attitude Towards the Use of ChatGPT to Promote English Speaking Skills in the Saudi Context	Arab World English Journals	Systematic Review	To investigate English as a Foreign Language students' perceptions and attitudes towards using ChatGPT to enhance their English-speaking skills in EFL classroom	74 students from three public universities in Saudi Arabia
Almineeai (2025)	The impact of ChatGPT on EFL Medical Track Students' affective filter	Journal of Language Teaching and Research	Mixed methods	To examine the impact of ChatGPT on reducing the affective filter and enhancing speaking proficiency among EFL medical track students	8 freshman female medical-track students at the University of Bisha, Saudi Arabia
Alshammari (2024)	Revolutionizing EFL learning through ChatGPT: A qualitative study	Revista Amazonia Investiga	Qualitative	To explore the role of using ChatGPT in learning English among students at	22 female undergraduate English majors at the University of

Author and Year	Article Title	Journal Name	Method	Research Goal	Context and Participant
Balci (2024)	The Role of ChatGPT in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Learning and Teaching: A Systematic Review	International Journal of Current Education Studies (IJCES)	Systematic Review	To identify the effectiveness of ChatGPT in promoting EFL learning and teaching	the University of Hail in Saudi Arabia Hail, Saudi Arabia 432 undergraduate students from two universities, along with 199 EFL teachers and 76 EFL at a university in Turkey
Celik et al. (2025)	Using ChatGPT as a Virtual Speaking Tutor to Boost EFL Learners' Speaking Self-efficacy	Australian Journal of Applied Linguistics	Mixed method; Quantitative and Qualitative	To investigate the role of ChatGPT in improving the speaking self-efficacy of EFL learners	44 Sophomore pharmacy students enrolled in Advanced English courses at a private university in Erbil, Iraq
Colak (2024)	Enhancing speaking skills through task repetition and ChatGPT integration in remedial EFL lessons: An action research approach	Focus on ELT Journal	Mixed method; Quantitative and Qualitative	To investigate the impact of integrating ChatGPT with repeated speaking tasks on remedial EFL learners' (N=17) speaking skills	At a university in Türkiye, involving 17 B1-level remedial students
Khan & Ann (2025)	The use of artificial intelligence (AI): ChatGPT and Mastery of English-Speaking skills	International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science	Systematic Literature Review	To establish a conceptual definition for two main variables: the use of artificial intelligence (AI): ChatGPT and the mastery of English-speaking skills	42 research articles and was conducted by researchers at the Institute of Teacher Education Malaysia, Gaya Campus
Khzouz et.al. (2024)	Exploring ChatGPT practices and user experiences in learning English skills	Theory and Practice in Language Studies	Mixed method; Quantitative and Qualitative	To investigate the utilization of ChatGPT as a tool for enhancing English language proficiency, specifically targeting fluency, vocabulary acquisition, writing,	98 undergraduate students (43 male, 55 female) from the German Jordanian University

Author and Year	Article Title	Journal Name	Method	Research Goal	Context and Participant
Klimova & Al-Obaydi (2024)	Exploring the potential of ChatGPT for foreign language education at the university level	Frontiers in Psychology	Qualitative	To explore students' attitudes and perceived usefulness of using ChatGPT for learning a foreign language to reveal how this new trend tool affects its end-users	reading comprehension, and listening skills 91 students of Tourism Management and Economics and Management studied English at the University of Hradec Králové, Czech Republic
Laili et al. (2025)	Student's Perception on the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) CHATGPT in English Language Learning: Benefits and Challenges in Higher education	Edu Cendikia Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan	Qualitative	To explore students' views on using ChatGPT as an English learning aid, including its potential advantages and weaknesses	45 health science students who used ChatGPT in learning English in Banyuwangi, Indonesia
Liu and McMinn (2024)	Using Generative Artificial Intelligence/ChatGPT for a Academic Communication: Students' Perspective	International Journal of Applied Linguistics	Mixed method; Quantitative and Qualitative	To address the gap by investigating students' experiences and attitudes toward GenAI tools for English academic communication, focusing on their overall perceptions, perceived benefits, limitations, and challenges	475 students and interviews with 12 at two universities in China
Muniandy and Selvanathan (2024)	ChatGPT, a Partnering Tool to Improve ESL Learners' Speaking Skills: Case Study in a Public University, Malaysia	Teaching Public Administration	Mixed method; Quantitative and Qualitative	To investigate The effectiveness of ChatGPT as a partnering tool in developing ESL learners' speaking skills in the flipped classroom setting in a Malaysian public university	40 ESL students At a Malaysian university

Author and Year	Article Title	Journal Name	Method	Research Goal	Context and Participant
Pratiwi	Speaking Practice using ChatGPT's Voice Conversation: A Review on Potentials and Concerns	Journal of Language Intelligence and Culture	Systematic Literature Review (with qualitative analysis)	To investigate the pedagogical potential and concerns of ChatGPT's voice conversation feature within the context of language learning	20 research articles reviewed: conducted by researchers at Universitas Muhammadiyah Kupang, Indonesia
Sarwanti et al. (2024)	Are they literate on ChatGPT? University Language Students' Awareness, Benefits and Challenges in Higher Education learning	Online Learning	Mixed method; Quantitative and Qualitative	To explore university language students' use, awareness, readiness, concerns, and views on ChatGPT's benefits and challenges in higher education	355 language students from five private higher education institutions in Indonesia
Shi (2024)	Advantages, Challenges and Prospects of ChatGPT in Oral English Teaching	Transactions on Social Science Education and Humanities Research	Qualitative	To explore the advantages, challenges, and prospects of using ChatGPT in oral English teaching	Involved contributions from teachers and students at the College of Language and Culture, Northwest A&F University, Shaanxi, China
Slamet (2024)	Potential of ChatGPT as a digital language learning assistant: EFL teachers' and students' perceptions	Discover Artificial Intelligence	Qualitative	To investigate the perceptions and preferences of the ChatGPT	80 EFL teachers and 46 EFL students from various educational institutions in East Java, Indonesia
Susanto and Siboro (2025)	EFL Students' Perceptions of the Impact of ChatGPT Usage on Critical Thinking Skills	Surakarta English and Literature Journal	Mixed method; Quantitative and Qualitative	To investigate the students' perceptions on the usage of ChatGPT toward their critical thinking skills in the EFL classroom and the challenges faced by the students in using	30 Students of the English education departments from four different universities in central java and west Kalimantan or

Author and Year	Article Title	Journal Name	Method	Research Goal	Context and Participant
Üstünbaş (2024)	Hey, GPT, can we have a chat? A case study on EFL learners' AI speaking practice	International Journal of Modern Education Studies	Qualitative	To explore how Turkish learners in higher education use ChatGPT for speaking	ChatGPT in the EFL classroom Borneo, Indonesia 4 pre-intermediate EFL learners (3 female, 1 male, studying at the School of Foreign Language, Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University, Türkiye)
Van (2024)	ChatGPT in English Language Learning: Exploring Perceptions and Promoting Autonomy in a University EFL Context	Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language--TESL-EJ	Qualitative	To investigate the impact of ChatGPT on English language	120 students' perceptions of their experiences over a 15-week semester at Korean university
Yıldız (2024)	ChatGPT Integration in EFL Education: A Path to Enhanced Speaking Self-Efficacy	Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and Language)	Mixed method; Quantitative and Qualitative	To examine the effect of ChatGPT on the speaking self-efficacy level of English as foreign language learners	65 college students to enrolled in a general English course at a university in Türkiye

Articles in Table 1 above were selected based on the following criteria to ensure the quality of the review. First, the articles should be written in English and be peer-reviewed academic articles. Second, the selected articles are empirical studies discussing the use of ChatGPT to learn English speaking skills. Third, the articles were published from 2023 to 2025. The articles have been cited more than 10 times.

Table 2. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Language	English	Non-English
Document	Journal Articles	Non-Journal Articles
Article Types	Peer-review Article	Non-review articles
Content	Discussing the students' perspective on using ChatGPT in English speaking class	We are not discussing the students' perspective on using ChatGPT in English speaking class
Context of study	The context includes EFL/ESL context in higher education settings	Non-EFL/ESL contexts, non-higher education settings.
Year of publication	2025-2023	Before 2023

Quality	Has been cited more than ten times	Has not been cited more than ten times
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Furthermore, the studies reviewed are geographically diverse, ranging from Indonesia to Saudi Arabia, as displayed in Figure 1.

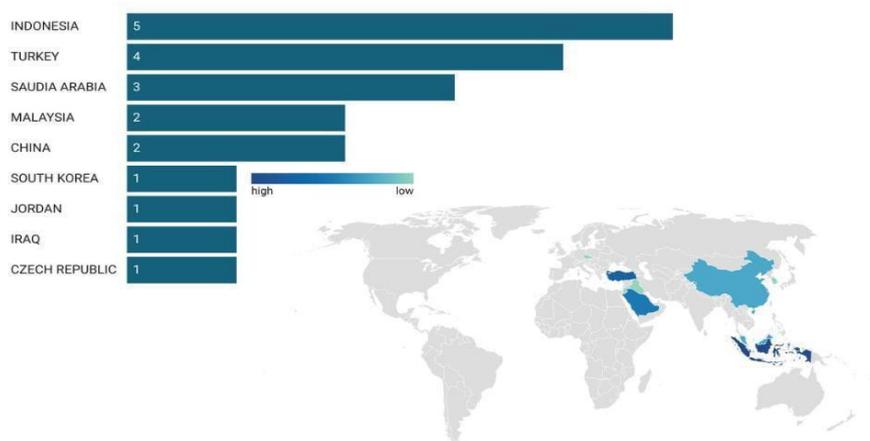


Figure 1. The Geographical Context of the Selected Article

Note. This figure was created on the Datawrapper website (<https://www.datawrapper.de/>)

2.1 Inductive Analysis

The author analyzed the information on the website using an inductive analysis approach to identify patterns and commonalities and highlighted repeated ideas, phrases, and important points that emerged from the data summarized in Figure 1. The researcher allowed for the emergence of meaningful themes without imposing any preconceived notions (Bingham, 2023; Gomes et al., 2023; Perkins & Roe, 2024). Practically speaking, the author carefully read all the information on the selected articles several times and prepared a *Google Sheet* to quote and note information that could answer the research questions. The author analyzed patterns and commonalities in her notes and categorized the notes as benefits and challenges of teaching speaking using ChatGPT. The author finally develops final themes as the answer to the research questions.

3. Result and Discussion

This section presents five themes in order of the research questions: What are EFL students' perspectives on the benefits of using ChatGPT to learn English speaking skills? And what are EFL students' perspectives on the challenges of using ChatGPT to learn English speaking skills? Each theme is examined in connection with appropriate literature.

3.1 ChatGPT Might Reduce Students' Anxiety

Some research has reported that students believe ChatGPT plays an important role in reducing anxiety during the learning process of speaking. ChatGPT can be used as a speaking partner for students, helping them overcome psychological anxiety and practice spoken language together (Alshammari, 2024; Almineeai et al., 2025; Shi, 2024; Pratiwi et al., 2024; Khan & Ann, 2025). Celik et al. (2025) reported that most respondents (90%) stated that they began speaking more assertively after being exposed to constructive feedback from ChatGPT.

"I had speaking anxiety in previous classes because I thought that my friends would humiliate or make fun of me when I made any mistakes. I handled this fear concurrently after using ChatGPT as a speaking tutor. I observed that speaking was not as tough as I expected. Additionally, getting recommendations to polish my English increased my motivation to communicate more assertively. Overcoming speaking barriers and fixing minor issues were my gains in this study."

Similarly, Alsalem (2024) found that participants had a very positive perception of the affective role that ChatGPT plays in combating English-speaking anxiety. Therefore, ChatGPT positively impacts EFL students' social and emotional learning by enabling them to practice conversation skills, aiding in the management of their emotional intelligence, providing feedback, and reducing their anxiety (Bin-Hady & Al-Humari, 2024).

3.2 ChatGPT Might Enhance Students' Motivation

Motivation is one of the most crucial aspects of learning English, and researchers have found that ChatGPT helps increase the motivation of EFL students to learn English. Student motivation was high, with students expressing excitement about the novelty and efficiency of ChatGPT. The use of ChatGPT contributed to more active classroom dynamics, fostering collaboration among students and sparking discussions about language learning strategies (Alshammari, 2024; Alsalem, 2024; Slamet, 2024). Celik (2025) highlighted that students' motivation rises when they find answers to their queries in an easily understandable and retrievable format. Colak (2024) found that the findings revealed a noteworthy difference in motivation scores before ($M = 2.71$, $SD = 0.41$) and after ($M = 3.41$, $SD = 0.71$) the intervention. Specifically, motivation levels post-intervention showed a significant increase compared to pre-intervention levels, t ($df\ 32$) = 6.19, $p = 0.00$. Muniandy and Selvanathan (2024) reported that some students mentioned that "I feel confident to give a presentation with the help of ChatGPT, I use ChatGPT to increase my interest and motivation in learning speaking skills beyond the classroom". The results also indicated that 64% of students felt more motivated to learn English with ChatGPT, and 67% felt more confident using English after interacting with the tool (Laili et al., 2025). Based on the findings from previous studies, I agree with Afkarin and Asmara's (2024) view that ChatGPT can serve as a learning tool, which appears to have a positive impact on their motivation to learn the language

3.3 ChatGPT Might Enhance Students' Flexibility

Some studies have reported that ChatGPT might provide a flexible environment for learning during the EFL students' learning process. Celik et al. (2025) reported positive feedback from some students, who mentioned that being privileged to take advantage of ChatGPT, they had earned the respect of all respondents (100%) flexibly. Similarly, Yıldız (2024) found that learners indicated that they could find the opportunity to practice speaking English outside the class at any time. One student mentioned that: "I installed ChatGPT on my phone, and I can practice English anywhere. I think it's awesome. I don't remember speaking English at home before." The flexibility offered by ChatGPT in terms of study time is highly valued. "I can ask questions or seek clarification any time, even outside of class hours" (Student 3) (Sarwanti et al. 2024). These findings resonate with Laili et al. (2025), some students mentioned that "ChatGPT allows me to practice English anytime and anywhere" (student 1). "ChatGPT allows me to learn more flexibly and independently" (student 2). It can envision the development of the next scenario based on the student's questions, and the student can change the scene and interact with it any time, with a response student that is instantaneous (Shi, 2024; Klimova et al., 2024). ChatGPT provides EFL learners with a virtual companion for practicing conversations, allowing them to engage in language learning at their convenience, regardless of time or location, making AI a valuable tool for post-class oral practice (Alafnan et al., 2023).

3.4 ChatGPT May Not Give Students Authentic Interaction as a Human

Some studies also reported that ChatGPT may not replace the role of human teachers in teaching. While ChatGPT can provide input-based answers, it lacks human sensory contact, emotional communication, and expressive meaning. For students, communicating with real humans may not provide more meaningful and instructive feedback and interactive experiences (Khzouz et al., 2024; Shi, 2024). Laili et al. (2025) reported that respondents agreed 87% with the statement, 'ChatGPT may not replace the learning forged from direct interaction with lecturers. When it comes to spoken interaction, the student participants report an even greater preference for having a human partner, with the highest endorsement in the whole study (item 18, mean 4.70), compared with a virtual one (item 17, mean 3.73) (Alsalem, 2024). Similarly, Van (2024) found that one student mentioned, "I think it will not be helpful for me because it's not a real person." Thus, as mentioned, students expressed reservations due to several factors, including the overwhelming amount of information, lack of oral interaction, and uneven participation. These findings are connected to the study by Fitria (2023), which suggests that actual human interaction cannot be fully replicated with ChatGPT, despite its training to imitate human conversations as closely as possible.

3.5 ChatGPT May Poses s Risk of Students Over-Reliance

Some studies suggest that ChatGPT may lead to a risk of student over-reliance when used too frequently, resulting in dependency (Laili et al., 2025). Learners might become overly dependent on ChatGPT for generating responses and feedback. This reliance can hinder their ability to practice and develop skills in real-world interactions, where responses are less predictable and more dynamic (Pratiwi et al., 2024; Khan & Ann, 2025). Susanto et al. (2025) reported that the sixth point is the participants' responses or perception about the potential overreliance of ChatGPT usage in the EFL classroom. The data shows that 13.3% strongly agree, 36.7% agree, 43.3% disagree, and 6.7% strongly disagree that the influence of ChatGPT has an impact on the risk of students' over-reliance (Üstünbaş, 2024). Similarly, Liu et al. (2024)

found that interviewees also expressed concerns about data privacy and leakage, (equality of) access, loss of creativity, and over-reliance on technology, leading to a lack of motivation to develop their skills. Moreover, Sarwanti et al. (2024) highlighted that concerns were also raised regarding over-reliance on the ChatGPT tool (Mean = 3.60 ± 0.96), as well as the potential impact on their social interactions, with fears that using ChatGPT for coursework could limit their opportunities for interaction and collaboration with peers. (Mean = 3.56 ± 0.94). Overreliance on ChatGPT, connection problems, encouraging students to take the easy way out in learning processes, and limited effectiveness for practicing speaking were reported as drawbacks (Karataş et al., 2024).

4. Conclusion

Overall, this research has reviewed both the benefits and challenges of utilizing ChatGPT as a tool to help EFL students improve their English-speaking skills. The findings reveal several common themes that warrant highlighting. Based on the results, ChatGPT might reduce students' speaking anxiety because this tool provides a comfortable and non-judgmental space for students to practice their speaking. Second, many students believe that using ChatGPT might increase their motivation to learn the language compared to before they used it. Third, because this tool is very easy to access, many students say that ChatGPT provides flexible time for them, as they can use it wherever and whenever they want, and they can also practice independently. Fourth, despite the benefits offered by ChatGPT, this tool also presents challenges for students. Many students report that ChatGPT may not provide learners authentic interaction as a human, such as a teacher who has feelings and can provide natural feedback like a human. Finally, many students admit that they are worried that if they continue to use this alternative, they will become dependent and reduce their critical thinking skills.

Although this study has reached certain concluding points, it is far from perfect because it only examined 20 journal articles. To address this, future researchers should evaluate more articles to gain a broader perspective. This will help produce more open and thorough findings in the context of ChatGPT use among EFL students. Additionally, this study only focused on higher education contexts. To solve this, future studies should also investigate perspectives of using ChatGPT to teach EFL speaking, particularly in junior or senior high school contexts, to gain more various perspectives.

In addition, I would like to provide a few questions for future research studies that I still cannot answer in this current study: How does frequent use of ChatGPT affect students' long-term speaking and critical thinking skills? Is there a simple technique for students to reduce overreliance on using ChatGPT? Do the benefits of using ChatGPT apply to students at the master's level? Do English teachers in junior or senior high school contexts also have the same perceptions as those reported in this study about ChatGPT in teaching speaking?

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