

ASSOCIATIVE MEANING AND SOCIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF TOP 20 POP MUSIC 2022 IN THE WORLD: ANALYSIS OF BILLBOARD POP MUSIC END-YEAR CHART 100

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Abstract

In the context of globalization, which brings profound cultural and social changes to society, language undergoes significant impacts, exemplified by the addition of approximately 600 thousand words to the Oxford English Dictionary. These additions encompass various slang terminologies commonly used in popular culture during this era. Popular culture, produced for mainstream audiences, encompasses various forms of entertainment, with 'pop music' as a significant expression. This research explores associative meanings and social representations in popular music lyrics using Leech's theory for meaning and Taine's Sociology of Literature theory for social context. Findings reveal diverse meanings in the lyrics, such as connotative, reflected, affective, collocative, and social meanings, reflecting themes like drug use, sexual activity, gender, sexuality, and women's empowerment. Prominently, connotative, reflected, and social meanings emerge as the most prevalent, with sexual activity being the most frequently depicted social theme in the data. This research sheds light on how popular culture music serves as a powerful medium for expressing and reflecting the various social phenomena and transformations occurring during the contemporary globalized era.

Keywords: Semantic; Associative Meaning; Social Representative

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this research is how associative meaning is used in popular culture music due to the the cultural and social shift from time to time and whether social and cultural shifts have led to the development of various new words and meanings. Words and its meanings grow every now and then, it is because one of the language characteristics is productivity. People in the late 18th century would have not known about the slang language people use these days, they would interpret no cap as someone who has no hat. Nowadays, the language improves itself due to social and cultural conditions, until people understand the meaning no cap means no lie; or originally means 'to surpass', it is the slang word that started being used in the early 20th century and was popularized in 2017 according to Green's Dictionary of Slang (Yule, 2009). This is what we find every day in every single popular culture, because of cultural and social shifts, the words continue growing.

Globalization has played an important role in the cultural shift, this era is the expansion and intensification of social relations and awareness across world-time and world-space, it is easy to get information and make friends from anywhere in the world (Steger, 2020). Due to the hybridization in globalization, the one that changes is not grammar but the language itself (Pieterse, 2020). For example, the Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary notes that outmoded meanings of *gay* are bright, attractive, or happy but due to the new culture the world brings, LGBTQ+ rights have become well-known and people nowadays know *gay* with the newer definition; a homosexual person. On the other hand, this adds a new meaning to the word.

Since this study will discuss meaning, it is, therefore, a study of semantics. Linguistic semantics is the study of how languages organize and express meanings (Kreidler, 1998). Kreidler defines semantics as the study of the relationship between the signs of a language and the objects and concepts in the world that they stand for or represent. While George Yule (2009) argues that semantics is the study of meaning in language, especially the study of the relationship between linguistic expressions and their referents in the world. Lastly, George Leech (1981) argues that the study of meaning in language, including the meaning of words, phrases, sentences, and larger units of discourse. Leech's definition emphasizes the broad scope of semantics, which encompasses not only individual words, but also how these words are combined and organized to create meaning at different levels of linguistic structure. Furthermore, Leech divides meaning into three types; The first one is conceptual meaning, conceptual meaning is seen as being composed of several different components, including denotation (the basic referential meaning of a word or expression), connotation (the associated emotional or evaluative meanings of a word or expression), and collocation (the ways in which words tend to appear together in language use). Which there are five types of associative meaning according to Leech that is connotative meaning, reflected meaning, associative meaning, social meaning and collocative meaning.

Several researchers have previously explored the topic using Leech's Associative Types of Meaning. Muhtadi (2017) conducted a semantic study titled "Associative Meanings In Doel Sumbang Song Lyric 'Beurit'" and identified connotative meaning, social meaning, affective meaning, and collocative meaning in the data. The researcher found a social issue expressed in the song, namely the bitterness of corporate life. While using song lyrics and data to uncover social issues, Muhtadi's research focused solely on one song, whereas this study will encompass diverse pop music with various issues. On the other note, Irfan (2017) conducted research titled "The Analysis of Associative Meaning In Samsung Advertisement Slogan" Samsung Advertisement Slogan is analyzed by Leech types of meaning and it shows that the most used type of meaning is connotative meaning while collocative meaning does not appear from the data. While the research use Leech's theory of Types of Meaning, this research aims another result that is how the associative meaning is used and what social representation shown from the meaning. In addition, Masriyah conduct research titled An Analysis of Associative Meaning In Two Song's Album of Lorde (2019). In this journal, Masriyah also utilizes Leech's associative meaning theory, where all types of meaning are present in the analyzed songs, with social meaning being the most prevalent due to the songwriter and singer's background. However, in this research, the focus is not limited to a single artist; rather, the emphasis is on exploring the social representations emerging from the meanings found in various pop music. The second objective of this research is to examine the social representations arising from the associative meanings present in pop music. During the era of globalization, there is a new term namely popular culture that is a collection of thoughts, ideas, attitudes, perspectives, and images preferred by the mainstream population. According to Winthrop Sargeant (1949), popular culture product is produced for the mass media for mass consumption by the public, it is also known as pop culture. Giroux (1994)) emphasizes popular culture both reflects and shapes our social and political realities, and he has argued that popular culture can be used as a tool for promoting critical thinking and social change. Giroux's work on popular culture emphasizes the ways in which cultural artifacts are not neutral or objective, but are shaped by the interests and perspectives of those who create and consume them. He argues that by critically examining popular culture, we can gain a better understanding of the social and political forces that shape our world, and we can work to challenge and change those forces.

On the other note, we have pop music that is growing from time to time as technology and how music is distributed. Pop music is accessible to all listeners or the general public rather than

targeting one of the social hierarchy, music skill, or someone's knowledge. Different from the genre, pop music includes all contemporary popular genres of music such as rock, reggae, country, rap, and so on (Frith et al., 2001). The art worker usually uses daily life problem and change them into a piece of art. Popular arts such as drama, music, novel, and so on confirm the experiences of the majority and are familiar to the public (Nye, 1972). Following the previous statement, the music industry is a part of popular music or as known as pop music culture popular music industry (Frith et al., 2001). Music nowadays can be reached through physical albums, streaming, or radio which the public can access every time and everywhere from their gadget, these data are collected by Billboard at the end of the year and calculated for awards. Billboard is created by one of the entertainment magazines built in 1840 by William Donaldson and James Hennegan, the chart shows how often the songs are played. The newest and complete data shown for Year-End Charts Hot 100 Songs in 2022 are collected from 200 more countries and the ranking is based on a weighted formula incorporating official-only streams on both subscription and ad-supported tiers of leading audio and video music services, plus download sales from top music retailers across the globe.

While the song does numbers, it is interesting to look at the pop music in the lyrics where we can find the mirror of society from the literature. According to Hudson (2011), literature is the vital record of what men have seen in life, what they experienced, and what they have thought and felt about that aspect of it which have the most immediate and enduring interest for all of us. It is thus fundamentally an expression of our life through the medium of language. On the other hand, according to Taine (2007), literature reflects the social and historical conditions in which it was produced, and can therefore be analyzed to gain insight into the values, beliefs, and ideologies of a particular time and place. He believed that by examining the social and cultural conditions that influenced literary works, one could gain a better understanding of the meanings and significance of those works. According to his argument, a literary work is shaped by three key influences: Race, moment, and milieu. "Race" encompasses the combined physical traits and distinct mental characteristics of a nation. "Milieu" refers to the circumstances or environment that alter the inherent racial disposition. Lastly, "moment" denotes the momentum of past and present cultural traditions, which exert their impact on the creation of the literary piece. There are social and cultural phenomena shown in each song, for example, Michael Jackson's Heal The World that raised the destruction of the world and invited the listener to work towards improving our world, fostering a sense of love and peace, even in the face of mortality (Sujarwati & Pandan Sari, 2021). In saying this, this research will show how popular music culture represents the social condition from its lyric meaning.

There have been several previous studies, such as Adriyanti (2001) with the title "Social Representations of the Covid-19 Pandemic in the Poetry Anthology 'To Kill The Invisible Killer' by FX Rudy Gunawan and Afran Malay," which focused on examining social representations in poetry using Alan Swingewood's theory. The research findings indicated that societal awareness, humanitarian efforts, the existence of leaders, the portrayal of poverty, and family disorganization emerged during the Covid-19 outbreak. In contrast, this research utilizes Taine's Sociology of Literature theory to understand the current state of popular culture. Another study by Majid (2019) titled "Social Representations in the Film 'Surat Kecil Untuk Tuhan' (A Semiotic and Sociological Study of Literature)" explored social representations of friendship and social interaction, family bonding, social empathy, and romance through a semiotic analysis. While this research shares similarities with the exploration of romance, it goes beyond mere romance and also examines sexual activity, all from a semantic perspective. Moreover, this research has a broader scope as it does not focus solely on a single individual. Finally, there's Muhtarom's (2019) study titled "Social Representations of Santri (Islamic Students) and the City in the Novel 'Hubbu' by Mashuri (A Sociological Study of Literature)," which found that the main character engaged in sexual activity after moving to the city, despite

adhering to Islamic principles during his time at the *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school), where such behavior was prohibited. Similarly, this research also touches on sexual activity, but its exploration is not limited to that aspect alone. Additionally, this research has a wider scope as it considers multiple aspects of social representation beyond individual actions.

METHOD

The current study uses a descriptive qualitative research approach to investigate the language used to analyze a collection of Top 20 Pop Music 2022 in The World: Analysis of Billboard Pop Music End-Year Chart 100 selected Pop Song as follows:

1. "As It Was" by Harry Styles
2. "Stay" by The Kid Laroi and Justin Bieber
3. "Easy On Me" by Adele
4. "Shivers" by Ed Sheeran
5. "Ghost" by Justin Bieber
6. "Cold Heart (PNAU Remix)" by Elton John featuring Dua Lipa
7. "About Damn Time" by Lizzo
8. "Bad Habits" by Ed Sheeran
9. "That's What I Want" by Lil Nas X
10. "Industry Baby" Lil Nas X & Jack Harlow
11. "abcdefu" by Gayle
12. "Need To Know" Doja Cat
13. "Woman" by Doja Cat

To collect the data, According to Sudaryanto (1993), tapping can be used to observe study objects. The researcher may intercept written language, spoken language, or conversations between one or more people in order to gather data. The initial method used to collect the desired data was wiretapping. Additionally, the note-taking approach is used to gather data. Note-taking is a strategy that is beneficial in gathering qualitative data and can enhance comprehension and analysis of the reading material or presentation being observed. Data from cards that have been or will be delivered can be recorded. The researcher creates an argument or grouping following the completion of the recording.

Data analysis should be done after collecting data. The analyzing tool used in the *agih* technique, according to Sudaryanto (1993), is a component of the language itself. A component or aspect of the study object's target language, such as words, syntactic functions, phrases, word syllables, pitch, and others, serves as the deciding instrument. Then use the substitution technique to determine how similar the category of elements that are replaced with replacement elements, and whether they can replace one another. Next, use *perluas* technique to identify the meaning aspects in specific lingual units, as well as the degree of synonymy, or how similar and different the information is shaped.

The lyrics' meanings will be classified using Leech's Associative Types of Meaning, which include referential, connotative, affective, reflective, and collocative meaning. This will provide for a more full knowledge of the language utilized in the lyrics. Taine's Sociology of Literature theory will also be utilized to investigate the concepts communicated in the lyrics. According to Taine's idea, literature reflects the social, political, and cultural context in which it was

formed. The study intends to understand the underlying social background that inspired the composition of the lyrics.

Overall, this theoretical framework will provide an in-depth understanding of the songs' language and the thoughts they communicate. The study intends to uncover the many meanings and concepts given by the lyrics and the ways in which they are understood by employing both Leech's and Taine's theories.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Upon analyzing the data from the Top 20 English Songs of 2022, as listed on the Billboard End-Year Chart 100, the researchers found forty data of associative meanings in twelve Pop Songs. Specifically, there were ten data of connotative meaning, nine of social meaning, ten of affective meaning, ten of reflected meaning, and one of collocative meaning.

The findings reveal a total of forty data of associative meanings in the selected Top 20 English Songs of 2022 from the Billboard End-Year Chart 100. These associative meanings encompass the five types identified by Leech's theory (1981) and the sociology of literature theory by Taine. The frequencies of each type can be observed in the table below.

Table 1. Result of Associative Meaning and Social Representation of Top 20 Pop Music 2022 Billboard Pop Music End-Year Chart 100 selected Pop Song

Associative Meaning	Data	Social Representation	Data
Connotative	10	Alcoholic Beverages and Recreational Drug Use	12
Reflected	10	Gender and Sexual identity	5
Affective	9	Sexual Activity	18
Social	10	Women Empowerment	5
Collocative	1		
Total	40		40

Discussion

The primary objective of this study was to analyze associative meanings in the lyrics of the Top 20 Pop Music 2022 Billboard Pop Music End-Year Chart 100, focusing on selected pop songs. To achieve this, the researchers formulated three research questions. The first question aimed to identify the various kinds of associative meanings found in pop culture song lyrics and how these associative meanings were employed in pop culture songs. Lastly, the third question aimed to determine the social representation depicted in pop culture through song lyrics. Upon analyzing the data, the study revealed a total of forty data of associative meanings in the lyrics of the selected Top 20 Pop Music songs of 2022 from the Billboard End-Year Chart 100. Among these, ten data pertained to connotative meaning, nine to social meaning, ten to affective meaning, ten to reflected meaning, and one to collocative meaning.

The most frequently used types of meanings in the song lyrics of pop culture music were connotative, reflected, and social meanings. While the most frequent social representation data is for Sexual Activity. Moreover, among the various social representations found in the data,

the most prevalent theme was related to Sexual Activity reflecting a prominent social aspect in contemporary pop music which will be explained below:

Connotative Meaning

Connotative meaning is meaning that is communicated by virtue of what language refers to, over and above its conceptual content. Researcher found 10 connotative data from 40 data and the following is the example of connotative meaning found in the data with its social representation:

Datum 1:

I wanna drink that smile, I wanna feel like I'm (Shivers by Ed Sheeran)

Based on the given data, it portrays that the writer is filled with a desire to be another man who can provide affection to the person mentioned. In the provided data, the word "drink" does not refer to its conceptual meaning of a liquid for drinking or an amount of liquid consumed. Instead, it refers to kissing. This can be inferred from the preceding lyrics: *"I never kissed a mouth that tastes like yours, Strawberries and somethin' more."*

If we substitute the word "kiss" for "drink" in the data, the result would be "I wanna kiss that smile." It can be concluded that the meaning of the song lyrics remains unchanged. Therefore, the writer's expression conveys a strong desire to become someone else who can provide affection to the mentioned individual. The word "drink" in the given data does not pertain to its conceptual meaning of a liquid for consumption, but rather to kissing.

Datum 2:

She give tenfold, come here, papa, plant your seed. (Woman by Doja Cat)

Seed conceptual meaning is the small hard part produced by a plant, from which a new plant can grow. However, in the lyrics shows that 'seed' carries a positive connotation of 'life'. This is emphasized by the lyrics of the subsequent song, *"She can grow it from her womb, a family,"* which implies that the seed represents the life planted in a woman's womb, resulting in the growth of a family.

According to the data above, both of the lyrics tells about sexual activity which this is the most social representative shows from the data with 18 data. Sexual activity is a deeply personal and intimate aspect of human life that can also be influenced by social factors. Sexual activity or sexual behaviour refers to the way in which an individual engages in sexual activities. It encompasses a wide range of actions, from those performed alone, such as masturbation, to those involving others, such as oral sex, vaginal intercourse, and various other behaviours (Walker et al., 2021).

With the advent of social media and online platforms, discussions and depictions of sexual activity have become more prevalent in the public sphere. The legality of different sexual activities varies across cultures and countries. Laws may differ regarding the age, gender, marital status, or other factors of the individuals involved. Certain sexual acts may be deemed illegal due to contraventions of social norms or generally accepted sexual morals (Cowling & Reynolds, 2017).

Reflected Meaning

Reflected meaning is meaning that is communicated through association with another sense of the same expression. There is 10 reflected meaning data found and following is the example of reflected meaning found in the data with its social representation:

Datum 3:

What kind of pills are you on? (As It Was by Harry Styles)

The word "pills" typically refers to small, round medicine tablets that are swallowed whole. It can also have reflected meanings as follows:

Medication: Pills can refer to genuine prescription drugs prescribed by a doctor for specific conditions, as mentioned in the following: *"I was on various pills for my heart condition."*

Contraception: "The Pill" can refer to oral contraceptive pills used for birth control, as discussed in the following: *"IUDs, in particular, can be more cost-effective than The Pill, or even Condoms, if you keep them for the full duration."*

Amphetamines: In drug slang, "pills" can be a term used to refer to amphetamines. For example, "Peep pills" is a slang term for amphetamine narcotics as shown in the co-text below:

I look at him, confused, thinking for one brief, horrifically wonderful second that he's dosed the wine with Ex and I've thus just done drugs without it having been my fault, when I glance into his previously clasped hand and spy a slew of small white pills gathered there. Is that Ecstasy? I've done it a bunch of times, but I've usually been so drunk or wired by that point that I don't really remember what it looks like.

— Anna David, PARTY GIRL

"You took a dose of Orange Sunshine LSD," Troy said. "Janelle got it from Tim Leary. Leary got it from Ronnie Joe Fowler. Fowler gets it from a lab up near San Francisco that nobody can find. What you got through your skin pores is pure LSD dissolved in distilled water. Instead of pills, the acid gurus are taking it orally.

— T. Jefferson Parker, CALIFORNIA GIRL

In the specific lyrics mentioned, the term "pills" refers to amphetamine pills that make the user excessively energetic and even lose consciousness. This is why the preceding line in the lyrics is *"Harry, you're no good alone. Why are you sittin' at home on the floor?"*.

Datum 4:

I get drunk, wake up, I'm wasted still (Stay by The Kid Laroï and Justin Bieber)

'Wasted' conveys the meaning of time being spent in an unproductive or unsuccessful manner. The person realizes that they have wasted their time. However, as seen in the first line, it has reflected meaning of strongly affected by alcohol or drugs as shown in the co-text below:

DRUNK people have no idea how wasted they are — and Aussie scientists reckon they have the data to prove it.

An intrepid team of researchers at Deakin, La Trobe and Curtin universities hit up bars and pubs across the country to compare how drunk people thought they were and how drunk they actually were.

— (Graham & AAP, 2017)

According to the data above, both of the lyrics tells about a alcoholic beverages and recreational drugs. Besides the example above, there is 12 data found about social representation about alcoholic beverages and recreational drugs use. Alcoholic beverages and recreational drugs are frequently consumed within certain cultures or societies. These substances are often utilized for various purposes, including socializing, relaxation, and as a means of escape. The consumption of alcoholic beverages and recreational drugs can be deeply ingrained in the customs, traditions, and social norms of specific communities.

Alcoholic beverages contain ethanol, a type of alcohol produced through the fermentation of grains, fruits, or sugar sources. According to International Alliance for Responsible Drinking (2022), age limits for alcohol consumption are set by governments to protect individuals, especially minors, and vary across countries based on societal norms, scientific research, and public policy.

On the other hand, recreational drug use involves consuming psychoactive drugs to experience altered states of consciousness for pleasure or leisure. According to "Historical and cultural aspects of man's relationship with addictive drugs" by Marc-Antoine Crocq (2007), cultural factors shape attitudes and patterns of drug use, with societies differing in acceptance or prohibition of specific substances due to religious beliefs, social norms, and economic factors.

Affective Meaning

Affective meaning is meaning that is communicated of the feelings and attitudes of the speaker/writer. There is 9 data for the affective meaning found in this research and following is the example of affective meaning found in the data with its social representation:

Datum 5:

I can be your lady, I'm a woman (Woman by Doja Cat)

The word "lady" refers to a word used to mean 'woman' that some people, especially older people, consider is more polite. It can also have reflected meanings that is a woman who is polite and well educated, has excellent manners and always behaves

In addition, the lady has a positive connotative of Queen or Princess as well as shown in the co-text below:

I think I'd prefer my own horse," I admitted, hoping I didn't offend Talin. "Riding double isn't exactly comfortable."

Osius bowed. "Of course, my lady."

Talin and I stood in silence for several minutes, mulling over our own thoughts. "Nor," he said finally. "I'm sorry we couldn't take your family." He chewed the corner of his lip, then added, "I'm sorry we couldn't take everyone."

— Mara Rutherford, KINGDOM OF SEA AND STONE

According to the reflected and connotative meaning the attitude of the writer/speaker shows that she is able to act like a queen that is a ruler and leader or a as an ordinary human being as a woman.

According to the data above, the lyrics tell about women empowerment and there is 5 data showing about women empowerment in this research. Women's empowerment is a vital

movement aimed at challenging and dismantling the historical gender inequalities that have marginalized women in various spheres of life. Empowerment can be understood as a multi-dimensional social process that enables individuals to gain control over their own lives (Page and Czuba, 1999). It is a transformative journey that nurtures personal power, which refers to the ability to take action and effect change. This newfound power empowers individuals to address issues that they personally identify as significant, not only within their own lives but also within their communities and society at large.

Beyond necessary well-being upgrades, adjustments may lead to women's empowerment, where women acquire the agency and resources they need to take charge of their lives, develop self-confidence, and pursue their own interests. Institutional practices, societal norms, and attitudes undergo more profound and truly transformative changes. (Patel & Petesch, n.d.)

Social Meaning

Social meaning is the meaning that is communicated of the social circumstances of language. There is 10 data found about social meaning in this research and the following is the example of social meaning found in the data with its social representation:

Datum 6:

I don't fuck bitches, I'm queer, ha (Industry Baby" Lil Nas X & Jack Harlow)

In the dictionary meaning, bitches refer to female dogs. However, in offensive slang meaning, "bitches" is used as an offensive term to refer to women, specifically in a derogatory or disrespectful manner.

It implies a negative view of women as unkind or unpleasant individuals. It's important to note that the use of offensive language is disrespectful and can perpetuate harmful stereotypes.

From the data above, it shown that the lyric tell about the gender and sexual identity and there is five data about this social representative in this research. Gender and sexual identity are essential aspects of human diversity and personal expression. Gender is the term used to describe an individual's self-identification and how others perceive and categorize them based on cultural understandings of sexual differences. It is important to note that gender is related to, but not synonymous with, the concept of sex (Díaz-Andreu et al., 2005).

According to Voss and Schmidt (2000), sex refers to the physical and genetic characteristics of the body that are related to reproduction, including genitalia, chromosomes, hormones, and reproductive organs. These factors determine an individual's biological sex. Sexual identities are defined by an individual's choice of sexual partners, such as heterosexual, homosexual, or pederast.

Society's understanding and acceptance of diverse gender and sexual identities have evolved over time, challenging traditional binary notions and recognizing the importance of inclusivity and respect. In this research, the social representation of gender and sexual identity is found in the example associative meaning data as follows:

Collocative Meaning

Collocative meaning is meaning that is communicated through association with words which tend to occur in the environment of another word. There is only one data about collocative meaning in this research and the following is the collocative meaning found in the data:

Datum 7:

I wanna stay up all day and all night (Shivers by Ed Sheeran)

"Day and night" is a collocation used to describe the two contrasting periods of time that make up a full 24-hour cycle, it is the idea of contrast or continuous periods of time. It is a fixed combination of words that is commonly used in everyday language as shown in co-text below:

1. *She studied day and night to prepare for her exams.*
2. *The city is bustling with activity both day and night.*
3. *The shop is open day and night to serve its customers.*

However, there is no social representation found in this collocation data.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzed and investigated the use of associative meanings in the lyrics of the Top 20 Pop Music songs from the 2022 Billboard Pop Music End-Year Chart 100. The research identified five types of associative meanings and their social respective functions within the pop culture context. The findings indicate that the pop culture songs predominantly employ connotative, reflected, and social meanings. These meanings serve to evoke both positive and negative associations, and they often involve the use of slang, taboo language, or informal tones to add depth and alternative interpretations to the words.

Among the social representations observed in the data, the theme of Sexual Activity emerged as the most frequent. The lyrics frequently address desire, intimacy, and even references to sexual encounters, highlighting the significance of this aspect in contemporary pop music.

In summary, the study sheds light on the diverse and expressive use of associative meanings in pop culture music. The research findings provide valuable insights into the themes and functions of associative meanings, as well as the portrayal of social representations related to social representation in the analyzed song lyrics. This research sheds light on how popular culture music serves as a powerful medium for expressing and reflecting the various social phenomena during the contemporary globalized era through the utilization of these meanings.

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