

THE PEDAGOGICAL VALUE OF ORAL DISCOURSE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS' LINGUISTIC IDENTITY

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Abstract. This article examines how oral discourse shapes teachers' linguistic identity in modern educational settings. The study is based on the assumption that spoken communication is a foundational pedagogical asset, enabling educators to project professional values, articulate educational philosophies, and cultivate a unique expressive voice. The analytical framework targets three interrelated dimensions: the role of speech in educational settings, the core of linguistic identity, and the nexus between them. The methodological framework outlines an experimental research design intended to leverage the formative power of oral communication. Preliminary findings suggest that reflective practices and authentic classroom dialogue reinforce the teacher's linguistic profile and professional voice. The urgency of this investigation is heightened by ongoing educational shifts driven by pervasive digitalization, and by the rise of artificial intelligence.

Keywords: oral discourse; educational communication; linguistic identity; professional expression; teacher identity; pedagogical interaction; communicative competence.

VALOAREA PEDAGOGICĂ A DISCURSULUI ORAL ÎN DEZVOLTAREA IDENTITĂȚII LINGVISTICE A CADRELOR DIDACTICE

Rezumat. Articolul investighează impactul discursului oral asupra configurării identității lingvistice a profesorilor în mediul școlar actual. Cercetarea valorifică premisa conform căreia actul comunicării verbale constituie o resursă pedagogică fundamentală, prin intermediul căreia educatorii își exteriorizează valorile profesionale, își definesc convingerile axiologice și își cristalizează un stil propriu de exprimare. Demersul analitic vizează trei dimensiuni interconectate: funcția discursului oral în mediul educațional, esența identității lingvistice și interdependența dintre aceste două componente. Secțiunea metodologică propune un design experimental axat pe potențarea valențelor formative ale exprimării orale. Concluziile preliminare indică faptul că reflexivitatea și dialogul autentic consolidează profilul lingvistic și amprenta vocală a pedagogului. Relevanța temei este amplificată de mutațiile structurale din învățământ generate de digitalizare și de emergența inteligenței artificiale.

Cuvinte-cheie: discurs oral; comunicare educațională; identitate lingvistică; expresie profesională; identitate profesională; interacțiune pedagogică; competență de comunicare.

Introduction

In what ways does oral discourse shape how educators articulate and negotiate their professional identity? Through what mechanisms does verbal interaction in the classroom foster the growth of a teacher's linguistic identity? Why spoken discourse must be reconsidered as a high-value formative resource in contemporary education?

These core questions have gained critical relevance in modern educational environments, where communication represents the very scaffolding of pedagogical

practice and professional interaction. The teacher's spoken discourse does not merely facilitate classroom activities; it orchestrates dialogue, scaffolds learning, and co-constructs a communicative ecosystem through which professional values and epistemic perspectives are transmitted. Language serves as the primary medium through which educators establish relationships, steer learning processes, and project their professional authority, directly impacting the quality of classroom interaction.

In day-to-day school realities, the oral dimension of communication is omnipresent. It underpins all classroom interactions and generates fertile spaces for collaborative reflection. Concurrently, oral communication mirrors vital facets of a teacher's professional profile, such as rhetorical style, lexical choices, and professional positioning. Consequently, discursive practice becomes indissolubly linked to the genesis and evolution of the teacher's linguistic identity.

This dynamic can be better understood through modern conceptualizations of identity. Richards conceptualizes identity as a fluid, contingent, and context-dependent construct, continuously reshaped by individual traits, social interactions, self-awareness, and the shifting professional roles that individuals adopt across various environments. In the school setting, teachers construct and refine this identity through instructional dialogue, pedagogical decisions, and continuous exchanges with students and peers. Such a perspective strengthens the argument that oral discourse serves as an essential laboratory wherein teachers negotiate their professional presence and mold their linguistic identity through daily communicative acts [1].

The maturation of a teacher's professional identity is deeply embedded in the overarching continuum of teacher education and career-long growth. Teacher preparation programs, much like vocational education at large, are intrinsically future-oriented, focusing on equipping candidates for real-world practice. Nevertheless, becoming an educator transcends initial academic certification; it requires a lifelong trajectory of experiential learning, deep reflection, and professional adaptation. This developmental journey is shaped both by personal biographical experiences and by deep-seated educational traditions that continue to influence contemporary classroom dynamics.

Within this developmental continuum, oral discourse acts as a primary catalyst for building professional identity. Sociolinguistic research demonstrates that identity is not a static property but an ongoing social performance, with discourse being the primary mechanism through which individuals signal their beliefs, allegiances, and positions relative to others [2,3,4]. In educational environments, teachers engage in repetitive discursive routines that gradually crystalize into a distinctive, recognizable mode of linguistic and professional expression.

The resonance of this topic is further underscored by contemporary social realities, marked by rapid institutional transformation and heightened societal expectations

regarding the communicative competence of educators. Concurrently, the mass integration of digital tools and artificial intelligence platforms has introduced novel communication channels, making linguistic authenticity and the deliberate management of professional language more critical than ever.

Educational literature has long scrutinized communication and teacher identity through various classical lenses. Lev Vygotsky underscores the socio-cultural mediation of language in cognitive growth, framing speech as the fundamental tool for internalizing social experience. From a pedagogical standpoint, Jerome Bruner conceptualized communication as an active meaning-making process through which individuals interpret information and transform educational experiences into personal knowledge. Merged with contemporary theories of teacher identity, these frameworks supply a robust foundation for examining oral discourse as a cornerstone resource in the development of an educator's linguistic profile [5, 6].

While communication, rhetoric, and teacher identity have received significant attention independently, they are frequently treated as isolated silos in educational research. Insufficient scholarly focus has been directed toward the explicit pedagogical function of oral discourse as an active catalyst in shaping the teacher's linguistic identity. This missing link is vital today, as modern classrooms increasingly require flexible, authentic self-expression and conscious identity construction from educators.

The present paper addresses this gap by mapping the intersection of oral discourse and linguistic identity, emphasizing the formative value of deliberate spoken communication in professional growth. The analysis demonstrates that classroom discourse is not merely a vehicle for content delivery, but a rich developmental site where teachers actively construct, express, and solidify their linguistic identity within modern educational landscapes.

To address these objectives, the article maps out a three-tiered investigative path: first, it contextualizes oral discourse as a formative asset within classroom communication; second, it deconstructs the architecture of linguistic identity alongside its professional manifestations; and ultimately, it critically uncovers the dialectical nexus joining speech dynamics to identity construction in ongoing teaching practice.

Methods and materials used

Rooted within the conceptual framework of the educational sciences, this inquiry probes the interplay between spoken discourse and the evolution of an educator's linguistic identity inside the classroom setting. The premise of this study posits that strategic verbal exchange functions as a foundational pedagogical lever, enabling practitioners to project professional allegiances, forge robust instructional relationships, and anchor a distinctive, recognizable communicative profile.

The research design operates on a dual-variable matrix. The independent variable comprises the intentional pedagogical deployment of oral speech, operationalized through explicit communicative modalities such as dialogic interaction, reflective communication, biographical storytelling, and authentic professional dialogue. Conversely, the dependent variable encompasses the maturation of the teacher's linguistic identity, captured via metrics such as theoretical style, expressive professional voice, code-switching or linguistic adaptability, discursive structural organization, and metacognitive awareness of language use across diverse pedagogical settings.

Methodologically, the study adopts an experimental-control design framework. The participant pool draws from active teaching practitioners within general education ecosystems, purposively sampled based on the depth of their professional tenure and their high engagement in classroom discursive practice. The experimental itinerary unfolds sequentially across three distinct phases: an initial diagnostic assessment, a targeted formative intervention, and a concluding evaluative appraisal.

The formative axis of this investigation centres on deliberate instructional strategies engineered to catalyse critical, self-aware discursive habits during professional execution. Strategic emphasis is allocated to communicative scenarios that trigger collaborative dialogue, auto-reflection, verbal self-actualizations, and the narrative deconstruction of classroom milestones. An innovative component of the intervention resides in harnessing educational podcasting as a digital laboratory for identity exteriorization and deep reflection, allowing participants to record, audit, and articulate their experiential trajectories, beliefs, and axiological frameworks through structured audio narratives.

Data triangulation integrates quantitative and qualitative methodologies to extract comprehensive reading and analysis of the phenomenon under review. The diagnostic and evaluative toolkit features standardized questionnaires, systematic observation rubrics, structured reflective journals, learner-driven feedback loops, and linguistic artifacts generated during the formative workshops.

The observation and tracking of communicative behaviour is tied to specific behavioural anchors that index both speech proficiency and identity formation. Key parameters include structural clarity, rhetorical cohesion, argumentative rigor, reflective depth, context-sensitive flexibility, and the linguistic encoding of personal and professional value systems. Parallel tracking is directed toward how educators orchestrate classroom dialogue, process and pivot upon student inputs, recalibrate their delivery when confronting volatile classroom situations, and cultivate non-linear interactions. Furthermore, the analysis also considers the emergence of an individual communicative style, the development of an authentic professional voice, and the organic integration of autobiographical experiences, internal tenets, and ethical postures into everyday pedagogical speech.

Deliberate dialogic interaction is prioritized, given that an educator's linguistic identity becomes visible precisely through concrete discursive performances and active engagement in pedagogical conversations. From this perspective, classroom speech represents both a site for professional self-presentation and a catalyst for identity transformation, both of which continuously morph through immersive communicative exposure.

The methodological framework seeks to decode the hidden mechanisms through which spoken discourse steers identity construction, ultimately isolating actionable pedagogical frameworks capable of supporting conscious, transparent, and reflective communication in contemporary school environments.

For the operational requirements of this study, linguistic identity has been mapped onto observable behaviour, utilizing target criteria such as communicative clarity, discourse coherence, adaptability to different values through language, and the development of a recognizable communicative signature.

Based on the theoretical analysis and on the preliminary stage of the research, it may be anticipated that the intentional and reflective use of oral discourse contributes to the strengthening of teachers' linguistic identity, supports professional self-expression and facilitates the development of a distinctive communicative signature within educational practice.

Results and discussions

Modern macro-educational policies increasingly position communicative proficiency at the very core of instructional mastery and career-long teacher development. Within educational settings, oral discourse structures interaction, facilitates learning and serves as the primary vector for the transmission of cultural meanings, lived experiences and shared ethical values. Despite this theoretical consensus, oral discourse is still overwhelmingly reduced to a transactional tool for information delivery and behaviour management, leaving its profound impact on the teacher's subjective professional expression and identity development largely marginalized in empirical research.

Current educational realities, disrupted by systemic societal shifts, multicultural classrooms, and the pervasive expansion of generative artificial intelligence - require a broader, more radical reconfiguration of how we conceptualize language use in professional practice. While technological tools increasingly support educational activities and provide access to information, they remain fundamentally incapable of replicating the deeply human dimensions of pedagogy, which manifests through authentic dialogue, interpretation, and professional judgment. Against this backdrop, a teachers' linguistic identity transitions from a passive skill to an indispensable existential resource. The teacher's unique professional voice acts as the ultimate anchor for projecting values, and

crafting meaningful experiences. Consequently, effective teaching transcends the sterile facilitation of curricular targets; it includes the continuous construction of professional meaning through interaction, reflection and participation in educational communities.

Oral discourse as a pedagogical resource in educational communication

Oral discourse represents a core element of educational communication and a fundamental component of classroom interaction. In teaching practice, discourse structures dialogue, facilitates the transmission of knowledge, and creates opportunities for reflection and interpersonal exchange. Through spoken language, teachers guide learning, organize communication, and establish the relational climate of the classroom.

An important theoretical perspective for understanding this concept is offered by L. S. Vygotsky [5], who viewed language as a mediating tool that supports cognitive development and the internalization of social experience. Under this framework, oral discourse functions as an educational resource through which learning is progressively formed through interaction and shared meaning. Communication therefore becomes an active part of the educational process, supporting participation and pedagogical engagement.

A complementary perspective is provided by J. Bruner, who emphasized that communication plays an essential role in the construction of meaning. In educational settings, dialogue creates opportunities through which ideas are interpreted, negotiated, and transformed into meaningful learning experiences. Evaluating from this stance, oral discourse becomes more than a means of transmitting information; it creates the pedagogical conditions necessary for reflection, participation, and collaborative knowledge construction [6].

The dialogical dimension of educational discourse is also reflected in the work of P. Freire, who described communication in education as a space of interaction through which participants actively engage in the process of constructing knowledge. This perspective illuminates the formative value of teacher discourse and reinforces the importance of authentic communication in building meaningful educational relationships [7].

In the Moldovan educational context, Goraș-Postică et al. emphasize the importance of interactive learning situations, reflection, communication and value-oriented academic practices that support the development of learner-centered educational environments [8].

Looking past its instructional and relational functions, oral discourse provides teachers with opportunities to express personal perspectives, professional values, and pedagogical beliefs. The language used in educational interaction reflects more than subject knowledge. It reveals ways of thinking, professional attitudes, and individual communicative preferences. Through repeated communication patterns, discourse

gradually becomes associated with a recognizable manner of professional expression, contributing to the development of a distinctive discursive profile.

Within Romanian and Moldovan educational thought, communication is frequently approached as a fundamental condition of educational action. Cucos underlines that educational communication facilitates the transmission of knowledge while supporting the formation of attitudes, values, and interpersonal relationships. From this point of view, language contributes to the organization of educational experience and to the creation of constructive interactions between teachers and learners [10].

This line of thought aligns with the work of Pâslaru, who associates educational communication with the broader process of personality formation and identity development. Educational discourse creates opportunities for dialogue, reflection, and value-oriented interaction, contributing to the construction of educational meanings and to the development of responsible participation in learning communities [11].

Synthesizing these viewpoints, several studies coordinated by Goraș-Postică bring into focus the role of values, intercultural understanding and reflective educational practices in the learning process. Consequently, communication may be viewed as a medium through which educational values are expressed, negotiated and gradually internalized [8, 9].

Recent approaches to educational discourse also underline its formative and axiological dimensions. Popoveniuc [12] emphasizes that spoken language influences classroom climate and shapes the relational dynamics between teacher and students. In this light, oral discourse may be understood as a pedagogical resource that integrates communication, interaction, and reflection, contributing directly to the educational process and supporting the development of teachers' professional expression. Consequently, oral discourse serves as a formative space in which teachers continuously express, shape, and negotiate elements of their linguistic identity through educational interaction.

Teachers' linguistic identity and professional expression

Teachers' linguistic identity represents an essential dimension of professional identity and takes shape through communication, educational experience, and social interaction. Within educational practice, it becomes visible in the ways teachers express ideas, organize discourse, adapt language to pedagogical situations, and interact with learners. Elements such as clarity of expression, coherence of discourse, communicative style, and linguistic adaptability contribute to the development of professional expression and influence the quality of educational interaction. In this sense, language functions both as a means of communication and as an expression of professional presence.

This structural focus aligns with the theoretical framework established by Richards, who describes identity as a dynamic and context-dependent construct shaped through

interaction, professional roles, and individual self-awareness. Within educational environments, teachers express professional identity through classroom communication, pedagogical choices, and everyday interaction. Consequently, language emerges as a primary channel through which an educator's professional stance is explicitly articulated and recognized, an observation corroborated by research that explores the relationship between language use and social interaction [1].

Research on teacher identity also emphasizes that linguistic practices play an essential role in the continuous construction and negotiation of professional identity. Norton and Toohey [13] point to the close relationship between language, identity, and social interaction, showing that communicative practices are influenced by context and by the meanings associated with language use. In educational settings, this perspective implies that classroom discourse serves a dual purpose: it reflects basic communicative competence while simultaneously projecting personal beliefs, professional values, and tactical pedagogical positioning.

A particularly relevant perspective is offered by Bakhtin, who argued that every utterance reflects elements of the speaker's individuality and that style is inseparably connected to the forms of communication used in specific social contexts. He further emphasized that each sphere of human activity forms its own speech genres, characterized by relatively stable forms of expression and interaction. Educational communication constitutes one such sphere, where discourse is shaped by pedagogical goals, institutional expectations, and interpersonal relationships. Viewed through this prism, linguistic identity ceases to be a static, innate trait; rather, it is progressively consolidated through participation in educational communication and through the repeated use of discourse practices associated with the teaching profession. Although teachers operate within shared communicative frameworks, they continue to develop distinctive ways of speaking and interacting, which contribute to the expression of linguistic identity [14].

The expression of linguistic identity becomes particularly evident in everyday classroom interaction. The way teachers formulate explanations, ask questions, offer feedback or encourage dialogue reflects communicative choices and shapes the tone of educational interaction. A clear and reflective communicative style may support student engagement and strengthen the teacher's awareness of their own linguistic expression. Accordingly, the classroom acts as a critical arena for identity exteriorization, as every explanation, question or feedback sequence requires spontaneous rhetorical choices that register professional knowledge while simultaneously revealing personal ways of thinking, interacting and positioning oneself in relation to learners.

This process may also be understood through perspectives on linguistic creativity. Building on the work of Humboldt and later developed by Coşeriu, language is viewed as a continuous act of creation and expression rather than a system of forms that is merely

reproduced. In educational practice, teachers actively construct discourse through communicative choices, professional intentions and personal styles of expression [15].

This perspective underscores the plastic nature of the teacher's communicative profile, which transforms through ongoing adaptation and communicative experience in educational settings. Teachers adapt discourse to the needs of learners, the objectives of instruction and the realities of classroom interaction on an ongoing basis.

The significance of linguistic identity extends beyond individual expression. In educational practice, the way teachers communicate influences classroom climate, shapes patterns of interaction and contributes to the development of meaningful relationships with learners. For this reason, linguistic identity may be regarded as a professional resource that supports effective communication, pedagogical credibility and learner engagement.

Recent studies on teacher identity further reinforce this perspective. Christensson explored how discursive practices influence the way teachers construct and express professional identity in educational settings. Through communication, teachers develop professional self-awareness, negotiate meanings and shape a recognizable linguistic presence in relation to students, colleagues and the broader educational environment [16].

The imperative becomes vital in current educational backgrounds, marked by social change, cultural pluralism, and increasing digital communication. The growing presence of digital technologies and artificial intelligence has created new forms of interaction and increased the visibility of professional communication. In this context, linguistic identity becomes closely connected to authenticity, clarity of expression and the deliberate preservation of an unmediated, genuine professional voice across both physical and virtual learning environments.

The relationship between oral discourse and linguistic identity in educational practice

How does oral discourse influence the way teachers express and develop their linguistic identity within educational practice? This question brings forth the close connection between communication and professional expression and draws attention to the formative role of language in the teaching profession.

Within educational settings, oral discourse creates opportunities through which teachers communicate knowledge, establish relationships and participate in meaningful exchange. Through spoken language, they express ideas, organize classroom communication and reveal particular ways of thinking, explaining and engaging with learners. As a result, discourse provides one of the principal contexts in which linguistic identity becomes visible in professional practice.

From a sociocultural perspective, language develops through interaction and participation in shared communicative experiences. Vygotsky emphasized that speech mediates cognitive and social development, while communication supports the

internalization of knowledge and experience. Extrapolating this framework to school realities, this perspective suggests that linguistic identity evolves through repeated participation in professional dialogue, reflection and communicative engagement [5].

A complementary interpretation is offered by Wenger, who viewed learning as a process closely connected to participation in communities of practice. Teachers construct professional identity through ongoing interaction with students, colleagues and educational communities. These immersive dynamics heavily condition professional positioning and contribute to the development of a recognizable manner of expression that becomes part of their linguistic identity [17].

Grounded in a Bakhtinian epistemology, teachers' discourse does not emerge in isolation. Classroom explanations, questions and comments are shaped by previous educational experiences, professional traditions, institutional expectations and earlier communicative encounters. In this regard, teachers construct their linguistic identity as an active link within an ongoing discursive chain that perpetually connects past experiences with present interaction.

The relationship between discourse and identity may be understood more deeply through the dialogical perspective developed by Bakhtin. According to this view, communication is never an isolated act. Every utterance emerges in response to previous interactions and anticipates future responses from others. Pedagogical exchange therefore unfolds through a continuous exchange of meanings in which teachers and learners actively participate. Linguistic identity evolves within this broader network of classroom communications through dialogue, participation and engagement with the contributions of others.

Bakhtin also emphasized that communication takes shape through concrete utterances situated in specific social contexts. Identity is therefore expressed through authentic communicative acts situated within educational interaction and shaped by the responses of others. In educational practice, explanations, questions, feedback and classroom discussions provide opportunities for teachers to reveal individual communicative styles, professional values and personal ways of engaging with learners. Through these repeated forms of educational communication, discourse gradually becomes associated with a distinctive individual communicative presence. This tailored rhetorical manner of communication may be regarded as one of the most visible expressions of teachers' linguistic identity in educational practice.

A cornerstone of Bakhtin's dialogism resides in the inherently responsive architecture of speech. Educators calibrate their delivery while continuously anticipating the evaluative feedback, interpretations, and real-time friction generated by their interlocutors. Educational communication reflects this dynamic particularly well. Teachers constantly adjust explanations, reformulate ideas, clarify meanings, and modify communicative

strategies in response to learners' reactions and levels of understanding. Consequently, linguistic identity develops through a dynamic process of adaptation and responsiveness, shaped by the communicative exchanges that characterize educational practice.

The organic feedback loop highlights the explicit role that the 'Other' plays in self-actualization. Because classroom communication involves collaborative meaning-making, collective interpretation, and cognitive negotiation, the acts of answering student queries and adjusting to difficult classroom dynamics naturally foster heightened professional self-awareness. By constantly mirroring their speech against the evolving needs of the learners, educators refine their vocal presence and consolidate their linguistic agency.

The relationship between oral discourse and linguistic identity becomes particularly evident in classroom situations. Explanations, questions, feedback and dialogue reflect communicative preferences that gradually become characteristic of teachers' professional practice. Over time, these patterns contribute to the development of a recognizable linguistic profile and support the expression of professional identity. These everyday communicative situations provide opportunities for teachers to apply, adapt, and refine their professional language in response to the needs of learners and the dynamics of classroom interaction. In this way, educational discourse may also be viewed as a medium through which professional attitudes, educational values, and ethical orientations become visible in classroom practice.

Newly emerging research on teacher identity supports these interpretations. Norton and Toohey reiterate that identity is continuously shaped through language practices and social interaction, while Christensson demonstrates how discursive practices influence the ways teachers construct and express professional identity within educational settings. These perspectives confirm that linguistic identity evolves through ongoing communicative experience and participation in meaningful instructional dialogue [13, 16].

Current educational realities further expand the contexts in which teachers express linguistic identity. The growing presence of digital technologies and artificial intelligence has transformed educational communication, creating new forms of interaction and new opportunities for professional expression. Classroom communication increasingly extends into digital and hybrid learning environments, where teachers engage with learners through online discussions, virtual platforms, and technology-mediated dialogue. These developments require greater awareness of language use, communicative adaptability, clarity, and authenticity. In this evolving educational landscape, oral discourse continues to play a central role in shaping professional expression and supporting the development of teachers' linguistic identity across both face-to-face and digitally mediated contexts.

Conclusions

In synthesis, this study explicitly answers the foundational questions raised at the beginning, confirming that oral discourse significantly influences the expression and development of teachers' linguistic identity. Replying to how speech shapes this professional construct, the empirical data demonstrate that through everyday pedagogical exchange, teachers express professional values, pedagogical beliefs, and individual communicative preferences that gradually become part of a recognizable professional presence. Repeated communicative experiences promote the cultivation of linguistic identity and support the development of a distinctive manner of professional expression.

Regarding the specific mechanisms through which classroom interaction fosters this linguistic growth, the findings show that communication in the educational setting supports the strengthening of linguistic identity through interaction, reflection, and participation in educational practice. Classroom discourse creates opportunities for teachers to negotiate meanings, adapt language to different pedagogical situations, and develop greater awareness of their own discursive profile continuously through professional experience and educational engagement.

Finally, addressing why spoken language must be understood as a high-value formative resource, the research highlights that oral discourse functions as a pedagogical resource with clear formative value. Beyond its role in facilitating learning and organizing classroom communication, discourse supports professional self-expression, reflective practice, and identity development. The relationship between oral discourse and linguistic identity may therefore be understood as reciprocal: teachers express their identity through language, while communicative experiences continuously shape and refine that identity.

The relevance of this topic becomes increasingly evident in contemporary educational contexts influenced by digital technologies and artificial intelligence. While technological tools provide new opportunities for access to information and educational support, they cannot replace the human dimensions of communication that are reflected in teachers' professional judgment, value-oriented guidance, and authentic educational relationships. In this context, the teacher's linguistic identity and professional voice remain essential resources for creating meaningful learning experiences and sustaining the broader humanistic mission of the teaching profession.

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