REFUSAL STRATEGIES BY JAVANESE TEACHERS IN BALIKPAPAN

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Abstract

We usually do refusal in our life to reject other person's request. People from different culture usually employ different refusal strategies since every culture has various way in protecting their positive face and reducing the threat that occur because of refusal ((Brown & S. Levinson, 1987). This study has two objectives: 1) to find out kind of strategies are used by Javanese teacher in performing refusal; 2) to describe how Javanese teacher use refusal strategies regarding the status of the addressee. This study was a qualitative study. The data were collected using discourse completion task (DCT) to elicit compliment responses from Javanese teachers in Balikpapan. The discourse completion task (DCT) encompasses a variety of situations that required the participants to refuse the requests directly at them. Moreover, the data were analyzed with the help of Bebe, et all. (1990) in (Boonkongsaen, 2013) indicators. We can inferred that most participants used difference of refusal strategies. However, most participants tended to use the indirect strategies. As we know that Javanese groups tend to be indirect, their refusals are confusing and often causes misunderstandings. It is quite hard for the learners of Javanese language to make refusals like native speakers usually do naturally. Therefore, it is a necessary to teach refusal acts to learners of Javanese language. Finally, this study also showed that the participants were more likely to be polite in their way of refusing requests because they are teachers as the role model politeness for students.

Keywords: Pragmatics, Speech Act, Refusal Strategies, Javanese Teachers

I. INTRODUCTION

Speech acts, as described in the speech act theory, differ in the functions which they serve in interpersonal communication (e.g., request, apology, invitation, refusal, compliment, etc.). Since they are part and parcel of real-life interaction, speech acts are informed by such sociocultural variables as authority, distance, situational setting, politeness, and so forth. In addition, the influence these variables leave on speech acts differs from culture to culture.

Refusal is one of speech acts that people perform. Refusal as suggested by Brown & S. Levinson (1987) is naturally a face- threatening and rapport- threatening speech act. For example, when the speaker invites a person, he/ she wish that his/her invitation is accepted. On the other hand, the hearer has to consider the speaker's invitation before refusing the invitation. If the hearer refuses, the hearer may threaten the speaker's positive face, that is, his/her public self-image to maintain from other.

We can say that refusal is the way of saying 'no" to the speaker's request. Some hearers have several reasons to refuse, like they do not want to hurt the other people's feelings and also when they refuse, the person who sent the request may think that they are bad people. Moreover, as suggested by Sahin (2011) refusal is very culture and context-dependent. Because of that, people from different culture will employ different refusal strategies since every culture has diverse way in protecting speakers' positive face and reducing the threat that occur because of refusals.

People from different culture usually use different refusal strategies because every culture has various ways in protecting their positive faces and reducing the threat (Brown & S. Levinson, 1987). Javanese as one of many culture groups in Indonesia has its own way to realize refusal. According to (Endraswara, 2010) Javanese group is naturally indirect people, their act is full of symbols and it causes them to convey their ideas indirectly. This statement is in line with (Sahin, 2011) that refusal is very culture and context-dependent.

Moreover, Javanese group also has compound politeness system that is presented in their language system. Javanese language itself is divided into three speech level, *krama*, used to communicate with higher status people, *madya*, used to communicate with equal status people and *ngaka*, used to communicate with lower status people (Sasangka, 2004). Due to that in performing refusal in their first language, Javanese will tend to use indirect strategy. Refusals often contain explanations/reasons why such refusals are needed.

This research is beneficial for academicals need and readers to understand how Javanese group do refusals. In order to avoid pragmatic failure in Javanese culture, they need to know the sociocultural strategies used by most Javanese group and the rules for their appropriate implementation. As we know that Javanese is kind of indirect group, their refusals are confusing and often causes misunderstandings. Javanese group tends to say "yes" when they really mean "no," or mean "no" without saying the word "no". On the other hand, learners of Javanese often feel that they have difficulty making refusals in Java language. They find it impossible to refuse offers of food, drink, and so forth, since no one may take their "no" for a real refusal. It is a necessary to teach refusal acts to learners of Javanese language.

Learners of Javanese language should understand the relationship between the interlocutors, the Javanese concept of politeness and general characteristics of Javanese communication. By understanding those concepts, they are able to start to see what kind of strategies that can be used to refuse in an appropriate way, and what social and

cultural factors influence the choices of strategies. Therefore, this study has two objectives: 1) to find out kind of strategies are used by Javanese teacher in performing refusal; 2) to describe how Javanese teacher use refusal strategies regarding the status of the addressee.

A. Refusal as Speech Act

Speech act is one of pragmatics elements introduced by Austin in 1962. He asserts that a person performs different acts in every utterance such as stating an opinion, stating a fact, confirming or denying something, asking a question, giving an order, making an offer or giving permission. 'Speech act' refers to an utterance and the total situation in which the utterance is issued. According to Al-Eryani (2007) a refusal is a respond negatively to an offer, request, invitation, etc. Refusals, as all the other speech acts, occur in all languages. However, not all languages/ cultures refuse in the same way nor do they feel comfortable refusing the same invitation or suggestion. In many societies, how one says "no" may be more important than the answer itself, therefore, sending and receiving a message of „no" is a task that needs special skills. The interlocutor must know when to use the appropriate form and its function. The speech act and its social elements depend on each group and their cultural-linguistic values.

B. Refusal Strategies

Beebe *et al.* (1990) in (Boonkongsaen, 2013) proposed a classification of refusals comprised of three categories: direct refusals; indirect refusals; and adjuncts to refusals.

1. The direct refusals:
   a) Performative (e.g., "I refuse"
   b) Nonperformative statement
      1) "No"
      2) Negative willingness/ability ("I can't!." "I won't", "I don't think so,")

2. The indirect refusals involve various types:
   a) Statement of regret like "I'm sorry…." ; "I feel terrible …"
   b) Wish like "I wish I could help you…"
   c) Excuse, reason, explanation like "I have an exam." e.g., "My children will be home that night." ; "I have a headache."
   d) Statement of alternative. 1. I can do X instead of Y (e.g., "I'd rather..."; "I'd prefer."); 2. Why don't you do X instead of Y (e.g., "Why don't you ask someone else?")
   e) Set condition for future or past acceptance like "If I had enough money" , "If you had asked me earlier, I would have …"
   f) Promise of future acceptance like "I'll do it next time."
   g) Statement of principle "I never drink right after dinner."; "I never do business with friends."

   h) Statement of philosophy like "One can't be too careful."
   i) Attempt to dissuade interlocutor:
      1) Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester like "If I knew you would judge me like this I never did that"; "I won't be any fun tonight"
      2) Criticize the requester "It's a silly suggestion."
      3) Guilt trip (waiter to customers who want to sit for a while: "I can't make a living off people who just order tea"
      4) Request for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping or holding the request.
      5) Let interlocutor off the hook (e.g., "Don't worry about it." "That's okay." "You don't have to,")
      6) Self-defense (e.g., "I'm trying my best." "I'm doing all I can do." "I no do nutting wrong.")
   j) Acceptance functioning as a refusal:
      1) Unspecific or indefinite reply "I don't know when I can give them to you"
      2) Lack of enthusiasm "I'm not interested in diets"
   k) Avoidance:
      1) Non-verbal (silence, hesitation, doing nothing and physical departure)
      2) Verbal (Topic switch, Joke, Repetition of part of request, etc. (e.g., "Monday?", Postponement (e.g., "I'll think about it."), Hedging (e.g., "Gee, I don't know." "I'm not sure.")

3. There are also some adjuncts to the refusals as follows:
   a) Statement of positive opinion like "That's a good idea"
   b) Statement of empathy "I know you are in a bad situation"
   c) Pause fillers like "well" and "uhm"
   d) Gratitude/appreciation like "Thank you."

II. METHODS

This part presents the participants, data collection, instruments and data analysis.

A. Participants

Data in this research were the answer of DCT (Discourse Completion Task) done by Javanese teachers in SMP Airlangga Balikpapan. It is interesting to conduct because we can understand how Javanese learners of English will realize refusal in English in various situations and examine if Javanese indirect nature will be reflected on the refusal they perform.

B. Data Collection

Procedure of collecting data is the guideline for conducting the research. In this study, there are

some steps, namely:

1. Read the theory of refusal strategies carefully multiple times until the researcher understand it.
2. Read many kinds of refusal strategies task to get more task variation.
3. Modifying a DCT (discourse completion task) about refusal strategies
4. Choosing the participants and making appointment with them.
5. Asking them to do a DCT (Discourse Completion Task) about refusal strategies.
6. Analyzing the result of the task.

C. Instruments

The pragmatic task is in the form of DCT to assess students' refusal strategies. The task are compiled by applying and/or adapting some of the items devised by Beebe, et al in 1990 cited in Boonkongsaen, (2013). The DCT were modified from (Al-Mahrooqi & Al-Aghbari, 2016). In other words, some studies have been used them as the instrument. However, there were some modifications and reductions according to the needs.

D. Data Analysis

The researcher will add one step more before drawing conclusion that is interpretation to make the data better.

1. Data reduction
   In this step, the researcher analyzes DCT (Discourse Completion Task) about refusal strategies to know Javanese Learners strategies based on their individual choice
2. Data display
   In this step, the researcher displays the data using tables consist of refusal strategies, frequency and percentage. Before that, the researcher categorizes teacher' answer/data using indicators of refusal strategies devised by Beebe, et al in 1990 cited in (Boonkongsaen, 2013)
3. Data interpretation
   In this step, the researcher interprets the tables and analyze strategies used by teachers based on gender, age and social status according to the indicators
4. Drawing conclusion
   Then, the researcher can continue making conclusion from the result of analysis to find out the description of refusal strategies used by Javanese teachers in SMP Airlangga Balikpapan.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION
A. Kind of Refusal Strategies used By Javanese

The first question is kind of strategies are used by Javanese in performing refusal. This question is answered by finding out the dominant choice of the refusal strategies chosen by the research participants.

Based on Bebe (1990) in (Boonkongsaen, 2013), there are three kinds of refusal strategies, they are direct, indirect and adjuncts. But the researcher found other kinds of refusal strategies that are not classified, they are combination strategies and misunderstanding.
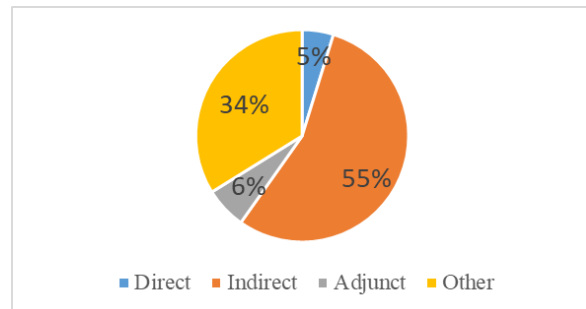

Figure 1
Kind of Refusal Strategies

By looking at the pie chart above, we can conclude that most Javanese used indirect strategies to refuse request that is 55%. It is also shown that 34% of them chose other strategies. We also see that there were 6% and 5% participants chose adjunct and direct strategies. Each strategies above are elaborated in the explanation below.

B. Direct

Direct strategies in refusal means we refuse the request from other people by saying it directly. It may be used by using non-performatives like "no" and negative willingness/ability like "I can't!." "I won't", "I don't think so," also performative verbs such as "I refuse.

The participants chose direct strategies in refusing request from higher and lower status in situation number 2 and 3. They also used direct strategies in refusing invitation from low status in situation number 6. They tend to apply direct strategies in refusing suggestion from higher status in situation number 8. Furthermore they selected direct strategies in refusing offer from higher and lower status in situation 11 and 12. It can be inferred that 9 responses from all participants says "NO" or "I refuse" or "I can't" in rejecting the requests (request, invitation, suggestion and offer). For example, "*saya menolak*" (I refuse).

C. Indirect

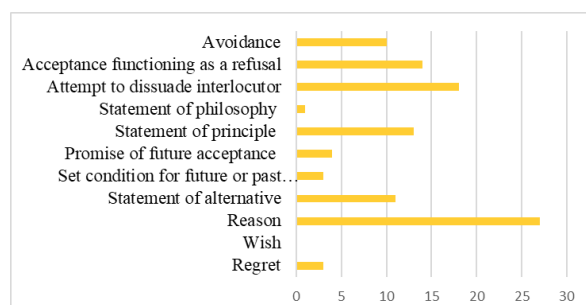Indirect strategies in refusal means we refuse the request from other people by saying it indirectly.

Figure 2
Use of Indirect Strategies

As shown in figure 2 above, we can say that in indirect strategies part, Javanese tends to use reason as their way to refuse the requests (request, invitation, suggestion and offer) with the total 27 responses. It can be inferred that they try to provide reason when refusing the requests. The second rank is occupied by attempt to dissuade interlocutor with the total 18 responses and the third rank is occupied by acceptance functioning as a refusal with the total 14 responses. Furthermore, no participants used "wish" as their strategies to refuse the requests (request, invitation, suggestion and offer). Wish strategy is about telling our wish when we refuse the requests to express that we feel sorry or sad about a state or situation that exists at the moment.

The participants chose most of indirect strategies in refusing request from equal, higher and lower status in all situations number 1 until 12. It can be inferred that there are varying responses from all participants. They respond with many kinds of strategies in rejecting the requests (request, invitation, suggestion and offer).

D. Adjuncts

Adjuncts strategies in refusal means we refuse the request from other people by adding something or connecting it to a larger or more important thing. It may be used by using statement of positive opinion like "That's a good idea"; statement of empathy "I know you are in a bad situation"; pause fillers like "well" and "uhm"; gratitude/appreciation like "Thank you".

The participants chose adjuncts strategies in refusing invitation from higher and lower status in situation number 5 and 6.The participants used adjuncts strategies in refusing suggestion from equal, high and low status in situation number 7, 8, and 9. They tend to apply adjuncts strategies in offering from equal and low status in situation number 10 and 12.
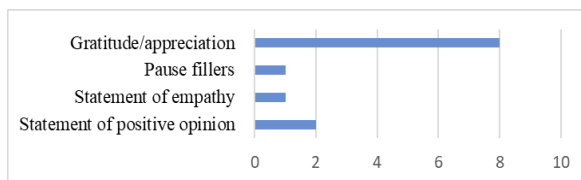

Figure 3
Use of Adjuncts Strategies

As shown in figure 3 above, we can say that in adjuncts strategies part, Javanese tends to use Gratitude/appreciation as their way to refuse the requests (request, invitation, suggestion and offer) with the total 27 responses. When someone refuse using Gratitude or appreciation strategy means he/she gives the feeling or quality of being grateful and appreciate with the refusals. Furthermore, only 1 participant each used "Statement of empathy "and "Pause fillers" as their strategies to refuse the requests (request, invitation, suggestion and offer). When someone refuse statement of empathy strategy means he/she gives the empathy to the requests.

When someone refuse using pause fillers strategy means he/she says something using pause in his speaking.

E. Role of Status in Refusal Strategies

There are 3 status in this research. They are equal, higher and lower status. Equal status means the requester is the same equal status with the participants.

Table 1
Distribution of Strategies in equal, higher and lower Status

Strategies	Total Equal Status	Total Higher Status	Total Lower Status
Direct (I refuse, No, I can't)	0	3	6
Regret	3	0	0
Wish	0	0	0
Reason	10	10	7
Statement of alternative	2	5	4
Set condition for future or past acceptance	2	1	0
Promise of future acceptance	2	1	1
Statement of principle	11	1	1
Statement of philosophy	1	0	0
Attempt to dissuade interlocutor	2	1	15
Acceptance functioning as a refusal	3	8	3
Avoidance	1	5	4
Statement of positive opinion	1	1	0
Statement of empathy	0	0	1
Pause fillers	0	1	0
Gratitude/ appreciation	4	2	2
Combination Strategies	19	23	12
Misunderstanding (Acceptance)	2	2	6

As shown in table 1 above, we can say that Javanese tends to use combination strategies as their way in refusing from equal status with the total 19 responses. The second rank is occupied by Statement of principle with the total 11 responses and the third rank is occupied by Statement of alternative with the total 10 responses. Furthermore, no participants used Direct (I refuse, No, I can't) Wish Statement of empathy Pause fillers as their strategies to refuse the requests (request, invitation,

suggestion and offer) from equal status.

As shown in table 1 above, we can say that Javanese tends to use combination strategies as their way in refusing from higher status with the total 23 responses. The second rank is occupied by reason with the total 10 responses and the third rank is occupied by Acceptance functioning as a refusal with the total 8 responses. Furthermore, no participants used regret, wish, statement of philosophy and empathy as their strategies to refuse the requests (request, invitation, suggestion and offer) from higher status.

As shown in table 1 above, we can say that Javanese tends to use Attempt to dissuade interlocutor as their way in refusing from lower status with the total 15 responses. The second rank is occupied by combination strategies with the total 12 responses and the third rank is occupied by reason as a refusal with the total 7 responses. Furthermore, no participants used regret, wish, set condition for future or past acceptance, statement of philosophy, positive opinion and pause filler as their strategies to refuse the requests (request, invitation, suggestion and offer) from lower status.

F. Discussion

Refusals have been considered as one of the most face-threatening acts since they naturally threaten some aspects of the hearer's positive face (Brown & S. Levinson, 1987). Learners can be perceived as rude, demanding, and offensive if they do not use refusal speech act appropriately. It can cause damage to both the face of the speaker and the listener. A lot of strategies are employed to mitigate the effect of a refusal and save the relationship. It also has been shown that speech acts reflect the cultural norms and values that are possessed by speakers of different cultural backgrounds, as different cultures are very likely to realize speech acts quite differently. Such differences might cause misunderstanding or communication breakdowns when people from different cultural backgrounds come in contact with each other.

People refuse in many ways. There are three types of refusals, they are; direct, indirect and adjunct also more classification met in this research that is misunderstanding and combination strategies. Refusal used to express the refuter unwillingness or inability for acceptance. In this research, the writer ask Javanese teachers in SMP Airlangga as the participants. The result of this research is most Javanese used indirect strategies to refuse request that is 55%. It is also shown that 34% of them chose other strategies. We also see that there were 6% and 5% participants' chose adjunct and direct strategies.

We can say that Javanese tends to use combination strategies as their way in refusing from equal status addressee with the total 19 responses. The second rank is occupied by Statement of principle with the total 11 responses and the third rank is occupied by Statement of alternative with the total 10 responses. Furthermore, no participants used Direct (I refuse, No, I can't) Wish Statement of empathy Pause fillers as their strategies to refuse the

requests (request, invitation, suggestion and offer) from equal status.

It can be inferred that Javanese tends to use combination strategies as their way in refusing from higher status addressee with the total 23 responses. The second rank is occupied by reason with the total 10 responses and the third rank is occupied by Acceptance functioning as a refusal with the total 8 responses. Furthermore, no participants used regret, wish, statement of philosophy and empathy as their strategies to refuse the requests (request, invitation, suggestion and offer) from higher status.

We also can say that Javanese tends to use Attempt to dissuade interlocutor as their way in refusing from lower status addressee with the total 15 responses. The second rank is occupied by combination strategies with the total 12 responses and the third rank is occupied by reason as a refusal with the total 7 responses. Furthermore, no participants used regret, wish, set condition for future or past acceptance, statement of philosophy, positive opinion and pause filler as their strategies to refuse the requests (request, invitation, suggestion and offer) from lower status. This research also found unexpected strategies used by Javanese teachers or we can just say other strategies explained below.

G. Other Strategies

In this research, other strategies means strategies which are not included in the classification by Bebe (1990) that researcher found in analyzing this research. There are two kinds of strategy, they are combination strategies and misunderstanding (acceptance strategies).

Combination strategies include two or more strategies that has been used by the participants in refusing requests. Firstly, they combined strategy number 1 - statement of regret like "I'm sorry…." ; "I feel terrible …" and strategy number 3 - excuse, reason, explanation like "I have an exam." e.g., "My children will be home that night." ; "I have a headache". The example of the answer from the participants are "maaf saya ada keperluan di luar kota" (sorry, I have necessity out of town); "maaf minggu ini saya ada janji dengan yang lain" (sorry, this week I have a promise with the other); " maaf pak saya ada kegiatan kampung" (sorry Sir, I have an agenda in my neighbor).

Secondly, the participants combined strategy number 0 - direct refusals include non-performatives like "no" and negative willingness/ability like "I can't!." "I won't", "I don't think so," also performative verbs such as "I refuse" and strategy number 1 - statement of regret like "I'm sorry…." ; "I feel terrible …" in refusing requests. They combined direct and indirect strategies because Javanese tends to be polite, they are using more "sorry" before their refusal as the sign of feeling sadness, sympathy, or disappointment. For example, "maaf saya tidak bisa datang" (sorry, I cannot come).

Thirdly, the participants combined strategy number 1 - statement of regret like "I'm sorry…." ; "I feel terrible …" and strategy number 7 - statement

of principle "I never drink right after dinner."; "I never do business with friends.". The reason is still the same that Javanese is used to be polite. For example, "matur nuwun, mboten menopo, niki tanggung jawab ortu" (terima kasih, tidak apa-apa, this is parents' responsibility)

Fourthly, the participants combined strategy number 1- statement of regret like "I'm sorry…." ; "I feel terrible …" and strategy number 8 - statement of philosophy like "One can't be too careful." The reason is still the same that Javanese is used to be polite and has philosophy in life. For example, "maaf, tidak usah, yang terjadi biarlah terjadi, lebih hati-hati saja" (sorry, no problem, let it gone by gone, please be more careful).

Fifthly, the participants combined strategy number 1 - statement of regret like "I'm sorry…." ; "I feel terrible …" and strategy number 10 - acceptance functioning as a refusal because they are sorry and confused what to say, so they refuse ambiguously. For example, "maaf jika tidak ada kesibukan saya akan datang" (sorry, if I have no business, I will come)

Sixthly, the participants used three strategies number 1- statement of regret like "I'm sorry…." ; "I feel terrible …" and strategy number 3 - excuse, reason, explanation like "I have an exam." e.g., "My children will be home that night." ; "I have a headache." Also strategy number 15 - gratitude/ appreciation like "Thank you." For example, "makasih maaf tapi saya bisa sendiri" (thanks, sorry, but I can do it by myself).
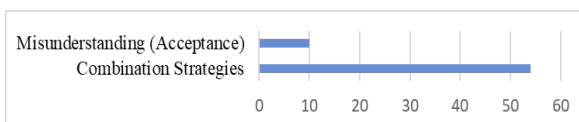

Figure 4
Use of Other Strategies

As shown in figure 4 above, we can say that in other strategies part, Javanese tends to use combination strategies as their way to refuse the requests (request, invitation, suggestion and offer) with the total 54 responses. Furthermore, only 10 participants misunderstood in answering the questions in the situations. They maybe did not understand the instructions. Most of them are accepting the requests.

Regarding to the limitations, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to other contexts as in different settings and under different circumstances because this present study used relatively small number of participants. Gender, which is a social variable, should be taken into consideration as a factor that might contribute to the variation of refusal strategy use.

The findings are useful for pedagogical purposes. Teachers can highlight the salient features of refusal patterns and politeness strategies of Javanese group to students in Indonesia. Thus, the findings can be used to raise learners' pragmatics awareness of how people of different cultures behave and speak and help them to become familiar with a range of devices and practices in the target

language especially Javanese language.

The study contributed to the study of communicative action in its sociocultural context. Learner of Javanese language should understand more variety in refusal strategies available to the speakers and facilitate the awareness of directness/ indirectness, and perception of different social status in different contexts. Finally, despite those few limitations, the current study supported the view that pragmatic ability can indeed be systematically developed through proper planning of the classroom activities.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study has two objectives. They are to find out kind of strategies are used by Javanese teacher in performing refusal; and to describe how Javanese teacher use refusal strategies regarding the status of the addressee. After the data analysed and discussion of several conclusions raised as follows: 1). Most Javanese teachers used indirect strategies to refuse request from other people; 2.) Javanese teachers also tends to use combination strategies as their way in refusing from equal status addressee; 3.) It can be inferred that Javanese teachers tends to use combination strategies as their way in refusing from higher status addressee; 4.) We also can say that Javanese teachers tends to use Attempt to dissuade interlocutor as their way in refusing from lower status addressee. Finally, this study also showed that the participants were more likely to be polite in their way of refusing requests because they are teachers as the role model politeness for students.

Further and future research can focus on the limitations from this research to make better results. Hence, the researcher recommends further study with larger sample sizes. Future research results can be better by using role plays and interviews as data collection tool. Gender, which is a social variable, should be taken into consideration as a factor that might contribute to the disparity of refusal strategy use. Lastly, future research can also explore other speech acts than refusal including suggestion, request, and complaint, among others.

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