THE IMPACT OF APPLYING ENGLISH SONG IN LISTENING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract: The study investigated about the sluggishness of students in English language lesson that caused them have low score. Due to that reason, it had researched teaching and learning process of listening comprehension. The students of one public junior high school, class VII were trained to listen songs as an experiment for several times in one semester, such as: folk songs, pop songs, etc. The research findings by applying Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed that Z > 1.96, that is Z > 5.147; which means there is significant difference after giving the treatment, or the score raised up about 5 – 10%. This indicates that students more understand the substance of the song also other English language materials, and more attractive and courage to learn English language.

Keywords: listening comprehension, English language song, material.

INTRODUCTION

Listening is an activity by nature of receptive, same as the activity of reading. The difference is: listening is accepting information which delivered orally or from the activity of talking, while reading is accepting information which delivered in writing or from the activity of writing. Tarigan (1987:4) since in childhood we learn to listen to the language, then talk, after that read and write.

Brown (2007:301) said “listening is not a one-way street. It is not merely the process of unidirectional receiving of audible symbols.” Tarigan (1987:28) further; listening is a process to obtain information, to capture the content or messages as well as understand the meaning of a communication that had been delivered by the speaker through speech or spoken. The skills of listening is the basic and it is very important
skill in learning such a language, moreover learning foreign language. So, listening is a skill which is needed to be taught in school.

Nevertheless, the skill of listening foreign language of English is less attention. This is due to the fact that in each teaching a teacher more often conveys instructions and explanations by oral, and teachers already considered that this is as listening exercises. Nicholas (1998:20) stated; - there is presumption among teachers of language that listening skill will be derived by students automatically when they learn to speak a language. In other words, students who are learning to speak, they are also learning to listen; - there is also presumption that exercise or learning to listen can simultaneously to do when someone is doing an activity, such as listening to music or watching movies.

Teaching listening skills is of course can be given by teachers of language with kinds of material and the appropriate teaching techniques, and can motivate students to engage their attention. Therefore, the initiative and creativity of teachers is absolutely necessary. Monreal (1992:44) revealed, a variety of teaching techniques is one of the important factor in increasing student’s motivation and a sense of attraction.

According to Harmer (2007:309) listening routines, based on the same principles as those for viewing, are similarly designed to provoke engagement and expectations. One of listening techniques is pictureless listening (music): where an excerpt has a prominent music track, students can listen to it and then say – based on the mood it appears to convey – what kind of scene they think it accompanies and where it is taking place.

In a short article about listening to the radio, Joseph Quinn advised students not to worry if they do not understand everything. They do not actually need to, and they’re bound to take in a lot of language even if they are not aware of it. To make the most of this kind of input, students should set themselves a simple listening task, adopt a relaxed posture and “lie down and doodle” while they listen (Harmer, 2007:303) from Quinn (2000:14).

If students are to get the maximum benefit from a listening, then we should reply it two or more times, since with each listening they may feel more secure, and with each listening (where we are helping appropriately) they will understand more than they did previously (Harmer, 2007:305).

As John Field suggests, students get far more benefit from a lot of listening than they do from a long pre-listening phase followed by only one or two exposures to the listening text (Harmer, 2007:305) from Field (1998a, 2000b).

Indeed, many activities of teaching language skills that can be given by using the songs. In addition to giving a pleasant atmosphere of the class, the song can be given as tools or materials of teaching speaking skills, as well as to learn about a culture. Then if we use selectively and creatively in teaching languages mainly English language, learning activities is expected to be more effective, more interesting and varied.

Same goes to the condition of students in Junior High School, SMPN, class VII, listening comprehension is less understand. By creating listening songs, seems
that listening comprehension influenced students’ understanding about the material positively.

Based on the background of the study, there are something that need to be researched, such as: (1) whether the use of English songs have significant impact for teaching listening comprehension, (2) whether the use of English songs can raise the students’ score in English language.

Listening Organizing

Rost (1991) cited by Rahmina, in teaching listening consists of four parts, namely:
1. Attentive or Extensive Listening
   The learners practice listening and try to give a short answer to the respondents, whether verbal or non-verbal. They are trained to understand the language aspects (key words), non language aspects (pictures, photos, music), and interaction aspects (making repetition, paraphrase, confirmation).
2. Intensive Listening
   Focusing students’ attention on the language form. The purpose of the intensive listening activity is to raise the awareness of the learners that the differences of sound, structure, and diction, can effect the difference in meaning.
3. Selective Listening
   Can help the learners in identifying their objective in listening. Selective listening activities help to direct the attention of the learners on the key words, the sequence of discourse, or the structure of the information.
4. Interactive Listening
   Designed to help the learners active in interaction (even though they act as a listener).

Teaching Listening Activities

According to Harmer (1991:189), the stage of teaching listening activities include; 1) stage of concentration (Lead-in Stage), 2) stage of presentation (Presentation Stage), 3) stage of exercise (Practice Stage), and 4) stage of production (Production Stage).

Whereas according to Field (1998:12) teaching listening is divided into three activities, namely; 1) the activity of pre-listening, 2) the activity of while listening, 3) the activity of post listening.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research conducted quantitatively by applying experiment method. The population is the students of one Public Junior High School, SMPN, class VII, in West Java, amounted to 32 people in one class. The research used Wilcoxon signed-rank test (Z > 1.96) to find whether there is difference after giving the treatment. The statistic hypothesis are: Ho → there is no difference, and Ha → there is difference. As the experimental study, the students were given treatment by listening few kind of song, such as folk song, pop song, etc., A month later the students were given quize that taken from their own English material lesson.
FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Listening Comprehension

As stated before that listening is a process to obtain information, to capture the content or messages as well as understand the meaning of a communication that had been delivered by the speaker through speech or spoken.

The process of the listening performance itself is the invisible, inaudible process of internalizing meaning from the auditory signals being transmitted to the ear and the brain (Brown, 2004:118). So, it can be concluded that listening comprehension is the process of introduction, knowledge and the elements of the language (sounds, vocabulary, sentence structure, word or sentence stress, intonation, and also expression of spoken language, and supported by other factors such as the background or the situation of talks (McDonough and Shaw, 1993:133-137).

To support the activity of listening comprehension, of course it needs media to fulfill. According to Arsyad (2002:3) the word of media comes from the Latin medius which literally means ‘the middle’, ‘intermediate’, or ‘deliverer’ – deliver the message from the sender to the recipient of the message.

In the process of teaching and learning in the classroom, teachers often use teaching media in conveying the subject matter. It also aims to support effective teaching process as well as to be able to increase the passion of student learning and to reduce monotonous against the subject matter during the learning process. According to Roestyah (1986:60) the use of teaching media intends to facilitate students’ understanding and perception of the material taught, all at once arouses students’ motivation in learning.

The Types Of Teaching Media

Heinich, R. (1996) teaching media can be classified into six sections, namely:

a) Non Projected Media, such as: real, model, graphic material and display.
b) Projected Media, such as: over head transparency (OHT).
c) Audio, such as: tape recorders, walkman, etc.
d) Video, as audiovisual media, which has elements of movement and sound.
e) Computer-Based Media, such as: Computer Based Training.
f) Multimedia Kit, package materials consisting of multiple media types.

In this stage, teacher gave several activities of listening comprehension by applying tape recorder as a media:

I. Interpersonal Dialog A

Listen to a conversation on the tape. Baron, Dedi and Arul are having lunch in the canteen.

Baron : Our new English teacher just came from Cambridge. His name is Jonathan.
Arul  : ( ) Is that right?
Dedi  : ( ) Yes, that’s right.
Baron : I heard he is a baseball coach, too.
Arul  : ( ) I don’t know how to play baseball. Really?
Interpersonal Dialog B

Listen to a conversation on the tape. Karen stops by to see Sekar at the recreation center. Sekar is Karen’s roommate.

Karen : Hi, Sekar! I see you got the job. Congratulations!
Sekar : Thanks. By the way, what brings you here?
Karen : I’m taking my nephews to play around here. So, how’s it going?
Sekar : Well, so far so good. Things are still a little confusing, or I should say I’m a little confused....
Karen : Well, it’s only for the first week. Anyway, how do you enjoy your new job?
Sekar : I can’t be happier, and you know.....the salary is quite good. I’m pretty satisfied with it.
Karen : I’m happy that you like it. Listen, tomorrow is Danny’s birthday and his parents are having a little party for him at Pizza Land. They wanted me to tell you to come.
Sekar : Oh, well. I’ll definitely try to make it. What time should I be there?
Karen : Six thirty.
Sekar : Perfect.

The students only hear the text from cassette or cd for several times, then they are asked to answer few questions, such as :

Say whether the sentences below are true or false.

1. This is the first time Karen has seen Sekar. ( T/F )
2. Sekar doesn’t know who Danny is. ( T/F )
3. Danny has already met everyone at the school. ( T/F )
4. Sekar didn’t like the new job because she’s still confused. ( T/F )
5. Karen knew that Sekar applied for a job at the recreation center. ( T/F )
6. Danny’s parents asked Sekar to be at the party. ( T/F )
7. Sekar and Karen live in the boarding house. ( T/F )

Another exercise of listening comprehension is :

Dictation

It is easy to fall asleep. Follow these steps.
...lay your body down in a comfortable sofa. ..., read something that entertain you. ..., drink a glass of hot milk. ..., you’ll feel so sleepy. ..., have a nice dream, no snoring, okay!

The words in the blank space are:

first, then, after that, next, finally

The students only hear the text from cassette or cd for several times, then they are asked to fill in the blank space.

Discussion

As described before, teaching listening skill can be given by English teacher with a variety of material and teaching techniques. The goal is to motivate and attract the students’ attention to English language. One alternative to teach listening skill that can be selected by the teachers is by using the song, as English song.

According to Pen (1992:140) the song is a mixing between text or lyrics and tone that expressed through sound, joined two forms of communication, concrete form of the words in the lyrics and the abstract meaning of the music. The song is a part of the music. Chenfeld (1978:287) expressed that the music and the song is a basic expression of human spirit.

The use of songs in the classroom will cause the excitement in learning the language and increase students’ motivation. In addition, the use of the song also involves the whole class, both teacher and students to participate in introducing the world’s culture (Griffe, 1978:337).

Before adapting the activity of listening comprehension by using English song, the students have English language score as shown on the table below:

**Table 1. English Score**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>COGNITIVE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DAILY QUIZ</td>
<td>FINAL TEST</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>75</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>68</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>70</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The scores above can be ranked into a graph as follows:

The Criteria Of Song Selection

Horner (1993:33) there are two possibilities to select a song. First, the song was chosen by the students, and the second the song was chosen by the teacher. “In selecting songs for language classroom, basically, there are two possible sources, the learners and the teachers”.

![Figure 1. The Criteria Of Song Selection](image-url)
Coromina (1993:27-28) some criteria that must be considered in choosing the songs, such as: - the proper song depends on how it can fulfill the purpose of teaching, - the lyrics should be digested easily, - the pronunciation of each word should be heard clearly, - rich and varied vocabulary, - the song should bring a message, or at least tell an interest story – the singer or the sole artist will sing more clearly than a group band.

The Song Selection

The use of English language song can be one of the optional in listening comprehension. Because the song can be used in the study of almost all language skills. According to Graham (1992:7) listening and singing can help in studying of things related to communication. Besides, songs can be given not only for children but also for almost everyone, both young and old, teens and adults. Because in general people like to sing.

The songs are selected for few choises, as shown below:

“**My Bonie**” Folk Song (present tense)

My Bonnie lies over the ocean
My Bonnie lies over the sea
My Bonnie lies over the ocean
Oh bring back my Bonnie to me

Bring back, bring back
Oh Bring back my Bonnie to me, to me
Bring back, bring back
Bring back my Bonnie to me
The winds will blow over the ocean
The winds will blow over the sea
The winds will blow over the ocean
To bring back my Bonnie to me
http://songlyric5.blogspot.com
Bring back, bring back
Oh Bring back my Bonnie to me, to me
Bring back, bring back
Bring back my Bonnie to me

Bring back, bring back
Oh, bring back my Bonnie to me.

The purpose of giving the above song is to remind students about applying present simple tense whether in the song itself or other needs such as in speaking/conversation or in writing.

Other songs that educate the students about using past simple tense and future simple tense can be noted as presented in sequence below:

“**Yesterday**” Pop Song (past tense)
Yesterday, all my troubles seemed so far away.  
Now it looks as though they’re here to stay.  
Oh, I believe in yesterday. Suddenly, I’m not half the man i used to be,  
There’s a shadow hanging over me,  
Oh, yesterday came suddenly.  

Why she had to go  
I don’t know she wouldn’t say.  
I said something wrong,  
Now I long for yesterday.  

Yesterday, love was such an easy game to play.  
Now I need a place to hide away.  
Oh, I believe in yesterday.  

Why she had to go  
I don’t know she wouldn’t say.  
I said something wrong,  
Now I long for yesterday.  

Yesterday, love was such an easy game to play.  
Now I need a place to hide away.  
Oh, I believe in yesterday.  

“We Shall Overcome” Pop Song (future tense)  

We shall overcome, we shall overcome,  
We shall overcome someday;  
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe,  
We shall overcome someday.  

The Lord will see us through, The Lord will see us through  
The Lord will see us through someday;  
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe,  
We shall overcome someday.  

We're on to victory, We're on to victory,  
We're on to victory someday  
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe,  
We're on to victory someday.  

We'll walk hand in hand, we'll walk hand in hand,  
We'll walk hand in hand someday;  
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe,  
We'll walk hand in hand someday.
We are not afraid, we are not afraid,
We are not afraid today;
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe
We are not afraid today.

The truth shall make us free, the truth shall make us free,
The truth shall make us free someday;
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe,
The truth shall make us free someday.

We shall live in peace, we shall live in peace,
We shall live in peace someday;
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe,
We shall live in peace someday.

The selection of the above songs is for the purpose of reminding the students about “tenses”, as in present tense, past tense, and future tense. The song is played back for few times, then it is wrote down on a piece of a paper which parts of words are chunked to be completed by the students.

In this lesson students listened the song and given worksheet contains a few questions. By working in pairs students are asked to listen and answer the questions on the worksheet. The students’ answer indicated whether they understand or not the content they refer to. In this session, the students are asked:

“Do you like listening to music or song?”
“What kind of music do you like?”
“What is your favourite song?”

The above questions are asked to arise the interest and motivation of the students. According to Djaafar (2001:11) to arise or to stimulate the motivation on the subject can be done by giving a contradiction of the concept.

**The Benefits Of Using The Song In Listening Comprehension**

According to Graham (1992:7) listening and singing can help in studying of things related to communication.

While Griffe (1992: 4-8) there are some of the benefits and usefulness of the songs in teaching listening, such as:- the songs and the music make pupils feel relaxed and fun atmosphere of a class, - the songs can be used as a material or a foundation for starting conversations, - the songs can be used as a substitute or additional materials
textbooks, - the songs can be used to introduce vocabulary, - the songs can also be used to study the grammar or sentence structure, - the songs and the music, tone, rhythm, and the emphasis of the word which is in it, can be used to teach how to pronounce (pronunciation), - the songs can be used as a tool to train memory.

Another activity can also be extended or integrated into an activity that refers to other language skills (reading, speaking, or writing), for example by asking students to create a summary of paragraph or writing lyrics, retelling the content of a song, or discuss about the song. Moreover, it can be continued to other teaching and learning activities, such as; grammar or sentence structure, vocabulary, and others.

Other exercises which are not for listening comprehension also given to students to find out whether there is progressive of understanding about English lesson as:

**MULTIPLE CHOICE**

*Choose one of the best word or phrase (a, b, c, d, e) to complete each sentence.*

1. Scientists finally................find a cure for the disease after years of research.
   a. managed to
   b. can
   c. could
   d. able

2. Excuse me, do you know .........?
   a. Where is the hospital
   b. Where the hospital is
   c. where hospital is
   d. where the hospital
   e. where is hospital

   a. stay
   b. stayed
   c. will stay
   d. have been staying
   e. staying

4. I’m very.............in you. You’ve made a real mess of things.
   a. concerned
   b. astonished
   c. disappointed
   d. upset
   e. sad

5. The new drug prevents the bacteria...........growing.
   a. to
   b. from
   c. in
   d. for
   e. on
Mr. Kartolo, the Farmer

Mr. Kartolo is very happy. The rainy season of this year makes the farm beautiful. It is planting time! Rice fields became fresh and green during this season and by the end of this season Mr. Kartolo is ready to harvest his crops.

Mr. Kartolo ploughs the land at the beginning of the rainy season. Then, he usually works early and finished at noon. Milking the cows, feeding the live stock, and cleaning the barns are among Mr. Kartolo’s duties before breakfast. He does most of the hard outdoor work by himself.

a **In pairs, answer the following questions.**

1. What is a farm like during the rainy season?
2. What is the colour of the rice field in the rainy season?
3. When does Mr. Kartolo’s workday end?
4. When does Mr. Kartolo plough the land?

b **Match the following words with their appropriate meanings. Work in pairs.***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. harvest</td>
<td>a. building for storing hay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. plough</td>
<td>b. amount of grain, grass, etc. produce in a year or season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. crops</td>
<td>c. situated outside building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. barn</td>
<td>d. cutting and gathering of crops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. out door</td>
<td>e. break up the surface of land</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c **Discuss with your partner to decide whether the statements are true or false**

1. Farmers work on the farm.
2. A pilot flies a plane.
3. Doctors find jobs at school.
4. Teachers teach at schools.
5. Engine drivers drive buses.
6. Pearl-divers cannot swim.
7. Sailors work on land.
8. Miners must have good stamina.
9. Taxi drivers usually own their taxis.
10. Chefs work in an office.

**GRAMMAR PRACTICE**

**Give the correct form of the present tense for the verbs in brackets.**

1. She (read) the newspaper every day.
   She reads the newspaper every day.

2. We (come) to work by bus.
   ------------------------------------------

3. I always (walk) to the office.
4. You (attend) class twice a week.

5. I (have) lunch in the cafetaria every day.

6. Helen (work) very hard.

7. I (like) sunbathing.

8. The dog (chase) the cat all around the house.

9. Mr. Smith (work) for a small airline.

10. Gene usually (sit) at this desk.

The above exercises are given to find out whether the students really understand the substances, and there is additional exercise that taken from the higher level of their lesson. Based on students’ answer of the above exercises, it is noted that there is improvement of English language understanding.

It is clear that the sense of listening always involves understanding. Understanding by Ellis (1992:202) refers to a person’s ability to interpret and explain the language, either by oral or written communication. Understanding involves many processes, but the main thing is the process by which the listener and the reader experienced in interpreting the sentence or the phrases.

Whereas Akmajian (1991:364) argues that understanding is a process that consists of several stages, namely; speech sounds capacity, lexical access and syntactic parsing capacity, semantic interpretation capacity, and pragmatic interpretation capacity.

Understanding involves two stages, namely; 1) the process of understanding language science where one knows the language elements like the sound of the language, the emphasis on words, intonation, vocabulary and sentence, 2) the process of application is the result of the first process. Soone be familiar and knew the things pertaining to the language science, he came to interpret that understanding and elaborating what he knew had been supported by the situation and the knowledge. (Flowerdew, 1994:9).

The Effect of Using Song

Listening comprehension by using the songs were carried out for few times in a few months. Then the students were tested with the same materials as in listening comprehension. The effect of using the song reflected the positive result for raising the score, as shown on the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>COGNITIVE</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>DAILY QUIZ</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The scores above are raise up about 5 – 10% from the previous one. The rank can be seen as on the figure below:
In addition to providing pleasure during the process of teaching and learning, the use of the song is expected to facilitate students’ understanding of the subject matter. The result of this observation confirmed in the form of interviews with some students, as follows:

A: I am glad when provided the activity of listening song in English lesson/subject. This activity is very different with other activities. If possible the activity of listening song can be given at least once in a month.

FF: The activity of listening song in English lesson makes me relax, and I do not feel nervous. I wish I could have the activity of listening song in every English subject.

D: The activity of listening song in English lesson encouraged me and I am not boring. It is different when comparing to other activities in English subject, such as; grammar, make sentences, etc.

R: Listening song in English lesson can motivate me to find out the meaning of the lyrics. Sometimes my emotion been brought while listening the song, and I imagine that I am as someone in the song.

It proved of Griffe’s statement that there are some benefits and usefulness of the songs in teaching listening; the songs can be used as a substitute or additional
materials textbooks, - the songs can be used to introduce vocabulary, - the songs can also be used to study the grammar or sentence structure, - the songs and the music, tone, rhythm, and the songs can be used as a tool to train memory.

In a way it involves all psychology; because the understanding, description, and explanation of musical experience and behaviour implies fundamental experience and behaviour in general.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Based on the description of the data, it can be concluded that:

1. The application of English song for the skill of listening comprehension can be used in class VII, in one of public junior high school, SMPN, west Java. By using the song, it can be expected to increase students’ motivation and attraction on English language subject.
2. The application of English song for the skill of listening comprehension has positive effect. This experiment is proved by the increasing of English lesson score of students around 5 – 10%.
3. The song is not used only for a pleasant at leisure moments, but also there is a lot of things can be expanded as a tool for teaching material.
4. The application of song can be as a device in training the students to develope their skill of listening comprehension, as well as training other skills, such as speaking, writing, and reading.

Suggestion

According to the conclusion of the research that conducted at one of public junior high school, SMPN, class VII, in west Java, I want to pass on some suggestions as follows:

1. The English teachers are expected to pay more attention to students’ obstacles on mastering the skill of listening comprehension, in order to apply appropriate techniques.
2. Teaching listening comprehension should be given with a variety of techniques, such as; telling story or games.
3. Teaching listening comprehension should be provided not just once in a while.

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