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Increasing Diversity of Japanese Language Teachers: Approaches to Teaching-Related Professional Development for College Students in North America

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How can we increase the diversity of Japanese language teachers? This is an important question. While people from Japan provide a substantial resource in North America for Japanese foreign language teaching, people who have learned Japanese themselves and developed high proficiency are an excellent model and resource for language students. Promoting language teaching, especially Japanese language teaching, as a potential future career has been something I have worked on since my early days at the University of Washington. I have partnered in this process with colleagues in my department, where we offer a Japanese major and minor. We have a diverse population of students in our Japanese program, including students from Japan whose language skills are such that they don't take any of our language courses, foreign language learners, and heritage learners who may take some of our language courses. Many of our students are already multilingual before embarking on their Japanese language studies, as immigrants or heritage speakers of languages besides Japanese. What our students have in common is a love of the Japanese language and a strong interest in Japanese culture; many also long for a career where they can use their Japanese. This population of students provides a natural group among whom to incubate interest in Japanese language teaching. Some of our graduates have gone on to become teachers, whether EFL teachers in Japan, JFL teachers in the U. S., or ESL teachers in the U. S.

The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of practical ways that colleges and universities with Japanese programs can help undergraduate and graduate students to consider Japanese language



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teaching as a possible career. I will share approaches that I take in my work, as well as activities conducted by and with colleagues. I will discuss a range of approaches to increasing teacher diversity by promoting language teaching as a possible career. The University of Washington has comparatively well-resourced Japanese studies and Japanese language programming compared to other universities in our area, which may allow us to implement more strategies than universities with smaller programs. To be maximally useful to faculty from Japanese programs of various sizes and with various faculty specializations, I will organize these according to the nature of resources needed to implement these strategies, beginning with strategies that are the easiest and cheapest to implement. The strategies I will present include (1) advisement, (2) guest lectures, (3) instructional units related to foreign teaching and learning, (4) teaching-related internship programs, and (5) courses on Japanese second language acquisition and teaching methods, where I will present a new course on teaching JFL in North America and teaching English in Japan.

1. Advisement

Student advisement is a natural place to begin in helping students to consider teaching as a possible future career. Students welcome conversations about career possibilities. We cannot direct their career choices, but we can mention teaching-related careers and provide information about K–12 and higher education teaching, depending on their skills and interests. I have found that students and community members who are exploring teaching as a career often begin with very little knowledge of what is involved. They need to understand the job qualifications required for different sorts of teaching positions, including the language skills that are required, the types of training required for different sorts of positions, and the level of academic skill needed for different kinds of teacher-training programs. For example, some students think that if they get an M. A. in Japanese linguistics they can get a job as a K–12 teacher (not realizing that what they need is to be certified to teach a language, which is not a function of Japanese M. A. programs); that with an M. A. in Japanese in hand, they will be able to get a full time job teaching Japanese in their city of preference; or that a Ph. D. is a vocational degree that, once obtained, assures them a job as a university professor. Students also need guidance regarding the availability of full-time openings commensurate with their language skills and planned educational path.

I often direct students and community members to two resources: (1) the Japan Foundation Los Angeles' (JFLA) webpage "Becoming a Japanese Language Teacher" and (2) the "Jobline" website of the American Associations of Teachers of Japanese (AATJ). While somewhat oriented toward people from Japan, the JFLA page offers information that is both helpful and realistic (for example, pointing out that college teaching positions for those with M. A. degrees are often term-limited appointments), along with giving an orientation to the process of becoming a K-12 teacher, which is unfamiliar to many. For students interested in college/university teaching, the AATJ Jobline is a place to see the kinds of openings that are available as well as the qualifications required for different types of positions. Looking over these resources is helpful for those considering teaching in deciding if they want to continue by taking next steps toward a particular type of career.

2. Guest Lectures

Our connections with local Japanese language teachers are very helpful to students. Of course, our in-house university/college teachers can give talks about their own career paths to becoming college faculty. Local Japanese teachers, including alumni who have become Japanese teachers and work nearby, are also excellent resources to invite to give guest lectures. Figure 1 shows a flyer for a recent talk that we sponsored. The speaker is an example of a home-grown teacher and a University of Washington graduate who has a heritage language background in Japanese (Figure 1).

Another way of promoting language teaching as a career for U. S. citizens and permanent residents is to promote the JET Program. Because we live in a city with a Japanese consulate, each year a JET representative comes to campus to talk to students. In addition, we invite returnee JET participants to come and talk about their experiences. The JET Program provides teaching experience and is a common first step toward a teaching career for those learning Japanese in college. JET also provides the student committed to the work of immersing themselves in Japanese-speaking communities in Japan with opportunities to develop their Japanese language and cultural skills, providing them with the strong language skills necessary to become a Japanese language teacher. Figure 2 depicts a flyer from an event where we invited three local JET alumni to talk about their experiences with students.

JAPAN STUDIES PROGRAM **W**

FROM STUDENT TO TEACHER: Japanese Beyond the Classroom

Kei Tsukamaki
Woodinville School District

Wednesday
October 24, 2018
3:30 - 5:00 PM
Savery Hall 138
Seattle campus

How do you move from being a Japanese language student to a K-12 Japanese language teacher in Washington state? Kei Tsukamaki will share her experience becoming a teacher of Japanese language, and will provide guidance and motivation for those considering the field of education. Discussion will include requirements, preparation, and keys to success in navigating the path towards Japanese language teaching as a profession.

Figure 1. Flyer for a recent talk by a local JFL teacher who graduated from our university. Used with permission.

JAPAN STUDIES PROGRAM **W**



Working for the JET Program— Stories of UW JET Alumni

Join us as three JET alumni share their own unique experiences and discuss what it's like to work for the JET Program. Speakers include: Maggie Thorpe, Jessica Record, and Kiyomi Mozley.

The JET Program is a competitive employment opportunity that allows young professionals to live and work in cities, towns, and villages throughout Japan. Being a JET is an opportunity to work and to represent the United States as cultural ambassadors to Japan. Most participants serve as Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) and work in public and private schools throughout Japan; some work as Coordinators for International Relations (CIRs) as interpreters/translators.

April 11, 2019
3:30–5:00 PM
Allen Auditorium



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Figure 2. Flyer for a Recent Talk by JET Program Alumni. Used with Permission.

3. Instructional Units Related to Japanese Teaching or Learning

Teaching a unit in a language class or content class about Japan that relates to second/foreign language development or language teaching and learning can open conversations about teaching as a possible career. In my course on minority languages in Japan, I have a unit on bilingual development and a unit on English in Japan, for example. In the latter, I include research on the JET Program. In my Japanese discourse analysis class, I cover interlanguage pragmatics and discuss research on pedagogical applications of the findings of discourse analysis. Might a literature course touch on L2 writers? Might a social sciences course consider Japanese diaspora and education issues, or touch on language policy? In language courses we can coach students to be teachers for one another, have students take turns as “teacher,” or connect with local schools where Japanese is taught to provide classroom volunteers. Japanese faculty can also share their own career path stories during informal moments, which encourages future conversations with students about their own Japanese-related career paths. Students who are working to envision their own future careers find stories from role models to be helpful, and such conversations can lead to more formal advisement opportunities related to career development to help students who might be interested in teaching to consider various possibilities.

4. Teaching-Related Internship Program

Since Spring Quarter 2018, we have been offering a teaching internship course that I developed in order to give students an opportunity to explore language teaching as a possible career. Catalog copy for the course is shown in Figure 3. Our course offers students the possibility of interning in university courses for any of the languages that we teach.

ASIAN 491 Internship in Teaching Asian Languages and Cultures (1-2, max. 5)

Teaching internship in a language course (undergrad or grad students are eligible) or a disciplinary course (graduate students only), as arranged with the supervising instructor. Faculty permission required. 3 hr/week internship earns 1 credit, 6 hr/week internship earns 2 credits. Credit/no-credit only. Offered: AWSpS.

Figure 3. Catalog Copy for Internship in Teaching Asian Languages and Cultures

Both undergraduate and graduate students may intern in language courses. I developed an explanation of how the course works for students in the form of a “frequently asked questions” page, displayed in Figure 4.

Asian 491: Internship in Teaching Asian Languages & Cultures FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is “Asian 491?”

Asian 491 provides, with faculty permission, an opportunity for a registered UW student to be an intern in a UW Asian Languages and Literature course. For undergrads with strong language skills, internships would be in a language course. For graduate students, internships could be in a language course or in a literature, linguistics, or culture course. Exchange students from abroad who are registered UW students are also welcome to apply. The approval of the faculty in charge of the course is required in order to enroll.

Can anybody take Asian 491?

Asian 491 is arranged between a student and a faculty member who advises the internship. It is available with faculty permission.

What would I do as an Asian 491 intern?

That depends on what you propose, what the faculty supervisor suggests, and what is mutually agreeable. In a language class, an intern might help in the classroom (i.e., as partners during pair or group work), develop or revise instructional materials, lead a “language conversation table” or “reading lab,” or doing tutoring outside of class. In a literature, culture, or linguistics course (graduate students only), an intern might assist in class, lead a discussion, teach a portion of a lecture in an area of expertise, consult with students on papers, etc.

Are Asian 491 interns “TAs?”

Interns are not TAs. They are not paid, and are not responsible for classroom instruction, grading, or other duties that TAs have. Their work does not replace that of a TA or instructor.

How do I sign up for an Asian 491 internship?

Registration is only with faculty approval. To propose an internship, consider what kind of internship you would like. Then, contact the appropriate faculty member, by email or in person, to ask about an Asian 491 internship. If the faculty member is willing to consider having an intern, arrange a meeting. Take along your filled out “Proposal and Internship Agreement” form, and have a conversation about your and their ideas related to a possible internship. If the faculty member agrees to supervise you in an Asian 491 internship, take the signed (by you and the faculty member) form to the Department office to register for the course.

What if an instructor isn’t interested in having me an intern?

Internships are only available with faculty permission for enrollment. Without this, you cannot register for an Asian 491 internship.

How is Asian 491 graded, and how much credit will I receive?

The course is credit/no-credit only. To receive credit, a 75% or higher attendance rate, appropriate completion of duties, and a reflection paper submitted by the first day of final exams week, or earlier, is required. A one-credit internship involves 3 hours per week, with 6 hours of work required for a two-credit internship.

Can I arrange through Asian 491 to do an internship in a class in a different department, or in a high school, community college or some other organization?

No. Asian 491 is only available for courses taught in the Asian Languages & Literature department.

Figure 4. FAQ for Internship in Teaching Asian Languages and Cultures

Students can do a one credit or a two-credit internship, for three or six hours per week. Interns do not replace the duties of faculty or teaching assistants but work as supplementary helpers. To sign up for an internship, a student meets with the faculty member who teaches the course where they would like to intern to discuss possible duties. If the faculty member agrees to have the student as an intern, they together plan student duties, which are shown on an agreement form, and the student then enrolls in the course (Figure 5). The course also requires students to submit a written reflection paper describing their experience.

Asian 491: Internship in Teaching Asian Languages & Cultures

Proposal and Internship Agreement

Name, Student Number, and Email Address: _____
 Quarter/year of proposed internship: _____
 Major/minor (proposed or declared): _____
 Proposed site of internship (course number, title): _____
 Proposed supervisor of internship (faculty member teaching the course above): _____
 Proposed credits for internship: ___1 credit (3 hours/week (30 hours total)) ___2 credits (6 hours/week (60 hours total))

Student status:
 ___ undergraduate student ___ UW direct exchange student from _____
 ___ graduate student ___ UW International English programs exchange student from _____
 ___ matriculated student ___ non-matriculated student

Why you would like to be an intern? Explain what you would like to contribute and what you hope to learn.

The following is a list of possible duties. Mark those which interest you. Actual duties will be confirmed/revised in consultation with the faculty advisor prior to enrollment.

- ___ Attending classes, ___ hours per week
- ___ Participating in in-class pair/group work student discussions
- ___ Helping the teacher with demonstrate conversations, or conduct other presentations to the class
- ___ Organizing and leading a "conversation table" or "reading lab" for the class, ___ hours/week, ___ times/quarter
- ___ Creating instructional materials or activities to be used in class, as mutually agreed with the instructor
- ___ Teaching a mini-lecture in an area of academic expertise (graduate students only)
- ___ Leading discussions in an area of academic expertise (graduate students only)
- ___ Assisting in instructional planning in an area of academic expertise (graduate students only)
- ___ Observing meetings with instructional staff
- ___ Other (please describe): _____

Internship Agreement:

- I understand that interns are not TAs, and that I will neither receive payment nor be expected to do work that would replace the work of a course teaching assistant.
- I will submit a reflection paper describing what I learned from this internship by the first day of Final Exams week, describing, analyzing, and reflecting upon my learning experiences.
- Within the agreed upon internship hours, I will perform my duties to the best of my ability.
- I will be helpful to students enrolled in the course, will seek opportunities for feedback with my internship supervisor, and will notify my supervisor and Asian Languages & Literature advising if problems arise that I'll need assistance in resolving.
- I understand that faculty permission is required to enroll; if a faculty member agrees to supervise my internship in his/her course, the faculty member and I will meet together about form and make revisions based on that conversation.
- I understand that I will not have access to private student records, that my duties will not relate to grading/evaluating students.
- I understand that the internship graded on a credit/no-credit basis only, and that a minimum of 75% attendance PLUS constructive engagement in internship duties are required to earn credit.
- I agree to complete the agreed upon hours. If this becomes impossible, I will notify my supervisor and contact Asian Languages & Literature academic advising immediately.

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

Faculty Supervisor: I agree to supervise this student's internship in the above-named course, of which I am the instructor, and give the student permission to enroll in ___ credits of Asian 491

Faculty name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Figure 5. Proposal and Internship Agreement for Internship in Teaching Asian Languages and Cultures

As of Winter Quarter 2020, twenty students have enrolled, eleven interning in Japanese language courses. An article in our newsletter features this course (Asian Languages and Literature 2019). One intern noted that the internship “really made me question my own baseline

language skills.... I had forgotten why certain grammar points exist the way they do” (8). She also enjoyed watching students develop and considers teaching to be a possible career option. Another intern said that his experience sparked his interest in applying for the JET program and that “it was a great experience both in lesson planning and testing the limits of my own Japanese language capabilities” (8).

Helping in a foreign language classroom, doing tutoring, or materials development may prompt deeper consideration of language teaching careers. An internship also provides stronger qualifications for teaching language in Japan, where students can further develop their linguistic and cultural competence, which is prerequisite to becoming a Japanese language teacher.

We are at early stages of including a service-learning opportunity for students studying Japanese and other Asian languages. Few resources are required to do an in-house internship such as this, which is supervised, onsite, by the faculty member in whose course the student interns. I have been thinking of how we might expand our course to reach more students by providing opportunities for teaching-related internships in a broader range of settings. Fitzgerald (2010) describes including an optional service-learning component in an undergraduate course, connecting students with outside agencies. Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) offers a foreign language teaching internship course that places undergraduates in local K–12 public school classrooms as tutors or classroom assistants (Polansky 2004, Polansky et al. 2010). CMU’s course goes beyond ours in including a syllabus of readings, assignments and journaling designed to promote tutor reflection and development. The faculty supervisor also does site visits as the main instructor supervising the internship course. I am exploring possibilities related to expanding service-learning opportunities for our students.

5. Courses on Japanese Second Language Acquisition and Teaching Methods

Since I am an applied linguist, teaching in my own field provides a natural avenue for raising issues related to Japanese language development. In this section I will introduce two undergraduate courses, one on Japanese second language acquisition (SLA), and a new course in development on teaching/learning foreign language in the Japan context.

5.1. The Acquisition of Japanese as a Second or Foreign Language

This course provides many opportunities for students to think about how Japanese language skills develop. I also include a unit on language

acquisition in JFL classrooms. The catalog description is shown in Figure 6.

JAPAN 441 The Acquisition of Japanese as a Second or Foreign Language (5)

Focuses on how Japanese is acquired or learned by non-native speakers in North America and Japan. Includes study of how Japanese is learned in both naturalistic settings such as study abroad and in foreign language classrooms.

Figure 6: Catalog Copy for The Acquisition of Japanese as a Second or Foreign Language

Because the students are Japanese majors/minors and students who know Japanese because they are from Japan or grew up using Japanese at home, I teach SLA by connecting to their own language-learning experience by focusing on topics such as language learning motivation, classroom interaction, study abroad, and language and emotion. For their term paper, students do an interview project; as part of the course, I teach interview research methodology. Each quarter, some students decide to interview language teachers, while others interview learners of Japanese. Seeing the course's success in nurturing interest in language teaching among some students, I wondered how to help students to develop further in this area.

5.2. A Japanese-Focused Teaching Methods Course for Undergraduates

I have recently designed a new course entitled “Foreign Language Teaching in the Japanese Context: English in Japan and Japanese in North America.” The catalog description is shown in Figure 7.

JAPAN 344 Foreign Language Teaching in the Japanese Context: EFL in Japan and JFL in North America (5)

Teaching methods course focused communicative, 4-skills, approaches for teaching foreign language in Japan (English as a foreign language) and in North America (Japanese as a foreign language). Includes portfolio development and job-seeking strategies. Prerequisite: either a minimum grade of 2.0 in JAPAN 203, or a minimum grade of 2.0 in JAPAN 213.

Figure 7: Catalog Copy for Foreign Language Teaching in the Japanese Context: EFL in Japan and JFL in North America

The goal of this course is to provide a practical and hands-on overview of foreign language teaching methodology, to prepare students for careers teaching Japanese as well as for EFL jobs in Japan. Teaching English in Japan provides an immediate career option for new college graduates with native or near-native English skills. Completing a college course on the

topic of foreign language teaching will distinguish students who have taken this course as compared to typical college graduates without such training. Meanwhile teaching in Japan can move motivated students toward the advanced proficiency and cultural competence needed to teach Japanese professionally. In searching for models to inspire course design, I found examples of Japanese foreign language teaching courses for undergraduates at Portland State University and Australian National University, for example, where undergraduates and graduate students enroll in a course that can be taken for either undergraduate or graduate credit; I did not find any offerings that were only for undergraduates, or that combined foreign language teaching methods with a focus on JFL and EFL.¹

For the main course text, I have chosen Johnson (2018), *An Introduction to Foreign Language Learning and Teaching* (see Swan 2010 for a review). Johnson covers foreign language teaching methods and considers how languages are learned, interactionist SLA theory, learner characteristics and individual differences, contexts for language teaching/learning, syllabus construction, lesson planning, language skills, and assessment. I plan to supplement Johnson with articles covering content specific to the North American JFL and Japanese EFL contexts, as well as to introduce sociocultural theory as an approach for understanding and guiding classroom foreign language development. I will also supplement Johnson with information on ESL (English as a second language) teaching in North America, to raise awareness of differences between foreign and second language instruction and the nature of these different sorts of careers. Table 1 presents a possible organizational arrangement of textbook chapters and supplementary readings. Additional details are given in the Appendix.

Class will be taught in a workshop style, emphasizing practical application and creative development of skills. Students will create language teaching materials and do teaching demonstrations in small groups during class sessions. Since the students in the class are language learners themselves, I also plan to have students try out some innovative learning activities themselves, such as Koyama's (2016) dubbing activity, so they can reflect on the impact of different types of activities and assignments. The course includes a required service-learning component of teaching/tutoring as language class volunteers on our campus or in the community, or as 1:1 volunteer tutors, with students keeping a journal of their experiences. There will also be field trips, such as a visit to the University of Washington Library's Japanese *Tadoku* (extensive reading,

Week	Topic	Johnson	Articles
1	Brief overview of teaching methods. What are EFL in Japan and JFL in N. America?	1–2	Japan Foundation 2019j, Leachtenauer 2015e
2	How languages are learned	3–4	Bialystock 2018, Yoshida 2010j
3	Second language acquisition theories and understandings of language learning	5–6	Chan and Wong 2017j, Taguchi 2014j
4	Sociocultural approaches, pragmatics		Eun and Lim 2009, Ohta 2017j, Chou, Lau, Yang and Murphey 2007e
5	The Learner	7–8	Shintaku 2019j, Thomas 2014j
6	Methods and contexts	9–10	Yamada 2010e, Furuhashi 2002j; Koyama 2016j
7	Syllabi and implementation	11–12	Okumura 2017e, Oga-Baldwin and Nakata 2014ej, Mori 2005j
8	Skills and lessons	13, 15	Tabata-Sandom 2017j, Nishi 2019e
9	Assessment	14	Pellowe 2015e, Iwashita 2010ej
10	Professional development for language teachers		Marchesseau 2014e

Key: e, j, or ej after a date indicates focus on teaching English (e) or Japanese (j) or both (ej).

Table 1. A Tentative Schedule for “Foreign Language Teaching in the Japanese Context”

see, for example, Tabata-Sandom 2017) collection where they will look at the collection and prepare to write or co-author a book for the *Tadoku* library. And, by offering the class late in the day, the schedule will permit inviting guest speakers—local JFL teachers, those who have taught EFL in Japan or are currently teaching ESL, and graduate students whose research closely relates to teaching JFL or EFL. Finally, to develop a stronger understanding of the job market and prepare students for job applications, students will do online research, collecting resources on applying for jobs in Japan, creating resumes, and tailoring resumes and cover letters to create an application.

6. Conclusion

College and university faculty who teach Japanese are in a unique position to promote diversity in our shared field of Japanese language teaching. This paper has introduced a range of strategies, including student advisement, guest lectures, internships, instructional units, Japanese SLA courses and teaching methods courses, that can be harnessed to guide students to consider Japanese language teaching careers. These strategies, individually or in combination, can lay groundwork for interested students to think about and prepare for future teaching careers. As Japanese faculty, our fields of specialization, program curricula, and expertise vary, as do our opportunities to introduce JFL teaching careers to diverse students. Each of us can think creatively about how we can help to guide students in their career development. We can choose strategies that fit with the scope of our own positions and teaching responsibilities, each considering the resources we have and what it is that we, personally and in our academic programs, can do to promote JFL teaching as a possible career path to our diverse student communities.

Will these strategies result in increased diversity among Japanese language teaching professionals? Only time will tell. Our work is one of planting seeds, tilling soil, watching students grow, and cheering for them in their career journeys. Where will they go? I know that we will, as always, follow their development with interest.

APPENDIX

Topical areas and potential supplementary readings for a course on teaching JFL in North America and EFL in Japan:

- Teaching positions and qualifications needed to teach Japanese in the U. S. (Japan Foundation 2019) and English in Japan (Leachtenauer 2015)
- Bilingual and immersion education in the U. S. (Bialystock 2018)
- Japanese L2 pragmatic development—Taguchi (2014) on incomplete sentences
- K–12 EFL instruction in Japan: “Lesson study” as teacher development (Rupp 2015), language policy and the JET Program

(Marchesseau 2014), “English activities” in the elementary school (Okumura 2017), a response card teaching technique for Japan EFL (Pellowe 2015)

- Japanese and popular culture in the classroom—teaching Japanese with *anime* and popular media (Koyama 2016; Wong and Chan 2017) and video games (Shintaku 2019).
- Sociocultural theory (SCT) and concept-based instruction (CBI)—overview of SCT (Eun and Lim 2009), and Japanese concept-based instruction (Ohta 2017)
- Classroom corrective feedback—student and teacher perceptions (Yoshida 2009)
- Learner-created content (Chou, Lau, Yang and Murphey 2007)
- Japanese reading development: Teaching *kanji*—air-writing (Thomas 2014); Extensive reading (Tabata-Sandom 2017)
- English loanwords as a source of vocabulary teaching for EFL in Japan (Nishi 2019)
- JFL teaching methods in the US—survey of US teachers about preferred Japanese teaching methods (Furuhata 2010) and “new language” and “own language” in teaching children’s EFL and JFL (Oga-Baldwin and Nakata 2014)
- EFL textbooks in Japan—multicultural contexts in English language textbooks, including the concepts of inner/outer/expanding circles as related to world Englishes (Yamada 2010)
- Oral proficiency for EFL and JFL (Iwashita 2010)
- Naturalness in language teaching materials—how *dooshite* is used in Japanese as compared to how it is presented in textbooks (Mori 2005)

NOTE

¹ See, for example, see Australia National University’s course information at <https://programsandcourses.anu.edu.au/2020/course/JPNS3014>.

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