

Gender-based Study of Interactive and Interactional Metadiscourse Markers in Conclusion Sections of English Master Theses

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to seek two types of interpersonal model of Hyland (2005) used in conclusion sections of 30 Master Theses of English Teaching, English Literature, and English Translation written by male and female graduate students. These conclusion sections were categorized into two groups of male and female writers: 15 conclusion sections belonged to male writers and other 15 conclusion sections belonged to female writers. The interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers were counted and analyzed to find if male or female writers utilize these metadiscourse markers differently or similarly in conclusion sections of English disciplines (Translation, Teaching, and Literature). These metadiscourse markers were analyzed descriptively and referentially. The descriptive analysis show that both male and female writers in Translation, Teaching and Literature applied more interactional markers than interactive ones. In Translation and Teaching, female writers used more interactional resources comparing to male writers. But, in Literature, male writers employed more interactional markers than female writers. The referential statistics indicate that in English Translation and English Literature, there are significant differences between male and female writers concerning use of Interactive and Interactional metadiscourse Markers, while in English Teaching, there are not any significant differences between male and female writers regarding use of these metadiscourse Markers.

Keywords: Metadiscourse; Interactive Metadiscourse Markers; Interactional Metadiscourse Markers

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Ghafoori and Oghbatalab (2012) article: A Comparative Study of Metadiscourse in Academic Writing, writing is a rich medium, for gender performance, as a matter of fact, writing functions to construct the disciplines as well as the gender of its practitioners. Moreover, they mention that there are close connections between writing and the construction of writer's identity. Identity refers to "an individual/ group sense of who they are, as defined by them or others and can be expressed in terms of nationality, geographical, location, ethnicity, social class, gender, and many others" (Swann, Deumert, Lillis,& Methrie, 2004, p.140). One way, by means of which the writer's identity is realized and practiced, is writing. One dimension of writer's identity is the expression of the writer's gender in written discourse.

Tardy (2006) states that “interactions are influenced by many factors, one of which is the gender of the writer of the text; male and female writers might not be do the act of interaction with equal use of language resources”. It is remarked that one way , by means of which the writers identity (gender) is revealed in written discourse is the employment of metadiscourse elements as well as organizing the text, and guiding the reader through the text; these elements can help writers to establish their identities (Hyland& Tse, 2004). Academic discourse was viewed as being an example of objective, rational and impersonal academic text. Hyland (2005) states that “the term metadiscourse was coined by Zellig Harris in 1959 to offer a way of understanding language in use, representing a writer’s or speaker’s attempts to guide a receiver’s perception of a text” (p.3). The concept has been further developed by writers such as Williams (1981), Vande Kopple (1985) and Crismore (1989). Hyland (2004) states that “based on a view of writing as a social and communicative engagement between writer and reader, metadiscourse focuses our attention on the ways writers project themselves into their work to signal their communicative intentions”.

Hyland (2005) writes, “Metadiscourse is the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community”(p. 37). Metadiscourse is realized through a range of linguistic forms included in the interpersonal model of metadiscourse (Hyland, 2005, pp. 49-54). This model comprises two dimensions of writer-reader interaction: interactive and interactional.

I. Interactive Resources: these devices let the writer manage the information flow to provide his/her preferred interpretations. These resources, according to Hyland, contain the following:

1. Transitions: these devices mainly indicate: additive, contrastive, and consequential steps in the discourse. Some examples are: in addition, but, thus, and, etc.

"I love English so much. I would like to continue learning English in an institute, but I don't have enough time".

2. Frame markers: they indicate text boundaries or elements of schematic text structure, like: my purpose here is to, to conclude, etc.

"Finally, for improving my English, I need to study it in an institute to get a better achievement".

3. Endophoric markers: they refer to information in other parts of the text and make the additional material available for the readers. Some examples are: in Section 2, Noted above, etc.

4. Evidentials: they refer to sources of information from texts other than the current one, Such as: Z states, According to X, etc.

5. Code glosses: these devices show the restatements of ideational information, like: in other words, e.g., etc.

"Learning English helps me to read articles related to my field of study. That is, English chemistry engineering articles".

II. Interactional resources: they involve the reader in the text, focus on the participants of the interaction and seek to display the writer’s personality in a text as he or she pulling readers along with their argument, focusing their attention, etc. There are five subcategories:

1. Hedges: they withhold commitment and open dialogue. They indicate the writer’s unwillingness to present propositional information categorically, such as: about, perhaps, might, etc.

"Perhaps the best effect of learning English in classroom is to read difficult articles on the internet and to chat with English professors".

2. Boosters: these devices express certainty or close dialogue. Some examples are: it is clear that, definitely, etc.

"Obviously, we can promote learning English from both academic and institute programs."

3. Attitude markers: they indicate the writer's appraisal of propositional information. Some examples are: I agree, surprisingly, etc.

"When I search the internet for the chemistry articles, unfortunately, I cannot understand the entire article. Because I don't know enough vocabulary and grammar"

4. Self-mentions: they refer to the extent of author presence in terms of first person pronouns and possessives. Some examples are: I, we, our, my, etc.

"Learning English helps me to read articles related to my field of study."

5. Engagement markers: they address readers explicitly, or make a relationship with the reader. Some examples are: you can see that, note that, consider? etc.

"If you wish to see why learning English is important, all you need to do is look around you. (Second person pronouns)", or "How can you be successful in the entrance examination of doctoral while you don't know English well?" (a question marker).

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Few studies (Crismore, Markkannen, & Steffensen, 1993; Francis, Robsen & Read, 2001; Herbert, 1990; Johnson & Roem, 1992; Tse & Hyland, 2008) which have examined the effect of gender on the way language is used and confirmed that male and female writers did differ in the employment of metadiscourse. Adel (2006) asserted that "gender has a significant influence on the use of rhetorical devices and gender could impact on how much or what type of metadiscourse is employed." Some scholars did investigation regarding gender differences in use of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers. Crismore et al. (1993) searches the use of metadiscourse in persuasive essays written by U.S male and female university students. The results indicated that both gender applied interactional metadiscourse more than interactive one, but female used them more than males.

In other investigation, Tse and Hyland (2008) worked on a corpus of academic book reviews written by male and female writers and also interviews with regarding both philosophy and biology fields. They revealed that both genders used interactional resources twice the interactive ones especially male writers. In details, male writers employed more engagement markers, hedges, boosters, and self-mentions. Regarding interactive markers, female writers employed more transitions and they were heavy users of evidential markers. But there was no significant difference between them in the use of code glosses. In general, both genders make different uses of metadiscourse features.

Other metadiscourse study by Karbalaei (2013), two types of Hyland's interpersonal metadiscourse used in compositions written by male and female students were investigated. Twelve students including 5 males and 7 females aged between 26 -33 who have been studying chemistry engineering in Islamic Azad University, Shahreza Branch were selected. Without any instruction, they were given a topic to write an eighty-word composition in ten minutes. Compositions were collected and were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Data was analyzed quantitatively in the result section and discussed qualitatively in discussion and conclusion sections. Findings showed that students employed all types of metadiscourse except for two subcategories of interactive metadiscourse namely endophoric markers and evidentials. Self-mentions were the most frequently used, and hedges and boosters were the

least in both males and females. Differences between genders in using metadiscourse with different degrees of occurrence are present in the overall interpersonal metadiscourse.

Ghafoori and Oghbatalab (2012), examined 20 applied linguistics research articles (10 written by native male English writers and 10 written by native female English writers). It explores whether male and female native English writers differed in their use of metadiscoursal elements. For this purpose, Hyland (2005) model of metadiscourse was employed as an analytical framework to identify the type of metadiscoursal elements. The results of independent samples T-Test showed that English male and female writers did not differ significantly in their overall use of metadiscourse; but, significant differences were observed in categorical distribution of metadiscourse elements.

The purpose of present study is to investigate the interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers based on (Hyland, 2005) between male and female authors in each discipline so as to find differences in using interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers between male and female authors. Regarding the objective of the present investigation, the research questions addressed in this study are as follows:

1. Are there any significant differences between male authors and female authors in English Translation in conclusion section of MA theses in terms of using interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers?
2. Are there any significant differences between male authors and female authors in English Teaching in conclusion section of MA theses in terms of using interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers?
3. Are there any significant differences between male authors and female authors in English Literature in conclusion section of MA theses in terms of using interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers?

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Corpus

Conclusion sections of 30 master theses of English Translation, English Literature, and English Teaching were chosen randomly from Islamic Azad University of Najaf Abad, Islamic Azad University of Arak, and Isfahan university. These conclusion sections were categorized into two groups: female and male writers: 15 conclusion sections belonged to female writers and other 15 conclusion sections belonged to male writers. According to these selected conclusion sections, in Literature Theses, there are 6 male and 4 female writers. In Teaching Theses, there are 8 male and 2 female writers. In Translation Theses, there are 1 male and 9 female writers.

3.2. Instrument

An interpersonal model of Hyland (2005) was employed as an instrument to analyze interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers in conclusion sections of 30 Master Theses of English Translation, English Literature, and English Teaching so as to find whether or not male and female writers of these Master Theses (Translation, Teaching, Literature) were different in the use of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers. The model of Hyland (2005) is as follows:

Table 1. An interpersonal model of Hyland (2005).

Category	Function	Examples
interactive	Help to guide the reader through the text	resources
transitions	Express relation between main clauses	In addition; but; thus; and
Frame markers	Refers to discourse acts, sequences, or stages	Finally, to conclude, my purpose is
Endophoric markers	Refer to information in other parts of the text	Noted above, see figure, in section 2
evidential	Refer to information from other text	According to X, Z states
Code glosses	Elaborate propositional meanings	Namely, e.g., such as, in other words
interactional	Involve the reader in the text	resources
boosters	Emphasize certainty or close dialogue	About, in fact, definitely, it is clear that
Attitude markers	Express writers attitude to proposition	Unfortunately, I agree, surprisingly
Self-mentions	Explicit reference to author	I, me, my, our
hedges	Withhold commitment and open dialogue	Might, perhaps, possible
Engagement markers	Explicitly build relationship with readers	Consider, note, you can see that

3.3. Procedure

In this study, in first, second, and third question, 30 Master Theses of English Language disciplines including Translation, Literature, and Teaching (from each 10 Theses) were selected randomly from Islamic Azad University of Najaf Abad, Islamic Azad University of Arak, and Isfahan university. The conclusion sections were written. Then, these sections were typed and stored in 3 folders of translation, literature, and teaching. Conclusion sections of these Theses were read word by word carefully so as to find out the interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers frequency based on Hyland (2005). The markers were counted manually. All data were analyzed twice by researchers to prevent from any fault in counting the frequency of metadiscourse markers or evaluated by other Master student of English Teaching or Master of English Teaching who have similar knowledge regarding interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers based on Hyland (2005). The writers of these selected and written conclusion sections were analyzed to find if male or female writers utilized the interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers differently or similarly in conclusion sections of English disciplines (Translation, Teaching, Literature). To fulfill this purpose, these 30 conclusion sections were divided into two groups: female and male writers. 15 conclusion sections belonged to male writers and the other 15 conclusion sections belonged to female writers. Considering these conclusion sections, the Literature Theses were written by 6 male and 4 female candidates; The Teaching Theses were written by 8 male and 2 female candidates and Translation Theses were coordinated by 1 male and 9 female

participants. The interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers which were counted, identified, and analyzed in these conclusion sections were used to scrutinize the differences between male and female writer in applying these metadiscourse markers.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

The conclusion sections of 30 master Theses of English language disciplines (Teaching, Literature, and Translation) were selected randomly from Islamic Azad University of Najaf Abad, Islamic Azad University of Arak, and Isfahan University. These sections were written, then stored in three folders of translation, literature, and teaching in computer. Afterwards, they were read word by word and carefully so as to count the interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers based on Hyland (2005) model manually. These conclusion sections were analyzed twice by two researchers who had similar knowledge regarding interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers. In the study of metadiscourse markers used in these sections, gender also were considered to find if male or female writers utilized the interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers differently or similarly in conclusion sections of English discipline (Translation, Teaching, Literature). To fulfill this purpose, these 30 conclusion sections were divided into two groups: female and male writers. Fifteen conclusion sections belonged to male writers and the other 15 conclusion sections belonged to female writers. Considering these conclusion sections, the Literature Theses were written by 6 male and 4 female candidates; The Teaching Theses were written by 8 male and 2 female candidates and Translation Theses were coordinated by 1 male and 9 female participants. The interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers which were counted, identified, and analyzed in these conclusion sections were used to scrutinize the differences between male and female writer in applying these metadiscourse markers. The independent sample T-Test was used to analyze data in these sections.

5. RESULTS

In this section, the descriptive and referential analysis of differences between male and female writers in conclusion sections of English Translation, English Literature, and English Teaching are illustrated by tables and results are explained.

5.1. Descriptive analysis of Female and Male Writers in English Translation

The descriptive analysis of male and female writers are shown in table 2 and table 3 as follows.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics 1 (Female and Male Writers in English Translation).

		Male		Female	
		F	P	F	P
Interactive markers	Transition	14	41.17	158	66.38
	Frame	3	8.82	22	9.24
	Endophoric	1	2.94	25	10.5
	Evidential	6	17.64	20	8.4
	Code	10	29.41	13	5.46
	Total	34	58.62	238	39.33
Interactional markers	Boosters	3	12.5	81	22.07
	Attitude	9	37.5	129	35.14
	Self-mention	0	0	3	0.81
	Hedges	1	4.16	31	8.44
	Engagement	11	45.83	123	33.51
Total	24	4.37	367	6.66	
Total	58	100	605	100	

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics 2 (Female and Male Writers in English Translation).

	Male			Female		
	M	SD	V	M	SD	V
Interactive markers	6.8	4.91	27.4	47.6	61.87	3828.3
Interactional markers	4.8	4.91	24.22	73.7	55.59	3090.8
Total	29	7.07	50	302.5	91.21	8320.5

In English Translation, among Interactive Markers, both male and female writers used Transitions as most proportion. Although, female applied more Transitions with 66.38% than male writers with 41.17%. Among Interactional Markers, female writers employed Attitude Markers with 35.14% as the most frequently used markers, while male writers used Engagement Markers with 45.83% as the most frequent ones. Totally, both male and female writers used more Interactional Markers than Interactive ones. However, female writers applied more Interactional Markers with 60.66% comparing to male writers ones with 41.37%.

5.2. Descriptive analysis of Female and Male Writers in English Teaching

The descriptive analysis of male and female writers are presented in table 4 and 5 as follows.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics 1 (Female and Male Writers in English Teaching).

	Male		Female		
	F	P	F	P	
Interactive markers	Transitions	259	86.91	27	50.94
	Frame	22	7.38	10	18.86
	Endophoric	14	4.69	12	22.64
	Evidential	0	0	2	3.77
	Code	3	1	2	3.77
Total	298	48.29	53	48.18	
Interactional markers	Boosters	159	49.84	24	42.1
	Attitude	61	19.12	17	29.82
	Self-mention	9	2.82	4	7.01
	Hedges	11	3.44	2	3.5
	Engagement	78	24.45	10	17.54
Total	319	51.7	57	51.18	
Total	617	100	110	100	

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics 2 (Female and Male Writers in English Teaching).

	Male			Female		
	M	SD	V	M	SD	V
Interactive markers	59.6	11.81	12502.3	10.6	10.23	104.8
Interactional markers	63.6	61.36	3765.8	11.4	9.15	83.8
Total	308.5	14.84	220.5	55	2.82	8

In English Teaching, among Interactive Markers, both male and female writers applied Transitions as most proportion. But male writers used more Transitions with 86.91% comparing to female writers ones with 50.94%. Among Interactional Markers, both male and female writers employed Boosters as most proportion. Though, male writers used more Boosters with 49.84% comparing to female writers ones with 42.1%. Generally, both male and female writers employed more Interactional Markers more than Interactive ones. While,

female writers used Interactional Markers with 51.18 more than male writers ones with 51.7%.

5.3. Descriptive analysis of Female and Male Writers in English Literature

The descriptive analysis of male and female writers are represented in table 6 and 7 as follows.

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics 1 (Female and Male Writers in English Literature).

		Male		Female	
		F	P	F	P
Interactive markers	Transition	403	77.94	277	77.59
	Frame	44	8.51	22	6.16
	Endophoric	39	7.54	37	10.36
	Evidential	7	1.35	9	2.52
	Code	24	4.64	12	3.36
Total		517	39.34	357	44.84
Interactional markers	Boosters	124	16.66	97	22.09
	Attitude	297	37.26	146	33.25
	Self-mention	38	4.76	13	2.96
	Hedges	40	5.01	10	2.27
	Engagement	298	37.39	173	39.40
Total		797	60.65	439	55.15
Total		1314	100	796	100

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics 2 (Female and Male Writers in English Literature).

	M	Male		Female		
		SD	V	M	SD	V
Interactive markers	103.4	168.1	282583	71.4	115.45	13329.3
Interactional markers	159.4	130.75	17097.8	87.8	74.49	5594.4
Total	6	197.98	39200	398	57.98	3362

In English Literature, among Interactive Markers, both male and female writers applied Transitions as most proportion, while male writers used Transitions with 77.94% more than female writers with 77.59%. Among Interactional Markers, both male and female writers used Engagement Markers as most proportion. However, female writers applied Engagement Markers with 39.40% more than male writers with 37.39%. In sum, both male and female writers employed Interactional Markers more than Interactive ones. Nevertheless, male writers used Interactional Markers with 60.65% more than female writers ones with 55.15%.

5.4. Referential Analysis of Female and Male Writers in English Translation

5.4.1. Research Question 1

The first research question addressed the differences between male authors and female authors in English Translation in conclusion section of MA theses in terms of using Interactive and Interactional metadiscourse Markers. Chi-square Test was run in order to investigate differences between male authors and female authors in English Translation in terms of applying Interactive and Interactional metadiscourse Markers. In table 8, referential analysis are presented as follows.

Table 8. Chi-square test Results of English Translation.

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.133 ^a	1	.004		
Continuity Correction ^b	7.356	1	.007		
Likelihood Ratio	7.976	1	.005		
Fisher's Exact Test				.005	.004
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.121	1	.004		
N of Valid Cases	663				

Chi-square reported in Table 8 shows that significant level is $0.004 < 0.05$. As a result, there are significant differences between male authors and female authors in English Translation in conclusion section of MA theses in terms of using Interactive and Interactional metadiscourse Markers. So the hypothesis one is rejected.

5.4.2. Research Question 2

The second research question addressed the differences between male authors and female authors in English Teaching in conclusion section of MA theses in terms of using Interactive and Interactional metadiscourse Markers. In order to find out the differences between male authors and female authors in English Teaching in terms of applying Interactive

and Interactional metadiscourse Markers, chi-square test was employed and are presented in Table 9 as follows:

Table 9. Chi-square test Results of English Teaching.

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Squar	.001 ^a	1	.982		
Continuity Correction ^b	.0001	1	.000		
Likelihood Ratio	.001	1	.982		
Fisher's Exact Test				1.000	.533
Linear-by-Linear Association	.001	1	.982		
N of Valid Cases	727				

In Table 9, the results revealed that significance level is $0.98 > 0.05$. Concerning this finding, there are not any significant differences between male authors and female authors in English Teaching in conclusion section of MA theses in terms of using Interactive and Interactional metadiscourse Markers. Consequently, hypothesis two is confirmed.

5.4.3. Research Question 3

The third research question addressed the differences between male authors and female authors in English Literature in conclusion section of MA theses in terms of using Interactive and Interactional metadiscourse Markers. Chi-square was used to explore if there are any significant differences between male authors and female authors in English Literature in terms of using Interactive and Interactional metadiscourse Markers. Following results are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Chi-square test Results of English Literature.

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.188 ^a	1	.013		
Continuity Correction ^b	5.964	1	.015		
Likelihood Ratio	6.173	1	.013		
Fisher's Exact Test				.014	.007
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.185	1	.013		
N of Valid Cases	2110				

The findings of chi-square, shown in Table 10, revealed that significant level is $0.013 < 0.05$. as thus, it can be concluded that there are not any significant differences between male authors and female authors in English Literature in conclusion section of MA theses in terms of using Interactive and Interactional metadiscourse Markers. In fact, hypothesis three is rejected.

6. DISCUSSION

With regard to first, second, and third research questions, results indicated that in English Translation and English Literature, there were significant differences between male and female writers concerning use of Interactive and Interactional metadiscourse Markers, while in English Teaching, there were not any significant differences between male and female writers regarding use of these metadiscourse Markers. In sum, first and third hypotheses were rejected, although second hypothesis was confirmed. Considering the descriptive statistics of gender-based analysis, In English Translation, both male and female writers used more Interactional Markers than Interactive ones. However, female writers applied more Interactional Markers with 60.66% comparing to male writers ones with 41.37%.

In English Teaching, both male and female writers employed more Interactional Markers more than Interactive ones. While, female writers used Interactional Markers with 51.18 more than male writers ones with 51.7%. In English Literature, both male and female writers employed Interactional Markers more than Interactive ones. Nevertheless, male writers used Interactional Markers with 60.65% more than female writers ones with 55.15%. In sum, the results indicates that female writers were stronger in using interactional markers than male writers. This finding is compatible with Crismore et.al (1993), indicating that both gender applied interactional metadiscourse more than interactive one, but female writers used them more than males writers.

The present findings are contrary to the previous studies (Hyland & Tse, 2008; Ghafoori & Oghbatalab, 2012), which have reported that “greater use of interactional resources by the male writers can be seen to represent a very different style of argument”. The second researcher stated that English male and female writers did not differ significantly in their overall use of metadiscourse; but, significant differences were observed in categorical distribution of metadiscourse elements.

7. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Swales (1990) also suggest that “the key differentiating aspect of dissertation writing is a much greater use of metadiscourse”. Based on the results reported and the discussion conducted in the previous sections, several conclusions can be drawn.

1. Based on descriptive analysis of gender-based study of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers in conclusion sections of English Translation, English Teaching, and , English Literature M.A Theses, in English Translation, both male and female writers applied more interactional markers with 60.66% comparing to male writers with 41.37%. In English Teaching, both male and female writers employed more Interactional Markers more than Interactive ones. While, female writers used Interactional Markers with 51.18 more than male writers ones with 51.7%. In English Literature, both male and female writers employed

Interactional Markers more than Interactive ones. Nevertheless, male writers used Interactional Markers with 60.65% more than female writers ones with 55.15%.

2.Regarding the referential analysis, it can be concluded that, there are significant differences between male and female writers concerning use of Interactive and Interactional metadiscourse Markers in English Translation, and English Literature M.A Theses. While there are not any significant differences between male and female writers regarding use of these metadiscourse Markers in English Teaching.

This study can have pedagogical implications for postgraduate students, whether they are male or female. They should acquire these metadiscourse recourses (both interactive and interactional) to be able to obtain explicit awareness of how to use metadiscourse markers efficiently. Therefore, it is job of syllabus designers, and textbook writers to allocate some effective sections to elaborate more metadiscourse markers instructions. As stated by Simin and Tavangar (2009), appropriate instruction for improving the writing of EFL learners are needed to be provided by instructors in addition to the activities employed in textbooks.

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