



Educational Literary Text in High School Departments A Field Theoretical Study Through the Second Year of High School

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Abstract

This discussion in this context relates to the reality of dealing with literary text in high school through its interconnected and multifaceted components, starting with the lexical component, to the contextual component with its three branches, and then the aesthetic components. The question we want to pose is: To what extent does the lexical interaction align with this type of text, given its precise and highly sensitive specificity, through a humble examination of the methods of interaction? At the same time, we inquire about the service that this reading can provide, considering its structured structural nature (i.e., literary texts), and also considering the influential function undertaken by the creator through the expanded and meticulous architectural plan? Following a descriptive approach, we observe and discuss the phenomenon to reach conclusions and results.

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1. The Problem

The discussion in this context revolves around the reality of dealing with literary text in high school through its interconnected and multifaceted components, starting with the lexical component, to the contextual component with its three branches, and then the aesthetic component. The question we aim to address is:

To what extent does the lexical interaction align with this type of text, given its precise and highly sensitive specificity, through a humble examination of the methods of interaction?

At the same time, we inquire about the service that this reading can provide, considering its structured structural nature (i.e., literary texts), and also considering the influential function undertaken by the creator through the expanded and meticulous architectural plan? Following a descriptive approach, we observe and discuss the phenomenon to reach conclusions and results.

2. Introduction

In the beginning, it is essential for us to agree that the transition from one receiving pattern to another does not happen abruptly or in a single leap. Instead, the transition is usually the inevitable result of a historical turning point that a society goes through, leaving a significant impact on reception patterns in various aspects of life (Kazem, 2003 , p. 61).

However, what is also agreed upon is that the reading of poetic texts, in general, has remained the legitimate companion of this transition. From the moment this text emerged, its reading has been inseparable from it. Since "the event of reception is a historical event largely governed by its historical moment and its general cognitive horizon (Kazem, 2003 , p. 61) " it leads to an evolution in its reception levels between simplicity and depth.

When we attempt to illustrate this, it suffices to go back a little before the advent of Islam, i.e., before the revelation of the Quran. At that time, there was no need to delve into the poetic text for certain reasons, meaning that its reading (the poetic text) was not a means in itself but rather an end. However, it lacked the depth we find later.

With the advent of the Quran, the reception of these texts elevated, as mentioned earlier, due to a historical turning point or turning points. Thus, dealing with this text shifted from goal-oriented to a means-oriented approach when those dealing with it turned to understanding the meanings of the Quran. They found nothing but a poetic commodity presented in clear Arabic language and a statement that captures the mind. The early Muslims' entry into understanding the secrets of the Quran and revealing its meanings was through building the Arabic language system, whether in its vocabulary, its grammatical rules, or the enumeration of its graphic forms (Qansuah, 2011 , p. 287). The most significant construction of the Arabic

language and its system was manifested in Arabic poetry, supporting the saying of Ibn Abbas: "When something in the Quran is ambiguous, look to poetry because poetry is Arabic (Al-Tabari, p. 269)." This idea became prevalent among many dealing with poetic texts at that time.

Al-Jurjani says, "It was impossible to know the Quran as a miracle unless one knew the poetry, which is the Arab's record and the title of literature." Many interested in the Quran and its language, gathered poems from the mouths of the Arabs (Al-Jurjani, p. 25), especially those characterized by various qualities. This movement paralleled the movement to record poetry, aiming to preserve what remained of it, and with the purpose of "protecting the nation's language and serving the book of Islam, understanding its words, interpreting its structure, and grasping its secrets in expression and eloquence (Al-Shati, 1970 , p. 14)." They were not concerned with the aesthetic aspects of this artistic heritage, but their movement was "for the purpose of explaining what was doubtful to others, showing progress in knowledge that others were incapable of, and their intention was not to glorify poetry for something that would return to it in itself (Al-Baillani, 1973 , p. 157)." A faction of these individuals and others later focused on studying, appreciating, and criticizing poetry, adding their contributions to what had been established by predecessors in the pre-Islamic era. The result of this tremendous effort was that the Arabs accumulated a vast heritage that would later lay the foundation for a journey of thought and civilization.

However, with the passage of time and the continuation of the reading movement, and after ensuring the understanding of the meanings of the Quran, or so we assume, they encountered the poetic text with its beauty and charm. They refused to do anything but linger on it for a long time, turning its words over, explaining and contemplating them.

3. The Poetic Text and Its Reading Components

The approaches to reading poetic texts have varied based on the desired objectives, as mentioned earlier. They range from a reading approach that relies on explanation using synonyms to eliminate the mysteries of its aspects without going beyond that, to another approach that focuses on the external aspects while modestly delving into its superficial structure to appreciate its aesthetics. A third approach concentrates on the aesthetic aspects realized through the literary content of the text, as commonly discussed among critics.

3.1 Literary Text and Lexical Component

Poetic texts have spread widely for known reasons, and due to the temporal and spatial gap, readers felt a barrier between them and understanding the texts, despite their attachment to them. Books emerged that had no purpose other than explaining the words of those texts, similar to what Ibn Jinni did in his commentary, or what Al-Tabrizi did in explaining Saktu Al-Zind or Al-Marzouqi in explaining the Diwan Al-Hamasah, and many others.

Therefore, these and others approached the poetic text, interrogating it according to their linguistic needs, relying on the method of explanation using synonyms. This method is intended to "reveal the meaning of the word in its context, not by indicating what it implies, but by mentioning another word that the explainer considers familiar and clearly shows the relationship between them (Al-Waad, 2004 , p. 116)." When a word is shrouded in obscurity, the explainer refers to another word from the lexicon to shed light on the darkness and dispel the ambiguity. The word then opens up with meaning, revealing what was previously mysterious up to a known extent. The explainer cannot reach beyond these limits, and each time the poetic text refuses to appear and flaunt itself in this explanatory manner. The text rejects the reader's reliance on anything other than itself and is concerned about that direction. When a poet uses words, he does so having detached them from their material world, separating them from their lexical origin. He manipulates them in a manner chosen with premeditation and anticipation, guided by his aesthetic taste. On the other hand, literal interpretation is a negation of the poetic, which is the distinctive characteristic of artistic texts. It is a surrender to the mechanism of literal dealing, fundamentally conflicting with the basis of poetic construction, as it "prevents the revelation of the meaning's openness. In other words, it hinders the idea of the transformed and plural meaning because it presents the text as a singular dimension (Al-Drabseh, 2006 , p. 322)." Adonis refers to it as the erasing

reading, "not only because it erases the textuality of the text but also because it erases the possibilities of questioning (Al-Drabseh, 2006 , p. 323)."

Furthermore, such a reading takes a contradictory stance with the nature of mercury-like literary works. This is because "the intended meaning revealed by literal interpretation remains constant and does not change, while the significance of literary works changes from one generation to another, depending on the historical and aesthetic data of the reading era, or in Yawas's expression, depending on the changing horizon (Al-Drabseh, 2006 , p. 103)." This means that there is no harmony between the dynamism of artistic creativity, a necessary feature of it, and the rigidity of literal reading that cannot break free from the narrow lexical space that hinders this dynamism and resists it. We must not forget that the poetic text is composed of words belonging to a specific language in which it was written. If you attempt to search for such words in the dictionary, you will undoubtedly be perplexed because they seem "as if they are not equivalent to themselves. Therefore, their similarity or even identity with the dictionary word becomes a clear reason for the distinct feeling of the difference between these two units (Lotman, 1995, p. 125)." This characteristic makes the artistic text different from other non-artistic texts. Therefore, it imposes a specific interactional pattern (i.e., reading) that also differs from others.

If words share some structure in building the artistic text and in constructing the

complete image, they gain much more value in this particular structure than they do in others. "The more elegant and polished the text is, the more valuable the word becomes, and its meaning becomes broader and wider (Lotman, 1995, p. 126)." Thus, the word appears to waver between the lexical meaning and the meaning it assumes in the artistic text, i.e., between its specific meaning in the poetic structure and its lexical reference. Conflict and tension arise between these two patterns of meaning, and thus, "the word has a double indicative or evocative meaning with strength, and the indicative meaning is the one found in dictionaries. The word is defined based on its cognitive characteristics (Cohen, 1993, p. 235)."

If the poet resorts to the selection of a word, he does so from the perspective of the artistic dimension and the evocative influence, not the indicative. His aim is to satisfy his own desires and amaze the other, making the word not only used to express meaning but also intended for its own essence. "It has an artistic creation in itself (Mandour, p. 32)." Therefore, "any explanation of the poetic text does not aim at being poetic itself, and this observation applies to explanations and comments on literary texts in general, which acknowledge that their specific form does not bear that material and those characteristics that give literature its value from the beginning, making it suitable to be itself the subject of explanation (Cohen, 1993, p. 138)." This led some to consider literal reading as "suppressive reading and a trick that reads empty and meaningless repetition, as literal reading leads to non-reading. Furthermore, words

do not live in isolation but are gathered and composed in the text. Therefore, studying them as self-contained signs is a sterile and unproductive study (Amina, 1999, p. 20)." In conclusion, it is arbitrary to be content with lexical explanation while dealing with literary texts.

However, it is also necessary to acknowledge that the efforts of linguists who engaged with poetic texts have greatly benefited the Arabic language. They enriched the Arabic lexicon with various vocabulary and provided extensive practical possibilities. They also ventured into different regions, especially during the time spanning the first and second centuries, where they explored the deserts, interacted with the Bedouins, and delved into the pure linguistic source. Simultaneously, they paved the way for the study of poetry. The recipient of the artistic text could not directly approach it without pausing at the first threshold, namely the lexical threshold. This is considered the weakest point through which the recipient can sneak towards the depths of the text, causing parts of it to collapse temporarily. Therefore, Mohammed Miftah proposes this type of reading as an initial plan to dive into the turbulent waves of the text. However, he does not endorse it as the sole and final solution for deciphering its symbols. Instead, he considers it "alone detrimental to the poetic text because it separates words from their structural context, both before and after (Miftah, 2006, p. 61)."

In this regard, it does not serve the intended purpose since it robs the poetic text of its aesthetics and diminishes its

value as an art and creative work. The poetic impact intrinsic to poetic texts and their function is lost, and the reader does not interact with the effect as an admirer and enthusiast but rather collides with the rigidity of the word, halting at the first threshold without surpassing its lexical boundaries. As a result, it "intentionally first dismantles the discourse into lexical elements that it explains at its literal level, then seeks to link these elements to a reality it believes actually existed (Belmalih, 1995 , p. 360)." This material reality of these words cannot trigger the dormant energy with it. It is sufficient for the reader to deal with them on the surface level. Therefore, it "fails to draw attention to the interconnection and free fall (Belmalih, 1995 , p. 360)," content with finding a thin thread that establishes relationships at the linear and literal level, nothing more.

The search for new relationships between units of the artistic text, narrowing the distant spaces between the dissonant elements, listening to what lies beyond the word, and decoding its artistic ciphers are tasks beyond the capability of this type of reading. This reading "fails to distinguish between levels of language usage, hinting at each level and referring it to a specific field (Belmalih, 1995 , p. 360)." It is a reading heavily reliant on a reality it clings to stubbornly, drawing its needs and materials from it. It leans towards monotony, making it tedious. If literary texts "vary in the ability of readers to perceive the successive levels that readers can fall into when reading them," then the reader should not remain at the first level, which is the superficial level of lexical

meanings identical to the words read (Mahmoud, 1971, p. 109). The reader should ascend to a higher level. Nevertheless, a reader may suffice with this reading, and in such cases, we cannot deny it to them. They may cite its inability to reach beyond the apparent letters as the reason, as each reader has their capacity and ability. The first steps remain necessary for any reading, and it is essential to acknowledge that "the purpose of the surface structure is only to reveal the deep structure (Ezra, p. 26)." In conclusion, this type of reading cannot be sufficient to encompass all aspects of the artistic text. It is enough to recognize that it poses a significant obstacle to the integration of the reader's self. Dealing with the letter's details makes us feel that spatial gap between us and the artistic text.

As we revisit the literary heritage, we almost observe a dominant lexicographic tendency among many who dealt with such literary texts. This is evident through well-known explanatory books, perhaps with the aim of enriching the Arabic lexicon, as mentioned earlier. Their work has been labeled as utilitarian, such as Al-Jahiz, who is described by some as having "derived his conception of rhetoric and some information about animals from poetry. He even came up with verses and explained them because his explanation helped him extract scientific knowledge from them (Abbas, 2001 , p. 83)." Al-Jahiz becomes an example of those who approached literary texts based on external utility. He did not adopt them as an end in themselves to experience and explore their beauty. Instead, he later adopted them as a means to reach shores beyond the shores

of poetry. He utilized them to present what he wanted to showcase in his works, such as eloquence and zoology, reinforcing his positions and judgments on social, ethical, and other issues. What concerns us in this discussion is the utilitarian aspect that became apparent in the interest of Al-Jahiz and others in poetry.

We find a similar inclination more explicitly among linguists and Quranic interpreters, where their engagement with artistic text also took a utilitarian approach, moving away from aesthetic goals.

Simultaneously, we hear lamentation from some readers of poetic texts, and we sense their awareness of the corruption of such readings, considering the solution to poetry in its literal sense as the lowest level of interaction. There is no virtue in it except "coming as a cool residue over it, enjoying the moisture and the period of embarrassment (Al-Athir, 1988 , p. 58)." They make an exception for beginners, providing them with an excuse for the purpose of learning. However, if someone becomes addicted to poetic texts and has the means, it becomes forbidden for them. They should not resort to unraveling poetic meanings in the literal sense (Al-Athir, 1988 , p. 58). Al-Tabrizi, a reader from the 5th century, expressed his aversion to this approach, stating, "I saw a group of writers, leaders in literature, and people's eyes, who desired to explain what our Sheikh Abu Al-Ala Al-Maarri had neglected in his verses and clarify its complexities. I sought help from Allah Almighty to explain it from the beginning to the end. I included what our Sheikh

Abu Al-Ala mentioned regarding the light falling at its places. Then, I clarified its complexities and mentioned its meanings, avoiding the method of Abu Al-Fath Othman ibn Jinni in his interpretation of Abu Al-Tayyib's poetry. He used excessive citations and mentioned Arabic language without presenting meanings that are essential and beneficial for the reader when looked at. The best explanations are concise and informative. Therefore, he avoided lengthening without necessity (Al-Tabrizi, 1986 , p. 04)." However, Al-Tabrizi's approach as a reader does not seem different from those who preceded him, as he could not add anything new. Nevertheless, we can infer from his words the reluctance of people and their withdrawal from this type of reading because readers, in later eras, no longer cared for it as their knowledge expanded, their minds matured, and the state of the language stabilized.

The word in poetry carries significant value that may not be equaled by another in the same context. For this reason, the "poetic word does not change the content of meaning but changes its form. It transitions from neutrality to intensification (Cohen, 1993 , p. 145)."

Models of Lexical Reading

We attempt to present some examples—there are many—whereby we can assess the effectiveness and robustness of this lexical reading approach.

First Model

The poet Labid bin Rabi'a has a verse that Al-Mubarrad quotes in full:

"He spent the night, and the people captured him at the end of their night, and he was not a companion (in hardship) except when pressed."

The word "al-mu`ṣar" (the companion) is highlighted (Al-Mubrid, 2002 , p. 58). This is how Al-Mubarrad, as a reader, dealt with the verse. The word caught his attention, and instead of merely asking about it, he knocked on the door of the lexicon to inquire there, returning with that scarce piece of information.

We may ask: Could the poet have chosen the word "al-maljā" (the refuge), for example, instead of "al-muṣar"? If the answer is yes, why didn't he? I believe that the word "al-muṣar" suggested to the poet a density greater than the word "al-maljā" or perhaps he deliberately chose it to add something scarce to the linguistic lexicon. Alternatively, it could have been for the sake of rhyme or to break the monotony of common usage. The interpretation of this word within the text directs the reader to its equivalent in meaning.

Second Model

Ibn Hurmah heard a singer reciting a verse about him, saying:

"By Allah, if you come, tell her: This is Ibn Hurmah standing at the door."

Ibn Hurmah corrected him, saying, "I didn't say 'standing'; did I donate?" The singer asked, "Did you sit?" Ibn Hurmah replied, "I didn't say 'sitting.' What did I do?" He said, "You stood." Ibn Hurmah replied, "So you didn't know the difference between standing and sitting."

Third Model

Ibrahim Anis, while discussing verses of Shauqi, described them as relatively easy except for the first half of the following verse:

"They deceived her by saying she's beautiful, and seductive songs are tempting."

Ibrahim Anis suggests that the first half of this verse is more challenging in terms of its musicality. Therefore, he proposes two alternative words to facilitate pronunciation—either "fatnuhā" (tempting) or "waṣfuha" (describing). According to Ibrahim, if the poet had chosen either of these words, the verse would have become musically easier, smoother, and more melodious (Anis, 1952).

However, a closer examination of the connotations of the verb "khadaūhā" (deceived her) and relying on aesthetic intuition reveal a robustness in the verb's force. While the verb "waṣafa" (describe) lacks the connotation of a crime committed against the weak, and "fatana" (tempt) might not necessarily imply insistence on temptation, "khadaūhā" (deceived her) carries the weight of cunning and deception not present in the other two choices. The poet's choice was precise, reflecting his sensitivity and taste.

Field Study

Our choice of the secondary stage was due to its proximity to the university stage, and because students - up to this moment - have enriched their linguistic and literary knowledge throughout years of study. We wanted to explore the general situation of

poetry lessons in secondary school classrooms.

Sample: Second year of general and technological secondary education.

Specializations: Mathematics / Experimental Sciences / Management and Economics / Technical Mathematics.

Reference: The book "Al-Jadeed in Literature, Texts, and Directed Obedience."

Note: These specializations are clearly scientific in nature.

Objectives: The introduction of the book mentions the goals of these lessons, aiming to deepen the learner's knowledge in descriptive, narrative, and argumentative texts. The ongoing exploration of these texts contributes to the intellectual development of the learner, grounding the characteristics of these patterns in the writings and thoughts of the students. The approach starts with competencies that seek what is more beneficial and useful to the learner, surpassing the concepts of traditional education.

Steps:

1. Brief introduction to the author, addressing the contexts of the text to dispel ambiguity.
2. Reading the text by the teacher and some students.
3. Lexical processing to enrich the linguistic repertoire of the students and attempt to explore the meanings of words within the context.
4. Examining the data of the text using a set of questions that reveal the aesthetic dimension of the text, as well as the varied ideas, emotions, and techniques available in the text.
5. In-depth analysis, according to the students' levels in aesthetic processing, to develop both aesthetic and critical senses. This involves delving into the depth of the text and uncovering its multiple secrets through multiple readings.
6. Attempting to identify the style of the text by discovering its artistic features, then asking students to weave on its model.
7. Examining the level of coherence and harmony between the parts of the text through the corners of consistency and harmony.
8. Conclusion regarding the artistic, social, and moral value of the text.

Content: The book contains eleven poems that vary according to place, time, and content.

Preview Results

Note: In this spatial context, emphasis was placed on the lexical component when the teacher and students dealt with poetic texts in the secondary stage. The discussion about the other two components has been postponed to another opportunity, God willing.

It is worth noting that this second level of secondary education is dedicated to Abbasid and Andalusian literature, with a somewhat subtle representation of

Maghreb literature. However, the selected texts are considered from the treasures of Abbasid and Arab poetry in general. Since the presented texts were not far from the students' level, lexical explanation appeared briefly. Throughout these texts, the number of lexically explained words was only eighty-two (82) out of a total of one hundred and forty-eight (148) verses, a very low ratio. This implies that the focus at this stage was not on the lexical side, perhaps because the texts were close to the students' level, so there was no need to linger extensively on lexical reading.

The teacher starts reading the literary text expressively, followed by multiple readings. Some students are selected based on their different levels of proficiency—good, moderate, and weak—accompanied by correcting the mistakes made by the reader. The teacher then explains some units of the text that seem difficult for the students lexically, either with synonyms or antonyms. Afterwards, students are asked to use these explained vocabulary in various sentence structures without delving too much into the implications of the words, their connotations, or their alignment with the context and the overall tone of the text.

After completing the lesson, the learner may leave with a considerable amount of linguistic knowledge to enrich their vocabulary. Therefore, the importance of this approach is strongly evident in the linguistic repertoire that the learner benefits from, especially in those structures where these lexical units are used. Thus, it becomes a necessary reading, especially in the early stages

where enrichment is needed, as mentioned earlier.

Results

1. When we return to the reading reality and reflect on our literary heritage, we almost realize that this type of reading has asserted itself in this reality. It has been present in the literary scene through extended reading phases, up until this moment. Therefore, lexical reading, despite its challenges, is not considered a wrong or misguided approach.
2. While the presented texts are at the required level, a more in-depth lexical analysis is needed when examining the text's vocabulary. This includes exploring antonyms, additional synonyms, and derivations. All of these aspects need to be crystallized through various exercises to ensure their solidification in the student's awareness and memory.

3.2 Contextual Reading Level

We won't dwell extensively on this level in the context of literary texts since discussions about it are widespread in various references. However, we aim to quickly point out the circumstances of its dominance in the critical scene throughout what can be classified as the modern era.

Studies in contextual reading, whether historical, social, or psychological, seek to understand the essence of social life in general. They observe the interaction between literature and the society they

study, considering its political, cultural, and religious institutions. Therefore, it becomes evident that readers may encounter numerous texts related to certain events, and understanding these texts often requires a return to the society from which they emerged. Events and incidents serve as illuminations guiding the path to comprehension.

Model for This Reading

We select a poem by Abu Firas al-Hamdani that necessitates an exploration of its context (occasion, and an introduction to its author). In this poem, he says:

"I say, as a dove coos near me, O neighbor, if only you could feel my condition.

I swear by love, you haven't tasted the bitterness of parting, And worries have never crossed your mind.

O neighbor, destiny has not been fair between us, Come, let's share our sorrows, come.

Come and see a soul weak in my possession, Echoing in a body tormented in pain.

Does a captive laugh while a free one weeps? Does a sorrowful one remain silent while a lamenting one regrets?

I, who was more deserving of shedding tears than you, But my tears are precious in calamities."

This poem serves as an example for delving into its surroundings, appropriateness, and an introduction to its author. Abu Firas al-Hamdani vividly

illustrates the emotions and experiences intertwined with the societal context in which the poem originated.

Author of the Text

The poet and prince, the sword-bearer Al-Harith bin Saeed bin Hamdan Al-Hamdani Al-Tughlabi, born in the year 320 AH and passed away in the year 357 AH. He was the cousin of Saif al-Dawlah Al-Hamdani, whose rule covered parts of the Levant and Iraq, with Aleppo as its capital. Our poet grew up in the lap of the Hamdani state, immersed in horsemanship and knowledge, gaining fame for his romantic poetry. These were a collection of poems he composed while in captivity following Saif al-Dawlah's wars against the Byzantines. His verses stood out for their linguistic strength, precision in meaning, and authenticity in experience because he refrained from excessive embellishment in his words and was not eager for personal gain through his poetry.

Background

Abu Firas Al-Hamdani was captured by the Byzantines during a war between the two armies. When Saif al-Dawlah delayed intervening to rescue him from captivity, he took that as a betrayal. Saif al-Dawlah's inaction distressed him profoundly, and the world became narrow in its expanse, with the darkness of prison intensifying upon him. One morning, he looked around, finding nothing but a dove standing before him, as if sharing his sorrow.

He addressed the dove with this poignant and impactful poem. Doves, as is known, are birds characterized by their gentleness,

seeking safety and peace, harming no one. They find contentment in a mere grain of food, a drop of water, and a quiet place to spend their nights. When they coo, it carries a sound of pain when they land, often on a solitary branch.

In this context, the myth states that doves in ancient times lost their male, called "Al-Hadeel," and they mourned and called out to him, becoming a source of inspiration for poets during moments of sadness and sorrow. The poets exchanged pain and lamentation with the dove, expressing their anguish through verses.

3.3 Level of Aesthetic Reading

Abdul Qaher Al-Jurjani presents an aesthetic reading model based on verses by Ibrahim bin Al-Abbas, in which he says:

**"If news of a lifetime spread and the
companion disowned, And enemies took
control while help was absent.**

**You would still be my dwelling from
Ahwaz, with elegance, But fates flowed,
and matters unfolded.**

**Yet, after this, I hope for Muhammad, A
brother and a minister for the best of
what is hoped."**

Here, we pose the following question: How does Al-Jurjani engage with these verses?

Al-Jurjani chose to interrogate the text before us – a collection of non-consecutive verses – drawing insights from what is available on the surface through its composition. He approached it as a whole, not fragmenting it, and did not

focus on analyzing its wording axis by axis.

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