

## HOW YOUTUBE INFLUENCES CHILDREN LANGUAGE ACQUISITIONS AND IMPACT THEIR ADVANCEMENT?: AN INVESTIGATION TO THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S KIDS

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study aims to investigate the children language acquisition advancement based on YouTube platform influence. To achieve this aim, this research applied qualitative methods as qualitative research. The participants of this study were three children at the elementary level and their parents in a different place. The data of this study were attained from interviews using open-ended questions and observations. Thematic analysis was implemented in this study. The result of the analysis showed that YouTube has positively influenced the children's language acquisition development. The duration of watching is directly proportional to the level of children language acquisition development. The variations in children's vocabulary are influenced by the type of content. Video blogging is part of informal environment for children in learning new things as also language given the benefit in this research which is hoped to lead more research in the language acquisition development in children level.*

**Keywords :** *children development, language acquisition, YouTube*

## INTRODUCTION

The language acquisition concerns to the acquiring language (Ritcieh & Bhatia, 1998) from all of the sources. Dewi (2021) revealed that language acquisition is a process, it cannot be just acquired from birth. Children's language normally develops in line with their age, and language acquisition for children is started when they produce words on their own. Regarding children's acquisition, the first thing they learn is called mother tongue as the first language, usually, they learn it from their parents fluently at the age of three. Children advance their language usually from their parents as their main sources or have interaction frequently. As Sekerina et al (2008) stated that children are hearing an adult utterance, reading the communicative intention embodied in that utterance, segmenting that communicative intention into component parts (in most cases), and storing the comprehended utterance and components is a fundamental process of language learning.

However, nowadays is not only parents or adults who are influential in the process of children's language acquisition, but also can be either technology. Since technology has developed very rapidly, children can get more facilities to learn a language (Davidson, Given, Danby, & Thorpe, 2014), such through social media. In recent years, social media has been continuously transforming and updating our daily life, in terms of information delivery, knowledge exchange, communication, and visual culture (Rieger, Diana, & Klimmt, 2018). Therefore, social media is utilized not only for adults but all of the elements of society including children.

Follow-up studies examining the impact of media on children confirmed Neumann's findings that the social media with the greatest learning potential for childhood is YouTube. There are many things that children can learn from YouTube either positive or negative things, several studies show it depends on the children and their parents' control. As Auliya and Fadlilah (2018) stated that many parents let their children play with devices and also watch videos on YouTube. By showing the video the child will be silent, while

parents can calmly carry out their activities without having to be disturbed by the child. Nevertheless, according to research, the Youtube screen media has possible high effects on young children's learning and development (Izci et al. 2019) where the children watch the behavior of others and have the potential to positively or negatively impact children depending on the quality of videos and images presented on the screen (Neumann & Herodotou, 2020). This creates a contradiction, so parents need to also be in the circle of their child's learning media to control its accessibility.

The cultivation theory is another relevant perspective that describes how media such as YouTube and its inherent messages may influence children's behavior and learning (Gerbner et al. 2002). This idea claims that, over time, viewers' societal conceptions of reality are evolving toward the screen media version of reality, even if it is not exact or precise. Spending more time on YouTube or other screen media can lead to two forms of learning: first-order learning outcomes are based on the material's concrete features, and second-order learning outcomes are based on implied information. They are messages that the audience can deduce from the media. According to the cultivation theory, the way individuals and social connections are portrayed in the media can influence children's impressions of the world, resulting in biased or false perceptions of reality. The importance of producing high-quality video is backed up by these theoretical ideas.

Several studies have also shown the arguable that YouTube is also a platform to influence the improvement of children's language acquisition which is popularly used (Sahayu & Friyanto, 2019). Sari and Margana (2019) identify that maximum use of YouTube is considered necessary in enhancing the development of children speaking skills as a crucial capability to be possessed in the 21st century. Furthermore, automatically, the children's language acquisition in Youtube can be stated that all of the things they can imitate the language that they watch and listen unconsciously on YouTube such vocabulary acquisition as the concern of this study. Besides, the researchers

recruited the participants based on the result of the field observation. Thus, this study examined the impact of YouTube's influence on children's language acquisition emerging from their daily activities context. To fulfill the purpose of the present study, the following research question is addressed that is YouTube's influences on the children's language acquisition advancement.

## **THEORY AND METHOD**

In the previous study, the research was conducted in the formal context or in school to seek the data about the students' language acquisition improvement (Sahayu & Friyanto, 2019). Similarly, Neumann & Heredetou (2020) undertook research that they used regular assessment that takes a long period. Some researchers also conducted by focusing on the children themselves. Hence, this study attempts to investigate the influence of the Youtube platform on children's language acquisition development and try to seek the distinction phenomena between the children in utilizing the YouTube platform through their parents' perception of this case. This present study just focuses on the children that closed with researchers, not students formally in the school, and also the impact of YouTube on their language acquisition.

This study applies qualitative methods as qualitative research to investigate the influence of Youtube on language acquisition in children (Cresswell, 2012). The study was conducted with three children at the elementary level and their parents in a different place. The recruitment of these children was due to the personal closeness factor between the researchers, children, and their parents. This factor is expected to help the researcher in building better rapport with the participants. The better rapport building exerted any positive effects on memory which can help in communication and collecting the data from the participants (Sauerland, Brackmann & Otgaar, 2018).

The data were collected through interviews using open-ended questions and observations. Widodo (2014) states that interviews can be the

right technique to obtain information related to one's experience. The use of interview techniques and the form of open-ended questions can help researchers to explore a lot of detailed information related to research topics (Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003). Thematic analysis was used to analyze the interview data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To analyze the data, this study will follow Cresswell's (2010) steps: collecting data, preparing the data for analyzing, reading the data, coding the data, and categorizing the data into themes and descriptions.

The interview activity of one of the participants was carried out via Whatsapp application (Gibson, 2020). The reason researchers used applications to do the interview is that the area of the researchers and the participants is quite far away. The others were carried out directly. The interview activity was also recorded using a digital recording device. The interview was used the Indonesian language to facilitate better communication between researchers and participants (Supiani, Rafidiyah, Yansyah, & Nadia, 2020). Then, the recorded data have listened to over and over again. Interview data were collected and copied into a table format agreed upon by the researchers to make it easier for researchers to classify the data (Ferdiansyah, Supiastutik, Angin, 2020).

The number of participants is three Childre (N=3) two males and one female. They are recruited due to two closed with the researchers and there is like the tendency for our data which means they accessed YouTube either for learning or just having fun. The detailed information of participants are presented in the following table 1.1:

Table. 1. Participants Demographic

Participants	Gender	Age
P1	Male	12
P2	Female	9
P3	Male	8

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the data analysis based on thematic structure. This study aimed to investigate the children's language acquisition advancement based on YouTube influence. The finding of this study comprised two fields: finding from parents' interviews and finding from observations of the children.

### 1.1 Finding from the interview

The interview of the study comprised six questions related to the concept of the YouTube content that the children watch frequently, the frequency of their watching, the role of parents, children's reactions after watching, the language implementation acquired from their watching, and the children vocabulary bank progress.

#### 1.1.1. YouTube Contents

The YouTube content context refers to the children's content that they watched on YouTube as the main platform of this present study focused. The detail will be presented in Q1 as follows:

"He likes watching children's cartoons like Upin & Ipin, Naruto, Boboi Boi, and Shifa". (P1)

"Before entering school age, he used to watch Kids Channel such as coco melon and cartoons. At that time, the only source of viewing was Youtube and TV. However, after entering school age, he has other viewing sources such as the Tiktok /Like app". (P2)

"He likes to watch children's arts such as Upin & Ipin, SpongeBob Squarepants and youtube channels related to the Minecraf game.". (P3)

Based on narrative data above showed that all of the participants watched YouTube. The majority of the participants watched cartoon channels. The data from P1 revealed that the cartoons he watched were *Upin & Ipin*, *Naruto*, *Boboi*, and *Shifa*. The data from P2 through the lil bit fast-process advancement from the cartoon into the hard one such as Tiktok and Like application which serves a myriad of videos that influence her language acquisition varied from kids language to the adult language such slang etc. The data from P3 showed that it is quite similar to P1 that he is still in his context

such as cartoon channel but there is a distinction like SpongeBob, SquarePants, and Minecraft.

It indicates that the children's language acquisition between P1 and P3 are at the same level which is cartoon channel as the source of their language acquisition. The researcher categorized it as the normal level due to they consume ordinary channels neither before they entered school nor entered the school. In contrast, the P2 has quite different concerns with language acquisition advancement. P2 has a higher level of spectacle such as TikTok and Like application that serve most of adult language like slang, whereas in the moment of children language acquisition advancement is inappropriate. Even though, before she entered the school has been watching cartoon channels, but it is quite premature that affects her language psychology.

### **1.1.2. The Frequency of Children's Spectacle**

This theme refers to the children's watching frequency that the students used watch the YouTube contents in a period of time. The detail will be presented in Q2 as follows :

"I only allow him to watch when finished / after studying sometimes and on holidays such as Sundays or red dates, the hours are free to watch". (P1)

"The duration of watching Serti is usually approximately 1 hour". (P2)

"Every day, when I get home from school, I only allow about 30 minutes". (P3)

This such data reveals the frequency that the children visited the channel at that moment. The data from P1 showed that the right and free moments to access the channel are after learning or doing the assignment and on the weekend, which means that the P1, not every single day can be accessed. The data from P2 stated that the frequency is around an hour a day which means that there will be intensive progress of children's language acquisition from YouTube. While P3 revealed that also accessed every single day after going home from school for around 30 minutes, it means that children's language acquisition advances significantly. To sum up, all of the data



mentioned that the frequency of accessing the YouTube channel as the main focus of this present study is influencing children's language acquisition.

### 1.1.3. The Role of Parents in Filtering the Children's Spectacle

This theme refers to the roles of parents in controlling their children in accessing the YouTube content that influence to the students language acquisition implementation. The detail will be presented in Q3 as follows :

"Very instrumental, I will give it to watch YouTube or play cellphones, for example on holidays but when it's time to schedule the Koran then you have to stop first, or if someone is told to stop first, or also when it's time to take a shower, or also be told to clean the bed, washing the dishes and helping me (his mother) somehow had to stop first. And most importantly, I limit myself to watching adult things". (P1)

"Parents install special applications for children. As for if he opens the regular YT application, parents will immediately forbid him if he sees or hears strange behavior from the child. Parents also often do checks to ensure a good viewing certificate. Parents also don't allow him to wear earphones so parents can hear what he's watching". (P2)

"I will guide my child with what he watches, I do not forbid him with what he watches as long as it is good for development and introduction to the outside world". (P3)

Concerning the children's frequency in accessing the content related to the role of parents in preventing and filtering their children. This data showed that parents have the main role particularly their mother. The data from P1 revealed that mother controlled their children in accessing YouTube especially when they schedule to learn, recite Quran, or when there is a duty from their parents the child need to stop it first. The main point of mother control was the adult content that will absolutely affect not just their language but also their psychology.

Likewise, the data from P2 showed that the mother was really protective and preventive in controlling her child in accessing social media particularly YouTube application, in the prelude step that the mother did was that download the YouTube that specifically for kids for her child, even though still allowed to access YouTube but some requirements that the child was not allowed to utilized earphone due to the mother can notice well what the content



is about and afterward, the child watched the YouTube, the mother always checked the history to ensure that her child accessed the good channel. While, the data from P3 demonstrated that this mother was quite flexible which means she did not prohibit a lot as long as good for her child's advancement. From the data above can be concluded that there are two fears from there are language and psychological advancement of their children.

#### 1.1.4. The Children's Reactions after Watching

This theme refers to the children reaction after watching the YouTube contents that they visit frequently. The detail will be presented in Q4 as follows:

"Often hears children using the language of the results of the spectacle, such as "ihh tak na laah, macam tu laah" the sentences he gets from watching the movie Upin & Ipin. And he usually said it spontaneously. There is another sentence that he often uses, such as "Don't call me uncle's little boy" a sentence that is often used because he watches Shifa cartoons and that is what he often uses when communicating with his friends.". (P1)

"His reaction after watching YT is usually to practice and ask a few things related to the show he just watched. For example: He watches videos of children learning to skate. He will remember the parts or support tools for roller skating. He will also remember movements or forms of exercise for beginners. Then he will ask his parents to buy him roller skates and self-training until he is able to master rollerblading on a self-taught". (P2)

"My son usually remembers words from youtube which he thinks are good or unique, like a big teacher whose real words are big, and from the game channel he remembers the word guys, this comes from a youtuber who greets viewers". (P3)

Regarding the children's reactions after watching the YouTube channel in terms of the words, phrases, or sentences that they produce in daily interactions. The data from P1 showed that the mother on some occasions listened to her child that produced the sentences spontaneously such as "Ihh tak naa laah" that was the sentence from Upin & Ipin cartoon and "Jangan panggil aku anak kecil paman" from the Shifa serial movie cartoon, even though those did not refer to the Indonesian or English but it includes the language acquisition for and the mother realized that the sentences her child imitated certainly from YouTube.

In addition, the data from P2 revealed that this child was quite critical and easy to remember something from her spectacle as an instance showed that she remembered every little part of skates, hence she was asking his mother to purchase it for her. She knew that from YouTube. She also asked many things when she discover something new from YouTube. While the data from P3 stated that is quite from P1 such as the sentence from Upin & Ipin “Cikgu besaa” and also “guys” that he found from YouTubers in greeting the viewers. Hence, all the data indicates that YouTube has a strong impact on children's language acquisition advancement significantly.

#### **1.1.5. Children Language Acquisition Implementation**

This theme refers to the children language acquisition implementation after watching the YouTube contents that they visit ferquently. The detail will be presented in Q5 as follows :

“Sometimes when watching, he immediately imitates the style or sentence he is watching, for example watching Upin & Ipin, he immediately practices it simultaneously with the cartoon, but he prefers to watch cartoons than others.”. (P1).

“He often uses or imitates the dialect of the language he is watching. Once upon a time he suddenly called his mother with the word "Mother" which is the word usually used for people who live in urban areas. Other words like using “I & You, Loe & Gue”. (P2)

“My son mentions unique languages to his friends”. (P3)

Considering the language implementation acquired from their watching, the data from P1 demonstrated that this participant implemented directly which means while he watches while mentions the sentence that he gets from the spectacle. To begin, the data from P2 mentioned that this participant implemented in her environment or her close people such their parents or her friend with slang language which are used frequently by the people who live in the big city. Other than that, the data from P3 showed that he implemented his words/sentences to those friends in daily interactions. It shows that language acquisition demands the utilization of either interpersonal or intrapersonal communications.

### 1.1.6. The Children's Vocabulary Progress Before and After

This theme refers to the children vocabulary progress or like their vocabulary bank before and after watching the YouTube contents that they visit frequently. The detail will be presented in Q6 as follows :

"Very influential, before he watched YouTube when he was little he still often used the language that I often taught, his teachers at school and his friends, but after I allowed him to watch YouTube there were some words that he actually got from YouTube and I knew that this is what he got from watching YouTube". (P1)

"Youtube's influence on his vocabulary is not that big because his parents and the environment have taught him before actively watching. However, with the YT spectacle, his vocabulary adds to the diversity of vocabulary. Plus he doesn't only watch YT but there are several other apps like TikTok and Tv". (P2)

"Very influential, the language that my child speaks is more varied. By watching youtube, my child learns and mentions words that he thinks are unique to his friends". (P3)

The last data from interviews attempt to excavate deeply regarding the children's vocabulary bank progress before and after watching the YouTube channel. This context refers to the final influence of children's language acquisition based on the YouTube channels. Based on the data from P1 revealed that YouTube has an effect on language acquisition, it seems that before the P1 is touched with YouTube, the source of his language is from the environment or the people who interact with him frequently such as parents, teachers, and friends, however afterward YouTube become one of the sources of his language. In contrast, the data from P2 showed that the influence of YouTube did not have a big influence due to her parents having stimulated her in terms of language acquisition, and also P2 accessed the other applications such as TikTok and TV. Meanwhile, the data from P3 is quite supporting the data from P1 which said has an influence on children's language acquisition.

## 1.2 Finding from observation

This kind of instrument tends to seek the other phenomena of the children's language acquisition advancement process in their daily interactions.

This instrument attempts the information supports the interviews data. Generally, analysis of the observation data with three children by the researcher brought forth two major categories from that clustered under a major theme .(Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). The major theme was Language Acquisition and its related categories were Environment and YouTube.

**Environment:** The researcher found matter related to the children's language acquisition such as *Tarik sist, semongko, and bacot*:

"Because this child lives next to my boarding house and I am very familiar with him and his parents, besides I saw the sentences from the results he watched with children's cartoons, I also often heard him use slang such as "bacot" and I'm sure this is not in terms of spectacle but because of the social environment. Because the association of children here can be said to be close to market conditions, the language culture will automatically follow itself. I've also heard the phrase "*Tarik sist, semongko*" I'm sure this sentence is not only from a social perspective but seen on YouTube on a friend's cellphone. Because maybe at home he is limited, but what about his environment and friends who already have cellphones, then he will automatically follow".(Maykut & Morehouse, 1994)

In this observation is not found the influence of YouTube by the child language acquisition but discovered another language phenomenon of the child language. This data showed that the P1 is not just influenced by the YouTube platform but the environment. In this case, he mingled with his friends and found out many new vocabularies and he utilized it. Due to the access to smartphones in his house being limited, certainly, he can access YouTube or some kind of applications from his friends. It indicates that the environment also influences children's language acquisition, however, in this study the environment jus is an output concept, in terms of employe the children language. Another data come from P2, for the detail presented in the following:

**YouTube:** The researcher found the duration of watching on YouTube became the thing matter:

"She usually watches small children's youtube channels in the form of vlogs playing daily, one of which is YT Channel Leika Garudita, Coco Melon, educational videos for children such as Bobo Magazine. She watched from 20 minutes to 2 hours at most. She usually watches after finishing schoolwork, studying, reading the Koran, or homework given by his parents. She is usually given a cellphone to watch as a reward for the work he has

completed. Parents have installed a special YT application for children and forbid opening regular YT which if caught, and then he will get a penalty of not being given a cellphone to watch or being limited/reduced in viewing duration. She usually watches closely with her parents, and her parents hear the sound of the video being watched". (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994)

This data revealed that discovery is still consistent concerning the influence of YouTube in children's language acquisition. The data showed that the researcher found the P2 accessed about the kid's vlog on YouTube such as channel of Leika Garudita and Coco Melon and also the educative videos for children such as lullaby magazine. She watched the channel for around 20 minutes until 2 hours. However, it is not escaped the parents notice certainly, the parents accord her access as the reward of what she has been done either studying or working in terms of the demands from parents. Additionally, the rule that the child should obey is watching YouTube near with her parents. It indicates that parents are really protective and prevents their children of language and psychological advancement from accessing the YouTube platform. Whereas, P3 in the same category as P2 was revealed such:

**YouTube:** The researcher found a substantial effect on the using channels such Upin & Ipin as children daily language (cakap, macam, apalah kau): "Participants are children who are quite active. Every evening always play. I see that the language of the children in their environment uses quite a variety of languages because they use the Upin & Upin language, where the language is Malay such as speaking, kind, whatever you are. Sometimes participants use the dialect of the Bugis regional language". (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994)

This last observation data discovered that P3 is an active child and plays with his friend every afternoon. With this instrument, the researcher found that the various vocabulary or languages appeared in this child's environment when he gets mingling. Particularly, this data showed that even though this participant mingles with his friends but he still utilized the sentences that he got from YouTube channel such as Bahasa Melayu from Upin & Ipin cartoon, and this third participant and first participant categorized

normal level in language acquisition acquiring level, while the second participant quite in higher level.

## 2.1 Discussion

This section reveals the discussion from the research findings which attempts to elaborate and describe the children's language acquisitions advancement based on YouTube platform influence. This section also considers, relates, and compares with the previous finding as presented by the prelude chapter. In other words, the results are discussed concerning the previous research and their contribution to the psycholinguistic context in terms of children's language acquisition advancement.

The data attained through two instruments were interviews of the participants' parents and observations which divided into six parts focused areas were YouTube content that the children watch frequently, the frequency of their watching, the role of parents, children' reactions after watching, the language implementation acquiring from their watching, and the children vocabulary bank progress. To discuss more this current issue, the researcher will convey a brief analysis of the prelude finding.

Since YouTube has existed in the current age, it has been a platform for all people around the globe either as a source for learning or for earning money. This present study tends to excavate more regarding YouTube as the platform for learning, especially for children as the main focus in this study, in other words how the YouTube platform can be influencing children's language acquisition. Concerning the YouTube content that the children watch frequently was the primary topic in this discussion due to navigating the consent of the children during accessed the YouTube platform.

Hence, based on the interviews and observations data demonstrated that the majority of participants consumed kids' channels especially cartoons as the main spectacle sources of their age and it categorized as normal advancement. In contrast, there is one participant that quite higher



advancement of language acquisition due to besides the kid channel she accessed, she either accessed the kid's vlog that enable her to attain more new vocabulary such as slang that is actually quite premature for her in her age.

For measuring children's language acquisition advancement of those contents, it needs to notice the frequency of their watching or how often the children accessed the contents. Based on the data showed that almost every single day the participants accessed the YouTube platform, it shows that the possibility for the children to gain some new languages from YouTube is higher categorization, particularly until two hours a day. Certainly, it seems on Children's reactions after watching the contents.

In terms of children's reactions after watching revealed that all of the participants produce some sentences that they found from YouTube, such as the sentences "*Ihh tak na laah*" that they got from the Upin & Ipin serial or "*Cekguu besaa*". Nevertheless, one of the participants showed the other attitude that she could remember well all of part of skates and she produce it with his mother. It indicates that they implemented those languages in their environment, and also revealed that the YouTube platform enables to stimulate the users about various things including the source of language acquisition particularly children in the age of their language development.

The language implementation acquired from their watching seems that they practice in their own ways, such as directly drilling the languages that they acquire from their spectacle while they watched and also practice with their close people especially their parents and friends. On some occasions certainly, their parents got subconscious at that moment about what their children said. It indicates except the input of language needs also to practice it as an output process even spontaneously or in a subconscious process. Therefore, it should not be escaped from parents' role in controlling their psychology and language advancement in their age development.

Considering the role of parents in filtering or preventing their children from the negative word or language in their advancement are extremely crucial.



The data showed that the parents always notice and restrict their spectacle in order to always control. Occasionally, parents allowed their children to access YouTube not as their main source in learning but just for reward or for having fun, in terms of not for searching the explanation of material as an instance. However, this study just focuses on whether there is an influence or impact for the children's language acquisition to add their vocabulary bank in their brain.

Hence, the last discussion reveals the children's vocabulary bank progress. There are two discoveries in this context, which is said that YouTube very influence for students language acquisition, and there is not a big influence. From the big influence stated that there is a tendency of revolution of their children vocabulary from the parents as the main sources of children language into the additional source such YouTube. On other hand stated that does not have a big influence due to there are other applications that enable the children to acquire language.

However, previous discoveries such as Naumann (2020) state that YouTube videos have implications for the number of skills acquired by children (e.g., researching, creating, curating, sharing, showcasing) marks the magnitude of the influence of YouTube on children, especially in children's language acquisition. Which in his several previous studies attempted to propose a YouTube video design for children considering the positive contribution that occurred (Neumann, 2015).

Sari and Margana (2019) in their research also expressed approval of the use of YouTube as a critical medium in children's language learning for self-study skills that are interesting and easy to access in this 21st-century, as seen from the children's increased speaking ability. Regarding with, YouTube also provides the experience of children's understanding of the meaning of language that is obtained, revealed from their environment who is aware of the child's language changes (Davidson et al, 2014).

Aside from that, most of these studies also indicate to the findings of this study lead to the involvement of people around, especially parents, as child

controllers in the child's language acquisition process through the YouTube influence.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussions, the researcher has made a final conclusion dealing with the YouTube's influence on language acquisition. The conclusion can be explained as follows. This study showed that the possibility of the children to gain some new languages from YouTube is higher categorization when the frequency of watching YouTube also high. The result of this study indicates that the duration of watching is directly proportional to the level of children language acquisition development. The variations in children's vocabulary are influenced by the type of content. In another case, YouTube platforms enables to stimulate the users about various things including the source of language acquisition particularly children in the age of their language development. In addition, except the input of language (YouTube) needs to practice in daily life of children as an output process spontaneously or in a subconscious process. Therefore, the parents's role in directing the development of psychology and language in childrens' development is also necessary.

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