

Review of Literature: English-Arabic Code Switching and Identity in Bilingual Saudis Living in Saudi Arabia.

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ABSTRACT:- This research attempted to examine whether these claims are true. The study interviewed 10 Saudi bilinguals who code-switch between English and Arabic. 5 of them were males and the other 5 were females. In order to conduct a comparative research, 6 of the participants were residents of large cities and 4 of them were residents of small cities in Saudi Arabia. The research found that bilingual Saudis code-switch in professional settings and they believe it is normal and expected. In casual settings, on the other hand, code-switching takes place according to the topic. Further, bilingual Saudis believe that they identify with English as well as Arabic and they do not believe that speaking English erases their Saudi identity or distort it. Finally, the research found that it is normal for large cities to necessitate the use of code-switching with the availability of non-Arabic speakers in public places as well as professional settings.

Key words: Code switching; Code mixing; Saudi English learners; Identity; Bilingualism.

I. THEORETICAL INTRODUCTION

In general, native speakers construct identities such as woman, man, mother etc. via doing specific actions and showing some sorts of effective stances. Similarly, speakers use verbal acts in order to construct their own identities as well as their social identities. For that reason, the relationship between language and social identity is mediated rather than being a direct one (Ochs, 1993). It is also indicated that the correlation between social identity and language behaviour is not a fixed one and that the linguistic structures are not allocated to the scope of one or another social identity (Ochs, 1993).

However, it is worth mentioning that a considerable amount of social identification is achieved via language choice. As the speakers choose one of the languages in the linguistic repertoire, they show and describe the social relationship with the people they are interacting with. At the social level, a whole group of people and sometimes complete nations might be identified by the language or languages they use. As a result, language, culture, religion and history are primary elements of national identity (Wei and Li, 2000). According to Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985), language choice for a multilingual speaker is a powerful way of communication as well as an element of identity. In the sense that when a person says a thing in one language and there is an easier way to say that intended meaning in another language, the speaker is attempting to reconnect with people, and situations. Thus, language choice allows people to reserve and change their ethnic boundaries and personal relationships (Wei and Li, 2000).

This research aims to discuss whether code-switching in bilingual Saudis in Saudi Arabia is becoming more and more spread and what people in Saudi Arabia feel about the increasing use of English from the viewpoint of bilingual Saudis. According to Findlow (2006), there is a linguistically implied thought in the higher education in the Arab Gulf that the use of Arabic implies localism, tradition, emotions and religion while the use of English implies internationalism, business, material status and secularism. The aim of this research is to explore some of these ideas and find out to what extent they are true for the chosen population (English-Arabic bilingual Saudis residing in larger and smaller cities). The research will tackle internationalism through the notion of westernisation and globalisation, and it will tackle business and education through the notion of professional settings.

The variables which this study will attempt to tackle are the variables of region and gender. The study will compare the data collected from participants coming from different regions (larger cities and smaller cities) in Saudi Arabia and will compare answers according to gender (male and female). The research will attempt to

explain in what situations bilingual Saudis code-switch and what the reasons behind code-switching are. It will also find out how they identify with each language and what attitudes they have towards these languages. The research hopes that the findings will contribute in the understanding and knowledge of identity and code-switching in Saudi Arabia. The research also hopes that it can be a cornerstone or a turning point in the perspective and view of code-switching into English in Saudi Arabia.

Language and identity, as mentioned earlier, have been the concern of sociolinguistic scholars for a long time. The case of Saudi Arabia is a unique one as language is associated with religion, culture and values. The research will tackle the problem of whether identity is truly distorted from the viewpoints of Arabic-English bilingual Saudis themselves.

The study will provide background information about code-switching and its relation with identity. The paper will also attempt to ask questions and later answer these questions. The Methods will be described, through presenting the context and setting of the study, the study design will also be specified. In the Methods section, there will also be a description of the participants, the sampling strategy, data collection and data analysis. The results and discussion will be presented through reporting the collected data, describing the participants' answers, the key findings as well as the secondary findings. Further, there will be a discussion of the findings and their similarities with other studies in addition to a statement of the implications of the results. In the end, there will be an analysis of the strengths and limitations of the study along with the conclusion of the study.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Code Switching and the Markedness Model

Code switching can be divided to four types: marked, unmarked, sequential and exploratory (Mabule, 2015). In Myers-Scotton's markedness model (1998:4), markedness refers to choosing one linguistic variety over another. The marked choice of code switching refers to the way the way the speaker distances themselves from the rights and obligations (RO), for example in a formal situation. The unmarked choice is related to the way the speaker code switches in accordance with the situation. the sequential choice occurs when switching is stimulated by the situation factors. The exploratory choice, on the other hand, takes place when the unmarked choice is not clear so the speakers are not certain about the RO set (Mabule, 2015). This section will focus on the marked model. Despite the fact that markedness can be obvious in a language, its definitions are not sufficient and it is usually considered a part of an input model where markedness is established by frequency (Alotaibi, 2018 as cited in Kettemann, 1993). As for transfer of markedness, it is believed that there is actually no transfer from the native language. The truth is that there is either no transfer from the native language or that the unmarked forms from the native language are transferred to L2 (Alotaibi, 2018). In any interaction, there is usually one linguistic variety that participants consider unmarked choice and that they have a cognitive or communicative competence to determine such choices. As a result, switching to a certain choice of linguistic variety is not arbitrary. In fact, the choice of codes can reveal the relationship between the participants (Gross, 2000). The Markedness Model is a rationally-based model. It also implies that all speakers generally have a markedness evaluator in their cognitive wiring. This component is the reason behind their ability to conceptualise markedness. Consequently, they are able to develop three capacities. First, their understanding of the applicable linguistic choices for a certain interaction, their understanding that the markedness ordering is changeable and that they are able to give related interpretations of all the choices (Myers-Scotton and Bolonyai, 2001). Furthermore, one of the major premises of the Markedness Model is that, as mentioned earlier, participants' choice of code is purposeful and that their selection can be explained assuming that they are rational actors (Gross, 2000). Myers-Scotton gives many examples suggesting the premises that humans are wired to change code choices in negotiations. They use these linguistic choices as means to reach others and their perception of self (Myers-Scotton, 1993).

A consistent theory of language choice and code switching requires clarifying the relationship between community networks; or the settings where language choice happens, in addition to the wide social and economic structure (Wei and Li, 2000). The Markedness Model, which was proposed by Myers-Scotton (1993), was an effort to integrate the micro and the macro views into research on code-switching. The Markedness Model indicates that an utterance relies on the specific social setting that is generated by interaction. The aspects of this frame relies on some variables such as the relationship between speakers, the setting, the topic and the goal of the interaction (Gross, 2000). Still, the model is largely based on Fishman's normative framework (1972), which states that language choice in multilingual speech is not arbitrary (Boztepe, 2003).

Code switching vs Code Mixing

Code-switching and code-mixing are two terms which can overlap. (Mahdi, Saadon and Al-Azzawi, 2018). Scholars such as Amuda (1989), Atoye (1994) and Belly (1971) had many attempts to define code switching and code mixing. However, Hymes (1971) described code switching as a term that refers to the use of two

languages or more, the variety of a language or speech styles (Mabule, 2015). Code switching and code mixing are both used across the world as they occur when two languages are used in one speech or utterance (Mabule, 2015). As code switching is the mixing of words, phrases and sentences from two different linguistic varieties into the same speech event, code mixing can be defined as embedding of many linguistic units including affixes, words, phrases and clauses as participants need to balance what they hear with what they comprehend (Ayeomoni, 2006). Code mixing, however, is the expressions where a mix of the grammar of two languages is used with no change in the grammar of the first language used. Wardhaugh (1992: 107-107) describes conversational code mixing as the mix of two languages on purpose without change in the topic. He also demonstrates that code mixing is generally used a marker of solidarity in multilingual communities (Mabule, 2015) Hence, code-switching tends to be inter-sentential while code-mixing is intra-sentential (Tay, 1989). In the following example, there a conversation between colleagues in Sesotho. It shows how the speakers code-switch and code-mix between the two languages.

Person 1:

(1a) *Ek voelnie lekker nieen het virBoss gevra of ek maar kanhuis toe gaan. Ek gaan10 o'clock loop, so saljysorgvir die allocations asseblief.*

Thanks!!

(I don't feel well and I asked the Boss if I can go home. I'm going to leave at 10 o'clock, so will you please do the allocations?)

(Thanks!)

Person 2:

(1b) *Mmotse gore a dire diallocationstseopele a tsamaya. A kere o kgopetseBoss? Or botsisaBoss gorediallocationsdi tlodirake mang?*

(Tell her she must do the allocations before she leaves. Didn't she said she had asked the Boss for permission to leave? Or ask the Boss who is going to do the allocations?) (Mabule, 2015)

Code-switching and code-mixing constitute what can be called bilingual styles. However, as code-switching is mainly a stylistic-rhetorical practice which should be analysed in pragmatic and conversation analytic manner, scrutinising code-mixing needs grammatical investigation. Different from code-switching, it needs a high competence of bilingualism (Auer, 2010).

In general, code-mixing is usually considered an alternative term for code-switching. Still, Maschler (1998: 125) suggested that a code-mixing or mixed code refers to the case when two languages are spoken and then a third one emerges as a new code through incorporating the two languages (Mahdi, Saadoun and Al-Azzawi, 2018). In fact, the causes of code-switching and code-mixing can be sociolinguistic or psycholinguistic. One example can be, as discussed earlier, bilingualism or language contact which cause borrowing of words and mixing two languages. Other causes can be status, integrity, pride, prestige, professionalism, modernisation and ranking (Ayeomoni, 2006).

Language and Identity

Since code-switching is an inescapable aspect of bilingualism, it can also be considered the most innovative characteristic of a bilingual speech. Kaplan et al. (1990) suggested that code-switching has been able to develop to constitute considerable sociolinguistic phenomena. Further, code-switching shows language interaction and difference and that it is a function of the community as well as the individual (Badir, 1995). To put code-switching in the right context, it is also important to understand the concept of 'speech community' and remember the aforementioned codes of 'we code' and 'they code' which were suggested by Gumperz (1982). These codes, as mentioned earlier, refer to the identity relations that bilinguals can have in the sense that the we-code is linked with home, intimacy and solidarity while the they-code is linked with formality, authority and larger social distance (Hall and Nilep, 2015).

Language is not merely a tool for transfer of messages. This can be obvious in multilingual communities as many groups have their own language distinguishing themselves from others such as the Flemish in Belgium and the Gujaratis in India. Sociolinguistics also argues that languages have their own social meanings and connotations. In tackling the relationship between language and identity in bilingual communities, sociolinguistics refers to the group's identity as *cultural* or *ethnic* identity, or ethnicity (Appel and Muysken, 2005). Language accounts for a fundamental part of the way people view themselves and their identity (Edwards, 2009). Traditionally speaking, linguists and philosophers agreed that the purpose of languages is mainly for communication and representation, classifying things in the minds of individuals through the use of language. However, linguistic identity is a classification which makes this traditional dual distinction less clear-cut (Joseph, 2004). In fact, language is related to the religious, national and ethnic identities of individuals and communities. This means that language and identity are closely and complexly related (Edwards, 2009).

The term *identity* denotes sameness. For that reason, it can be anticipated that identity becomes primary when individuals are very similar. However, it is difficult for an external observer to decide when a group of

individuals can be labelled as similar. It is also difficult to determine how categorisation can be made. Consequently, categories of identity which are forced from the outside typically have associations with the observer's position of identity similar to any kind of social reality which can be objectively described (Bucholtz and Hall, 2004).

The attitudes and actions of bilinguals in situations which have risk and transition have a distinct distress and visibility since identities become more obvious when they face threat. Further, these same actions and attitudes can stimulate others and could make a bigger notice that issues of language and identity are not related to ethnics and minorities alone (Edwards, 2009). A great deal of the attention on bilinguals, as theoretically having two separate identities, has been paid. Hamers and Blanc (2000) suggested that there is a shortage of empirical data about the subject. In fact, the vague and uncertain findings of the available studies are not sufficient evidence for the underlying mechanisms. However, reasonable variations in the descriptions of these mechanisms can make the explanation of minor behavioural discrepancies difficult to spot (Edwards, 2013).

It is also worth mentioning that a language can be very valued due to social, subjective or even affective reasons, specifically by the younger generations of immigrants and those who feel proud about their culture. This is one shape of *language loyalty* which shows the relationship between language and the social identity of ethnolinguistic groups. Still, the relationship between language and identity is not that simple. In other words, a specific social, cultural or ethnic identity does not mean having a specific language in turn. In the same way, groups who have a specific language might have interrelated identities (Appel and Muysken, 2005). The truth is that identities and languages are not rigid entities. They are rather distinguished, diverse and variable. Consequently, their relation in some cases can be complicated (Appel and Muysken, 2005). Conversational code-switching and code-mixing are linked to issues of social identity in the sense that bilingual speech is generally established by members as key for other extralinguistic social category. This category can be ethnic or social. Bilingual speakers, consequently, are viewed and tend to view themselves in semiotic constellations. These can be local, regional or national; urban or rural; minority or majority (Auer, 2005). In fact, the approach of teaching of language and identity tends to argue that language establishes and also is established by identities (Ochs, 1993). In this respect, second language learning denotes gaining a second identity (Brown, 1992 as cited in Liang, 2006). Hence, code-switching differs depending on the user, the reason for use and subject of conversation (Liang, 2006).

The study conducted by King and Ganuza (2005) on Chilean Adolescents in Sweden suggested that participants believed that they had a complex social identity in the sense that they are in the procedure of establishing an identity that is both Chilean and Swedish as they belong to both cultures (King and Ganuza, 2005). This might have caused what is referred to 'identity crisis'. This crisis emerged as a result of late modernity, as globalisation theorists refer to it. In addition, as identity plays a major role in everyday life, having different language varieties can contribute in developing more resources for expressing it (Hall and Nilep, 2015). Further, Cummins (2001) argued that language use or linguistic competence is not really an integral part for integration, resistance or educational success for such minorities. It is rather respect, acceptance and equality that matter (Cummins, 2001 as cited in King and Ganuza, 2005).

Although there has been an increased attention on bilingualism in the recent decades, studies conducted on it from the point of view of the speakers and the way individuals comprehend and recognise their experiences, linguistically and culturally are still limited (King and Ganuza, 2005).

Code-switching in Larger and Smaller cities:

In his study on code-switching in Irbid, Jordan, on 145 university students, Badir (1995) used the themes of region, sex, age and education in order to find out the effects of code-switching and the procedure of code-switching among Jordanians. He suggested that variables such as urban, well-educated, female and young were the most affected by English influence. On the other hand, variables such as rural, less-educated, male and old have had the least influence. Further, he noted that sociolinguistic reasons such as need and prestige can also be behind the use of code-switching. The participants also showed disapproval of code-switching and regarded it as damaging to the purity of the Arabic language, the pride of the Jordanian nationality and social identity (Badir, 1995). It is important to note here, for the sake of this research, that that urban refers to the majority where people work in professions, trade and business whereas rural refers to the majority where people work in farming and raising animals (Badir, 1995). In order to differentiate between Badir's (1995) study and the current study, this study will only look at the variables of city size and gender rather than region, sex and age variables. Badir (1995) concluded that code-switching is used in cities more frequently than villages. Still, he found it important to note the sub-categories of cities including rich vs poor areas as richer areas tend to code-switch more frequently than poorer ones. Further, being richer can also lead to higher probability of having better education, which means more frequent code-switching. Badir (1995) also highlights that the gap between city code-switchers and village code-switchers is not as big as the gap between well-educated and less well-educated

code-switchers (Badir, 1995). Furthermore, the variable of sex in the same study did not affect the frequency of code-switching as in variables like education and region (Badir, 1995). In fact, Badir's (1995) study also proves an earlier study conducted by Milroy and Margrain (1980). In this study, it was suggested that the individual tends to use a system of verbal behaviour that is similar to the group or groups they desire to be identified with. In the same way, Lewis (1973) believed that it is universally true to basis for network structure is economic and reserving it is, important for survival as it requires close relationship (Milroy and Margrain, 1980). The truth is, however, very little research has been done on bilingualism and code-switching in comparison with smaller and larger cities, in general. As a result, this makes this research even more significant as it will aim to study a relatively novice issue in the literature of linguistics.

Language and identity in the Gulf and Saudi Arabia

English has become the determiner of prestige in the Saudi society (Pennycook, 1995 as cited in Barnawi and Al-Hawsawi, 2017). It is essential for the process of globalisation. In fact, the Saudi policy regarding English is divided between the need to protect the Arabic language and the need to keep up with globalisation and be part of international communication, science, trade, and politics (Barnawi and Al-Hawsawi, 2017). As English has had a major role and effect in education systems around the world, the same case is true in the Gulf countries. English has also become 'one of the most powerful means of inclusion into or exclusion from further education, employment, or social positions' (pennycook, 2001, 81 as cited in Hopkyns, 2014). In fact, the presence of English as an international language in the UAE, as an example, in addition to the demographic and complex history and face-paced transformation of the country have all caused a cultural fragility (Hopkyns, 2014). Authors such as Al-Issa and Dahan (2011, cited in Hopkyns, 2014) suggested that the abominable role which English has seems to have been planned to distance Arabic from its high status position and power in the local scene, educationally as well as socially (Hopkyns, 2014). In the same way, Suleiman (2004, p. 35) described Arabic as a 'small island that is in danger of being submerged by the foreign linguistic flood'. The linguistic flood he was referring to was English being the lingua franca among the various nationalities that find themselves obliged to communicate in a common language on a daily basis (Hopkyns, 2014). Similarly, Barnawi and Al-Hawsawi (2017) suggested that some Saudis believe that the inclusion of English in the education system is a "conspiracy" to demolish the Arabic language in Saudi Arabia and the Islamic heritage which is an integral part of the language (Barnawi and Al-Hawsawi, 2017). For that reason, the Emiratisation initiative, which the government started, involved Emirati citizens in the workforce as well as naming Arabic the official language of the federal authorities in 2008. Further, that same year was declared 'the year of national identity' in the Emirates (Hopkyns, 2014). Al-Dabbagh (2005) claims that it is a wrong supposition to believe that English is just a neutral force in the cultural battle. He states that language is actually a main means of culture as well as human communication. The truth is that language, culture and identity are all closely related and they are even subject to the 'domino effect'. In other words, if one of them is affected, the other two will be affected as well (Al-Dabbagh, 2005 as cited in Hopkyns, 2014). Similarly, Saudisation, a term used to refer to the procedures of strengthening the action of Saudis in Saudi Arabia, started in the 1990s and is now more vital as Saudis need to have communicative skills in English in order to operate the industry positions (Mahboob and Elyas, 2014). Saudisation aims at investing in the local skills and have less dependence on foreign labour as the percentage of the foreign workforce in Saudi Arabia in 2006 was 72%. Rees et al (2007 p.33) stated that "the dependence on an expatriate workforce has serious long-term political, economic and social consequences". (Mashood, Verhoeven, and Chansarkar, 2009).

In addition, the teaching of English in Saudi Arabia has been affected by the status of English itself in the country. In other words, during the early history of education in Saudi Arabia, there was some unwillingness to teach or accept English and other foreign languages in general. English was only included in some schools and for limited hours in secondary schools. The mentality and inclination in Saudi Arabia has generally been that if there is a lot of English taught in curriculums, this can negatively affect Islam (Elyas and Picard, 2010). On the other hand, Although Abuhamdia (1988) suggested that Arabic has a special ideological basis that can unify and integrate Arabs together, he also believed that Arabic is not affected by the domination of English or French media for science (Abuhamdia, 1988 p.42 as cited in Elyas and Picard, 2010).

Omar and Ilyas (2018) revealed that there is a considerable association between education and age, on the one hand and the acceptance of code switching, on the other. Young educated Saudis tend to have a positive attitude towards code-switching, which, in turn, influences their academic performance (Omar and Ilyas, 2018). For that reason, it is also very common in the present day to hear the Gulf Arabs, especially young women, talking to each other exclusively in English, rather than just code-switching. It is also typical to find Arabs of the Gulf using a mixture of Arabic, Arabic and English or just English. Further, English which is used is a fluent one. In fact, this is generally referred to as *Arabizi*. The special thing about *Arabizi* is the use of English characters in Arabic writing (Yaghan, 2008). In fact, those who use code-switching in this way generally come from a comfortably middle-class background. Further, they usually received their education in local,

international schools which used English as a medium for communication (Holes, 2011). In fact, although there is a sense of achievement for the Arabs of the Gulf about their linguistic skills, there is an agitated sense that the Gulf is facing an identity crisis (Holes, 2011). The potential crisis of identity of the Arabs of the Gulf could be a causal sequence of the linguistic changes they have been going through. Critics also believe that the current Gulf generation could be losing its identification with the local dialect, the language as well as the culture (Holes, 2011). Although language change is an unavoidable process that takes place in languages of the world, the government's policy of Saudi Arabia has always opposed it for reasons of national identity and religion.

Similar to the findings of Barnawi and Al-Hawsawi (2017), HAQ and Smadi (1996) also suggested that some Saudis still have some concerns about the use of English in the country as they believe it has some connotations of westernisation, distancing of the Saudi identity and negatively affecting the religious commitment. (HAQ and Smadi, 1996). Haugen (1971: 288) notes that language is not just a means to express oneself and identity. It is also, according to Hjelmslev (1953), a way to preserve the human individual. In fact, Haugen and Hjelmslev argue, that this is true only when it comes to the native language of the speakers. The study conducted by HAQ and Smadi (1996) studied the response of 1,176 university students who were chosen randomly between the ages 18 and 23. The study supported the arguments proposed by Haugen (1971) and Hjelmslev (1953) and suggested that Saudis tend to use English as a way to express modernisation and advancement. As a result, when some Saudis have concerns about English having a potential negative impact on Arabic, it is totally justifiable and understood. Saudis who have such concerns also believe that there should be more attention paid to Arabic being a language in science and technology and English texts ought to be translated (HAQ and Smadi, 1996). In the end, the study concluded that Saudi university students believe that English does not indicate westernisation. It is only some kind of social prestige and enrichment to their cultural experience and enhancing the economic development of the country (HAQ and Smadi, 1996).

On the other hand, senior officials in the Ministry of education asserted that English is an essential choice for national survival in the twenty-first century. Further, it is also an essential public need. They also suggest that those who oppose the involvement of English in education need to reconsider their attitude (Barnawi and Al-Hawsawi, 2017). In fact, Barnawi and Al-Hawsawi (2017) suggested that although there is a need for including English in the education policy in Saudi Arabia is directed by the global changes. It is also important for the inclusion to be designed and controlled by local intellectual conditions and needs, or else the changes can damage the Arabic language and the Saudi identity. It can also put the national interests of Saudi Arabia at jeopardy (Barnawi and Al-Hawsawi, 2017).

Code-switching Among Male and Female Bilinguals in Saudi Arabia

The variable of gender has not been given much attention in the literature of code-switching. In fact, different studies provide varied results regarding their relationship (Ismail, 2015). For example, similar to Badir (1995), Poplacks's (1980) study on the Puerto Rican speakers of Spanish and English in the city of New York, suggested that code-switching is closely related to gender and that women are more likely to produce intra-sentential switches than men. About 56% of women's switches are intra-sentential whereas just a third of men's switches are intra-sentential (Poplacks, 1980). On the other hand, Cheshire's and Gardner-Chloros's (1998) study, which examined the Greek-Cypriot and the Punjabi communities in Britain, suggested that gender and code-switching have no serious correlation. They suggest that the analysed data revealed that despite the fact code-switching is a nonstandard variety of speech, there is no regular pattern of gender differentiation. However, they also suggest that the unavailability of a regular pattern of sex differences implies that code-switching also has social roles of men and women which largely differ in different communities (Cheshire and Gardner-Chloros, 1998). In the context of Saudi Arabia, however, Ismail (2015) suggested that Saudi women tend to significantly code-switch more than male bilinguals. In a mixed-sex interaction, however, the speakers did not prefer to adapt to the other speaker's switching into English since the interactions in mixed-sex contexts seem to be restricted by the Saudi culture and values (Ismail, 2015).

In fact, the found literature on the subject and the literature provided in this study gives sufficient information about code-switching and identity and the relationship between them. It provided information about a range of languages and cultures. However, there was insufficient information and details about the Saudi society, in specific. The relationship between prestige, professionalism and modernity, on the one hand, and language choice, on the other, have been discussed in literature and also provided in the literature review of this study. However, there were no direct answers to the difference between bilinguals in larger and smaller cities and the way they link prestige and language choice. This study will aim to fill this gap and find an answer to this question. Further, it will attempt to find an answer to the questions related to identity of bilinguals living in larger and smaller cities. The specific questions are provided in the following section.

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