

LANGUAGE POLITENESS STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY LECTURERS AND STUDENTS IN ONLINE LEARNING

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LANGUAGE POLITENESS STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY LECTURERS AND STUDENTS IN ONLINE LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

Politeness is a way to communicate so that speakers do not feel pressured, cornered, and offended. Using polite language makes the speech partners and interlocutors feel respected and comfortable and do not cause misunderstanding. In classroom communication, language politeness is vital to maintain harmonious interactions between students and lecturers. It is not merely needed during face-to-face learning, but it is also required during online learning. This study investigates the language politeness strategies students and university lecturers employ during the online learning processes. The researchers in this study used a qualitative approach. The data were collected through conducting observation, recording, and field notes. This study found that several language politeness strategies were employed by the students and the lecturer, namely: the maxim of tact, the maxim of generosity, the maxim of appreciation, the maxim of humility, the maxim of agreement, and the maxim of sympathy. The findings of this study provide implications to enrich the knowledge relevant to the theories and principles concerning effective language politeness strategies used during the learning process.

Key Words: language; politeness; online; learning

ABSTRAK

Kesantunan adalah cara berkomunikasi agar penutur tidak merasa tertekan, terpojok, dan tersinggung. Menggunakan bahasa yang santun membuat mitra tutur dan lawan bicara merasa dihargai dan nyaman serta tidak menimbulkan kesalahpahaman. Dalam komunikasi kelas, kesantunan berbahasa sangat penting untuk menjaga keharmonisan interaksi antara mahasiswa dan dosen. Tidak hanya dibutuhkan saat pembelajaran tatap muka, tetapi juga dibutuhkan saat pembelajaran daring. Penelitian ini mengkaji strategi kesantunan berbahasa yang digunakan mahasiswa dan dosen selama proses pembelajaran daring. Peneliti dalam penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, pencatatan, dan catatan lapangan. Penelitian ini menemukan beberapa strategi kesantunan berbahasa yang digunakan oleh mahasiswa dan dosen, yaitu: maksim kebijaksanaan, maksim kedermawanan, maksim penghargaan, maksim kerendahan hati, maksim kesetujuan, dan maksim simpati. Temuan penelitian ini memberikan implikasi untuk memperkaya pengetahuan yang relevan dengan teori dan prinsip mengenai strategi kesantunan berbahasa yang efektif yang digunakan selama proses pembelajaran.

Kata Kunci: bahasa; kesantunan; daring; pembelajaran

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INTRODUCTION

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Language is a communication system that uses arbitrary vocal symbols, which can be strengthened by accurate bodily movements (Radhika, 2017).⁶ Language as a communication tool is the most effective way to convey thoughts, opinions, intentions, feeling, and goals to other people. In a broad sense, language is used to deliver messages or meanings from one person to another (Handayani et al., 2019). Therefore, an excellent ability to use language in communication is essential.

Theoretically, everyone can use a language to establish good communication with others (Astawa et al., 2018). In creating good communication, everyone must maintain ethics in communicating so that communication goals can be achieved. In using a language as a tool of communication, language users must also pay attention to the rules of language, both linguistic and pragmatic rules, so that the purpose of communicating can be achieved (Gladkova et al., 2019).

Language is used to express opinions, thoughts, feeling, ideas, and arguments to other people. Therefore, increasing language skills is essential to establish effective communication. In this case, effective communication can be done using several strategies, for

example, using the right choice of words, polite expressions, pleasantries, and suitable sentence structures (Ifechelobi, 2014). These strategies should be carried out by speakers and interlocutors so that the communication process can run well and the message to be conveyed can be adequately achieved (Sari et al., 2020).

In communicating, language politeness is needed so that communication becomes more effective (Yeomans et al., 2019). Language politeness is the main prerequisite in the communication process. Language politeness is needed to maintain social relations (Elhadi, 2018). Language politeness is one of the parameters of language civilization. Language politeness is one of the dimensions of education that needs attention to realize sustainable educational development (Mantra et al., 2020).

Regarding classroom communication, Astawa et al. (2017) emphasized that students need to consider their language choice and should be able to employ appropriate communication strategies. Additionally, students should be able to communicate based on the situational and sociocultural context that applies to the campus environment (Fitriyah et al., 2020). Therefore, students need to understand and be able to use various forms of

language politeness according to the sociocultural context that applies to academic interactions (Anyanwu, 2016).

Nowadays, students are required to have better communication skills due to the shift of communication strategies through the use of technology certainly affects the communication strategies in the classroom. Consequently, these changes also affect students' language politeness patterns in the learning process (Shamahmudova, 2021). It indicates that politeness in language use is crucial to maintaining good social relations.

During online learning, the pattern of communication between lecturers and students has changed (Zarei & Fathi, 2020). Intensive study concerning language politeness in online learning should be carried out more comprehensively because the use of diction and sentences, and discourse are now different from face-to-face learning (Kebritchi et al., 2017). There need to be more communication strategies and language politeness used in online learning. Moreover, communication has also affected the distance, time in delivering the message and communication technology used during online learning (Widiastuti et al., 2021).

However, online learning provides some benefits for the success of learning

because the learning process can be assessable to anybody. Moreover, online learning activities can challenge students because using various media and applications to support the learning process (Mantra et al., 2021). Applications widely used in online learning are google meet, zoom, google classroom, WhatsApp, and various other applications that are considered easy to use to conduct learning activities (Putra et al., 2020). The change in the learning model from face-to-face to online is a new habit for educators and students (Rahayu & Wirza, 2020). Learning patterns have changed drastically, which also changed the patterns of communication.

Furthermore, the changes in communication patterns cause changes in language politeness used in classroom interaction (Widya, 2018). Therefore, implementing language politeness during online learning became the focus of this research. It was done because, based on observations made by researchers during online learning, students tend to violate language politeness. Behind the ease of communicating through technological media, lecturers and students must still follow the principles of linguistic politeness in the language (Rahmi, 2020).

The speech acts used during online learning consist of several components that interact with each other to obtain an effective interaction. Speech acts are one of the pragmatic concepts that produce social acts (Shamahmudova, 2021). A speech act is an action that is displayed through speech in the communication process by complying with the principles of language politeness (Ningsih et al., 2020). In essence, language politeness is closely related to the use of the six maxims, namely, the maxim of wisdom, the maxim of generosity, the maxim of appreciation, the maxim of humility, the maxim of agreement, and the maxim of sympathy (Kurniawan, 2018).

The politeness of student speech acts in character education has values that are very important to understand the ethics or character of a student; this can be seen through the way he interacts with the teacher in the learning process (Ifechelobi, 2014), especially online learning. In the learning process, politeness of speech acts dramatically influences the learning outcomes. Politeness is essential in reflecting the speaker's character (Nurjanah, 2017). This politeness is an educator's effort to build a close relationship with students in managing online teaching and learning activities. Variations in the use of forms of politeness in language show

that expressions of politeness are based on various purposes and functions (Fitriah & Hidayat, 2018).

Several previous studies have been conducted concerning language politeness used in the classroom, which revealed that language politeness is undoubtedly essential to establish effective communication (Nurjanah, 2017; Ifechelobi, 2014; Fitriyah et al., 2020). The similarity of this research lies in the study of language politeness that uses the principle of politeness and investigates the language politeness that occurred during the learning process. Furthermore, the previous studies mainly investigated maxims employed by teachers and students during face-to-face learning. However, this study focused on investigating maxims used by the lecturer and university students during online learning. Moreover, this study also critically analyzed the six maxims, namely the maxim of tact, the maxim of generosity, the maxim of humility, the maxim of appreciation, the maxim of agreement, and the maxim of sympathy. It is done to ensure that all utterances spoken during the online learning process are analyzed to comply with the indicators of the practical maxims. Therefore, this research is deemed necessary because it has educative implications for students and teachers to create more effective

communication during learning. Learning processes could be successful if each student can understand and use the language politeness.

Literature Review

Politeness is a rule of behaviour determined and mutually agreed upon by a particular community, so politeness is a prerequisite for social behaviour (Syafrizal & Putri, 2020). The essence of language politeness is our ethics in socializing in society, or where we are, by using language and choosing good words, and paying attention to where, when, and to whom we speak because language is culture. Therefore, to understand a language properly, people must understand the culture (Fitriah & Hidayat, 2018).

Some theories discuss language politeness, such as politeness theory by Yule & Widdowson (1996), which states that our speech will sound polite to our listeners or interlocutors if three rules must be obeyed, namely formality, aloofness, and hesitancy. These rules should be obeyed in such a way that communication becomes harmonious.

Politeness is a property positioned with speech. In this case, according to the interlocutor's opinion, the speaker does not exceed his rights or deny fulfilling his obligations. At the same time, respect is part of the activity that

serves as a symbolic means to express appreciation regularly (Sari et al., 2020).

Furthermore, in this study, the researchers chose to use the theory of politeness principles suggested by Leech (2014). The researcher uses Geoffrey Leech's theory because this theory is more appropriate than the other theories related to language politeness. Besides, Geoffrey Leech's theory also has six maxims of language politeness principles, which are usually unknowingly often applied in the learning process. Leech (2014) describes the politeness principle as the following six maxims: the tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, and agreement maxim, sympathy maxim. Leech (2014) in his book states that politeness is a study of how something utterance has meaning in a situation where there is a willingness of language users to communicate. In his theory, a language situation depends on permanent factors, such as age, status, and roles.

Language politeness is one way to create harmony in social life. Language politeness is a system of interpersonal relationships designed to facilitate interaction by minimizing the contradictions and confrontations inherent in humans. This conflict avoidance is carried out by language that pleases the interlocutor. Creating

polite language must be distinct from the context of the speech, social factors, and culture.

METHOD

Research design

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This study employed a qualitative research design with descriptive analysis. The qualitative study was merely conducted to reveal the existing natural phenomena (Taylor et al., 2015). The data were in the form of language politeness strategies used by the lecturer and the students during online learning. Online classroom observations were conducted to quantitative data required data for this study. This research design was considered appropriate to collect the necessary data to determine the language politeness strategies employed by lecturers and students during online learning in higher education.

37 Research site and participants

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This study was conducted in English Education Study Program at a private university in Bali. The participants of the study were the English lecturers and the students of the English Education Study Program. The total number of participants was 40 students.

Data collection and analysis

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The data of this research were collected by observation method, recording technique, and field note method. The data in this study are the utterances spoken by students and lecturers. The researchers were passive participants because they were not involved in the learning activity; the researcher attended the class merely as observers. When the activity started, the researchers recorded the classroom interactions. It was done so that it could be heard repeatedly. It becomes a tool for re-checking the correctness of the data that has been previously recorded. In addition, the researcher recorded every utterance related to the purpose of the problem, namely utterances that met the principles of politeness in language, namely the maxim of tact, maxim of generosity, maxim of appreciation, the maxim of humility, the maxim of agreement, and maxim of sympathy.

The analysis technique was carried out by examining all available data from several sources. Then the next step was to perform data reduction, which was carried out by making abstractions. The next step was to arrange them into units and then categorize them in the next step. The final stage of this analysis was interpreting the data to manage the interim results of this research

(Hennink et al., 2020). The steps used in the data analysis of this research start with identifying, classifying, and describing data on student-lecturer language politeness in online learning communication utterances. After that, the research data were drawn to conclusions based on the results of the data analysis.

The data analysis was carried out by referring to the following steps. (1) The data transcribed from the recording is then selected. Data selection was made by marking the data that needed to be analyzed. The data that has been collected needs to be re-selected. It is done to separate the required and unneeded data. (2) The data that has been selected were then classified based on the problems that have been formulated. The data were classified by grouping the data based on the six maxims studied, namely the maxim of wisdom, the maxim of generosity, the maxim of humility, the maxim of appreciation, the maxim of agreement, and the maxim of sympathy. (3) Data analysis was conducted to determine the politeness principle based on the division of the six maxims. Furthermore, the discussion of the data was done descriptively by explaining the amount of data obtained and the form of use of language politeness by student lecturers to provide valid and reliable findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This study dealt with language politeness used by the students and lecturers in this online class. It examined six maxims, namely the maxim of tact, the maxim of generosity, the maxim of humility, the maxim of appreciation, the maxim of agreement, and the maxim of sympathy. The data from this research can be presented as the following.

Maxim of Tact

The maxim of tact is that the speaker tries to speak attentively and consistently seeks to limit harm to others and increase the gain to others. The principle of the maxim of tact or the maxim of wisdom is that the speaker can reduce or minimize losses to others and increase or increase profits to other parties. The speaker using this maxim in discussion activities is characterized by speech that does not impose personal opinions, uses subtle and straightforward diction in asking questions, and answers such as sorry, thank you, and please, not to be sarcastic in asking or giving opinions. In the following speech, the maxim of wisdom is found.

Lecturer: well, to do the assignment today, you can ask in the WhatsApp group. If you

need help understanding, you can ask me in the WhatsApp group by writing a question or using a voice note.

Context: The speech event above occurred at a class meeting in an online English class. The lecturer explained that students might ask questions through the WhatsApp group if the students need help understanding how to do the assignment.

The principle of the maxim of tact in the speech should adhere to the principle of minimizing benefits for themselves and increasing the benefits of others when communicating. If, in speaking, people adhere to the maxim of wisdom, they will be able to avoid envy, jealousy, and other attitudes that are less polite to the interlocutor.

Maxim of Generosity

This politeness strategy is used to express a speech act to show a sense of giving in which the speaker shows sacrifice for others by reducing his personal needs. Placing himself in a place that is below or in a lower position implies that the individual is caring, generous, and generous towards others. In the following speech, the Generosity Maxim is found.

Lecturer: Why are so many people going in and out of zoom today? Do I have to wait another 10 minutes before starting the lesson?

Student: I am sorry, sir. The signal is not good today, sir. There are some of my friends whose signal is still disturbed. I will tell them to join again, ok, sir?

Context: The speech event above occurred at the beginning of the lecture when the lecturer checked each student's attendance. The lecturer saw some students go out and enter zoom. Lecturers, with complete generosity, gave the students to go back into zoom and wait another 10 minutes to start lectures.

¹² The characteristic of the Generosity maxim is to minimize benefits to self and maximize cost to self. This maxim requires each speech act participant to complete the loss to himself and minimize the benefit to himself.

Maxim of Appreciation

The speech act of appreciation is fundamental in communication, especially interaction in the online learning process in the classroom. Respecting other people in communication will make the communication process run well, and

the communication goals can be achieved. Maxim of appreciation can be found in these utterances.

Lecturer: wow, your answer is perfect. You can explain well".

Student: Thank you, sir.

Context: The speech event above occurred when the lecturer listened to the student's answers to find who could answer the questions correctly.

In this maxim of generosity, the participants of the speech are expected to be able to respect other people. Respect for others will occur when people can reduce profits for themselves and maximize profits for others. With the maxim of generosity or generosity, speech participants are encouraged to respect others.

Maxim of Humility

The humility maxim or simplicity is characterized by a person having to limit praise to himself. One should extend the shame or attack on oneself. The more he praises or tends to himself, the more disrespectful a person is.

Student: That is enough that we can talk about this topic. If there is something we still need to discuss, please forgive us. We apologize.

Context: The above speech event occurred because the presentation activity had been completed, and the speech above was spoken by one of the participants in the presentation group.

In the maxim of humility, participants are encouraged to have a humble attitude. This humility is done by reducing self-praise.

Maxim of Agreement

The maxim of the agreement occurred in communicating during the learning process if students and lecturers must be willing to minimize disagreements in the interaction process. In order to comply with this maxim in discussion activities, communication should be done by giving agreement or approval to the opinions of others marked by diction, "true, correct, yes, agree". In using the maxim of agreement, speakers should be ready and willing to accept the discussion results.

Lecturer: How about next? Can we start 30 minutes early? There are many things we need to discuss. Is it possible?

Student: Yes, sir.

Lecturer: Can I give me the module now so you can study it before the lecture starts?

Student: yes, sir, Thank you.

Context: The above speech event occurred at the end of the lecture. Lecturers and students are discussing lectures next week to start 30 minutes early because there was much material to be discussed.

In the maxim of agreement, it is hoped that the speech participants can build consensus when speaking. Participants in speech acts are not allowed to behead or directly refute the other party's words.

Maxim of Sympathy

Sympathy speech acts are needed in communicating in class because using speech that contains sympathy makes the communication process more polite and smooth. The maxim of sympathy is that in every act of speaking, there must be an effort to strengthen mutual sympathy and limit hatred or antipathy between one party and another.

Lecturer: Hopefully, all are in good health. The lectures will be held online from today. You may experience difficulties because this lecture system is new to all of us. Besides that, like your parents, who have a low economy, it will be challenging too. In addition, you also have to pay for the internet network to attend lectures.

Context: The speech event above occurred when lecturers shared their opinions because of the online lecture system being implemented at the time, so the lecturer gave his opinion on this matter.

In maxim of sympathy, it appeals to the speech participants to maximize the attitude of sympathy between humans in speaking. People who are cynical towards other parties will be considered as people who do not know polite manners.

38 Discussion

Based on the data analysis, the maxim of tact was used when the lecturers tried to give students the freedom to ask how to do assignments and ask things that they did not yet understand by students by writing questions or sending voice notes in the WhatsApp group. By saying, "well, to do the assignment today, you can ask in the WhatsApp group. If you do not understand, you can ask me in the WhatsApp group by writing a question or using a voice note". It showed the lecturer was using a maxim of tact. In the speech, the lecturer showed very wise politeness, allowing students to ask questions through the WhatsApp group.

Based on the data related to the maxim of generosity, it was found that

one of the students explained the weak signal at that time so that his friends left and entered zoom. Speech act used by the student to answer the lecturer's speech, "I am sorry, sir, it seems the signal is not good today, sir. There are some of my friends whose signal is still disturbed. I will tell them to join again, ok sir?" aims to help his friends who still had a problem with internet network. The actions taken by this student can be said to help their friends who are in trouble joining the zoom room. Therefore, the utterances of students and lecturers above are classified as Generosity Maxim. The principle of the maxim of generosity is that the speaker may reduce the profit for himself and increase the sacrifice for himself (Kurniawan, 2018). The speaker who uses this maxim in discussion activities is marked by helping others when they have difficulty explaining their opinions, offering something to the interlocutor, and allowing others to express their opinion.

Based on the lecture's speech related to the maxim of appreciation as presented in the findings above, it can be seen that the lecturer said, "Your answer is perfect. You can explain well," which is one form of direct speech about appreciation. One form of appreciation is a word of praise, like very good, like the words in the lecturer's speech above. It can be

concluded that the data meet the principle of politeness maxim of appreciation or praise. The maxim of appreciation is characterized by politeness in language, namely conveying pleasant things or compliments to the speech partner and not offending the speech partner. The principle of the maxim of appreciation is that the speaker can reduce criticism of others and add praise to others (Widya, 2018). Compliance with this maxim in discussion activities is marked by appreciation when other people answer or refute opinions, not insinuating the interlocutor, being able to respect other people's opinions, not demeaning people, and saying "thank you" when getting suggestions.

Based on the data related to the maxim of humility, it was found that the lecturer met the criteria of the maxim of humility. It can be seen when the students apologized if there was material that had not been presented due to their limited ability; the students showed their humility. Because the topic of the material presented is quite broad, the student apologized if there was something that had not been presented. Besides that, the student was also aware of many things that must be discussed related to the topic presented; therefore, by apologizing, this student used the humility maxim as a politeness strategy (Marsih, 2010). The apologies

spoken by students need to be conveyed because the presentation activities could never be perfect.

For this reason, students felt they had to apologize for the lack of their group presentation. Thus, the speech above can be categorized as the maxim of humility because it used the politeness marker 'please'. The word 'please' can also be categorized as a politeness marker in communication.

Based on the data related to the maxim of agreement, it was found that the lecturer agreed with the students to start 30 minutes earlier because there was much material to discuss. The speech acts used by the lecturers were to obtain approval for the inaccuracy that might occur at the next meeting. Other reasons also follow this statement. After hearing the lecturer, the students agreed with the lecturer's speech by answering, "Yes, sir". In another speech, the lecturer said, "Can I give me the module now so you can study it before the lecture starts?" Then the student answered, "yes, sir, Thank you". This answer showed that it was agreed that the lecturer sent the module to the WhatsApp group so that discussions at the next meeting became easier because students could study the module first before the next meeting. In the data above, it can be seen that lecturers and students meet the criteria

for the maxim of agreement. The principle of the maxim of agreement is that the speaker can reduce the discrepancy between himself and others and increase the correspondence between himself and others (Fitriyah et al., 2020). The speakers use this maxim to maintain politeness in using the language to foster smooth and effective communication.

Maxim of sympathy was found in the speech when the lecturer explained his concerns about students' difficulty learning online because they had to use an internet connection. The lecturer also expressed sympathy because students had to pay for the internet network to attend lectures. Moreover, the lecturer felt that students' parents would also experience economic difficulties during the covid-19 pandemic. This lecturer's utterance can be classified as the maxim of sympathy. The principle of the maxim of sympathy is that the speech participants should increase their sympathy with others and reduce their antipathy toward others (Fitriyah et al., 2020). This maxim is fundamental to establishing conducive communication and creating a caring atmosphere in communication situations.

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Politeness is a behaviour that is expressed in a good or ethical. Politeness is a cultural phenomenon, so what is considered polite by one culture

may not be the case in other cultures (Mantra & Kumara, 2018). Destination politeness, including language politeness, is to make a fun interacting atmosphere. Language politeness can be done through the speech actor obeying the polite principle of polite language that applies in the community that uses that language. So, it is expected that speech actors do not ignore the principle of courtesy. It is to maintain a good relationship with his partner.

Thus, in communicating, it is necessary to use polite speech acts so that the communication process occurs smoothly; then, the sender and recipient of the message must understand each other's linguistic rules and social norms in communicating. Language politeness is a way of behaving in a community that agrees upon that as a rule of social behaviour. Politeness can not only be seen from the speaker's side but also must pay attention to the impression of the interlocutor who listens to what the speaker is saying. A language expressed in speech will feel more polite if the speaker uses proper politeness.

Likewise, in the campus environment, students are taught and required to be able to use language under linguistic rules or norms.

Therefore, education is one of the forums for forming language politeness. The ability to use language orally under linguistic rules or norms will establish good and pleasant communication relationships. Good communication relations are expected between students and students, students with students, lecturers, and all language users in the campus environment.

Based on the findings described above, this study's implication can be formulated as the following. The use of language politeness in the classroom provided a conducive learning atmosphere. Moreover, students and lecturers feel highly comfortable communicating during the learning activities because of the appropriateness of language politeness used by students and the lecturer. Therefore, compliance with the language principles must be considered to attain a harmonious relationship between students and lecturers. During the teaching and learning activities, especially in university, harmonious communication between lecturers and students should be well maintained to achieve the learning objective. Consequently, a good understanding of the principles of language politeness certainly provides beneficial implications for the success of teaching and learning processes.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

Language politeness is reflected in the procedures for communicating through verbal signs or language procedures. When people communicate, they are subject to cultural norms, not just conveying the ideas they have in mind. Language procedures must be under the cultural elements that exist in the society in which they live and the use of a language in communication. The participants must consider language procedures for smooth communication. Therefore, the problem of language procedures must get attention, especially in teaching and learning the language. Knowing the language procedures helps people better understand the messages conveyed in communication. In this study, it was found that there are six maxims used in online learning, namely, the maxim of tact, the maxim of generosity, the maxim of appreciation, the maxim of humility, the maxim of agreement, and the maxim of sympathy.

This study was conducted during online learning. Therefore, Considering the differences between face-to-face and online learning, this study was limited to analyzing the spoken discourses that occurred during the online learning process. Consequently, this study's results should be carefully considered

for future research. Furthermore, this study suggests that other researchers should conduct a further intensive study to reveal further findings related to language politeness in the learning process.

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