



### I'M VERY PROUD TO INTRODUCE OUR PRESETT NEWSLETTER.

PRESETT has certainly been one of the most effective, important and inspirational programmes the British Council has carried out in its 20 year history in Uzbekistan. Nothing is more important than education, no one more important than teachers! And as an English teacher myself the support of young teachers starting out in their career is so vital. This engagement is something that will shape a teacher for their whole career, and therefore affects the thousands of pupils PRESETT graduates go on to teach. Therefore, and without any exaggeration, PRESETT is life changing.

I believe that in Uzbekistan we have got PRE-SETT right, and this is evidenced by the influence our programme has had on similar, newer initiatives in other countries, for instance Ukraine. This success, in my opinion, is due to a variety of factors: the very high level of professionalism of our team (amongst the best in the world according to our UK experts), the strong and consistent support of the Government if Uzbekistan for this work and of course the incredible enthusiasm and openness of the many trainees who have graduated from the programme over the years.

We want to build on the success of PRESETT and are currently looking at modules for ICT in teaching, as well as designing new ways to help directly improve the standard of English for those teachers who need it. Our newsletter is an important tool to communicate our plans as well as to hear your experiences and views.

#### Long live PRESETT!

Mark Crossey Director British Council Uzbekistan

### THE IMPACT OF THE PRESETT **CURRICULUM**

The PRESETT Curriculum has long since been adopted and implemented in all the universities responsible for the training of English teachers and many of the first graduates from the initial experimental groups are now employed as state sector teachers across the republic. Educational change takes time, and as a project team, we were always aware that we would have to take a long view of the work we embarked on some eight years ago. The long-term aim of the English Reform Project in general, and of the PRESETT Project in particular, was to improve the standard of English teaching in schools, lyceums and colleges. Thus, it is only now that we are able to gain an impression of the impact of the reforms on learners of English in these institutions. We await a full-scale evaluation of this impact, planned for later in 2016, but in the meantime. project team members and PRESETT tutors have had their ears to the ground in the school sector and they have sent in some of their findings for inclusion in this issue of our PRESETT newsletter. In addition in this issue we are happy to extend the boundaries of our newsletter from the national level to the international one and welcome our colleagues from Ukraine who talk about how they initiated the PRESETT project in their country and how their visit to Uzbekistan helped them redesign the methodology curriculum. To these, we have added some interesting experience reports from University teachers in Uzbekistan and Ukraine.

Dilafruz Khodjaeva and Aziza Yunusova, Lecturers from the Bukhara State University, report on the success of the new curriculum implementation in their institution. They share some valuable feedback of their former students who currently teach in schools and colleges. Nargiza Tokhtahodjaeva and Malika Yunusova, colleagues from the Uzbek State World Languages University, reflect on their learning and teaching experience before and after the adoption of the new curriculum. They talk about positive impact of the PRESETT project on their teaching and their students' learning. Madina Isamukhamedova, a recent graduate of the PRESETT experimental group at the UzSWLU, who has been teaching at the Lyceum atta-





ched to the University of World Economy and Diplomacy, writes about her experience of the new curriculum as a student and emphasizes the courses that she has enjoyed most. She highlights the skills, she has developed thanks to the programme, that turned out to be useful in her teaching. Gulnora Nasirova, a former PRESETT project member from Andijan State University, who currently teaches at the Tashkent State Pedagogical University according to the new curriculum, revisits her professional path; the joy and challenges of changing her way of teaching and thinking under the influence of her involvement in the project and other professional development opportunities. She notes that the curriculum writing experience enabled her to succeed not only in her profession but in her private life as well. Dr D. Khodjieva and the 4th year student A. Smaylov from Karakalpak State University give a teacher-and-student perspective on the new curriculum. They write about how PRESETT helps students develop their language skills and use the new methods of teaching English. They also share how the University celebrates the "Annual English Week".

We hope that these reports will also inspire other readers of our newsletter to contribute to future issues. We want to reach out to and involve tea chers and students in all parts of Uzbekistan.

Nodira Isamukhamedova and Rod Bolitho

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF PRESETT** PROGRAMME IN BUKHARA

Bukhara State University was one of the first institutions in Uzbekistan which adopted the new curriculum in 2009, aiming at preparing teachers of English who are competent in practical classroom methodology and in language referred to international standards. The PRESETT Curriculum was piloted in two groups out of six existing. To date, the University has turned out about 80 PRESETT graduates.

Any educational revolution is almost certain to have a revolutionary impact. However, the English Philology Faculty at Bukhara State University didn't face any resistance or challenges. The administration and the vicerector responsible for education provided a solid support in launching the programme. Later on, the University Rector lent a hand to keep up the programme implementation.

Following the republic-wide adoption of the PRESETT programme in 2013, the number of trained PRESETT teachers in the English Philology Department has increased and all new first year students have been starting their studies according to the new curriculum.

We should note that the applicants applying for the English Philology Faculty don't usually aim to be teachers in future, preferring to think about professions like a guide or a translator, or simply getting a job in a foreign firm or a company. This tendency has changed in PRESETT groups. Most of the students changed their attitude towards the teaching profession and their minds about future profession. The number of PRE-SETT graduates among school teachers of English in Bukhara is the evidence of the effectiveness of the curriculum.



Zarnigor Jalolova is teaching in the secondary school

The PRESETT Curriculum differed from the traditional programme in language and methodology modules, teaching approach, students' role and etc. Consequently, it led to advantageous outcomes so far. The PRESETT graduates are competent and professional teachers of English with a fluent command of the target language, meeting international standards. After completing all the PRESETT methodology modules, students are skillful enough not only in planning lessons, but also in adapting and designing materials, working with different age groups, using different approaches to teaching and learning, testing and assess-





ment. This certainly contributed to a very positive external evaluation by an international expert and this evaluation also influenced the decision to adopt the curriculum nationally. Besides the expert's evaluation, the attempts of the students from traditional groups to move into PRESETT groups were also signs that the programme was becoming successful. Additionally, many of the schools and colleges where PRESETT students have their teaching practice in year 4, invite these graduates to work with them after graduation.



Zarina Turaeva is teaching in the secondary school

At the moment there are 74 PRESETT graduates for the last three years and about 60 (80%) of them are teaching English in different educational establishments including secondary schools, academic lyceums and colleges. These former students keep in touch with the University teachers as we are all UzTEA members and there are regular association events where they share their challenges and success.

As PRESETT teachers, we are always interested how the programme is helpful and useful in our students' teaching. Here are some some former students' views about the PRESETT programme:

a) about putting PRESETT learning into practice in teaching:

Zarnigor (secondary school teacher): Even being a novice teacher, I could easily manage to work with documentation as we had "Planning teaching and learning" classes where we analyzed curricula and made our own lesson plans. Another good point of PRESETT for me is that we studied how to teach different age groups as I have young learners and teenagers.

Shakhlo (secondary school teacher): I've been working for three years in school and I see that PRESETT is a very useful and easy way of teaching English, because PRESETT teachers know different styles and methods of teaching.

b) about the confidence they feel as a teacher of English:

Nargiza (secondary school teacher): I always feel confident while talking on different topics with my students and I really enjoy communication in English.

Mukhayo (college teacher): It is not enough to know English well to be a good teacher. A real teacher should know psychology of pupils, how to organize lessons, how to communicate with pupils. I have learnt them from PRESETT, so I feel confident in class.

c) about the learners' benefits from PRESETT methods:

Zarina (secondary school teacher): My learners get both knowledge and pleasure from my lessons. I can see it from their test results and participation in the lessons.



Malika Jalolova is teaching in the secondary school





Zarnigor (secondary school teacher): Though we know a variety of teaching methods, we can't always use them with all pupils as they are different in age and learning styles. For example, some pupils like peer editing, whereas the others don't prefer showing their writings. However, all my pupils like to be involved in different interactive activities, like, jig-saw tasks and roleplays.

Shakhlo (secondary school teacher): My pupils learn English easier and faster than others. They like my teaching methods because I see them very active when they work in small groups and pairs. They feel free when speaking English. They are not shy in front of me and each other.

d) about resistance of other teachers to new ideas on teaching English:

Ilkhom (college teacher): When I began working, I was afraid that teachers wouldn't like my teaching style. But after three months two English teachers asked me to help them with ideas to apply new methods of teaching that I use. I didn't expect it. Then I heard that some groups wrote letters to the school director asking for me to be their English teacher.

Zarina (secondary school teacher): Some of the teachers of my school prefer working with traditional methods as they find them easy. But when I invited them to observe my class they found PRESETT methods very useful and interesting. Besides, when our school sent us to the retraining institute, I didn't find anything new, because we had already learnt and used everything in PRESETT.

The programme has been fully proving its value and meeting all the expected outcomes. It is not only skills and knowledge that distinguish PRESETT students from traditional students, but the enthusiasm and zest for teaching, and dedication to their profession. They are constantly on the lookout for new materials and open to any new idea in the sphere. The other significant advantage of the PRESETT Programme over the traditional one is that it also aims to develop students' transferrable skills

along with the language skills which come in handy not only in their teaching career but also in their further personal lives.

Consequently/Notably, future PRESETT teachers develop in their students critical and reflective thinking, time and stress management, teamwork skills, problem solving and setting SMART goals that contribute to their personal maturity. Furthermore, we think PRESETT is the right programme to prepare appropriate cadres to implement the aim and functions of the Presidential decree №1875 which has been signed to make fundamental changes in the system of teaching foreign languages in the country.

Dilafruz Khodjaeva, Bukhara State University Aziza Yunusova, Bukhara State University





#### **TEACHERS' VOICES**



Nargiza Tokhtahodjaeva Senior Teacher. The Uzbek State World Languages University

I've been teaching several courses like Reading I & II, Listening and Speaking I & II, Integrated skills I and II for the last two years within the PRESETT curriculum. We can see the advantages of PRESETT in many aspects. For example, I would like to highlight the reading skills. Before the PRESETT programme, within the old system of education lessons were organized around a certain text designated for reading and translating. The teacher was dominant and students worked only according to his/her directions. It was rather boring. But now, the PRESETT curriculum targets at developing learners' reading skills and strategies through various interesting and effective tasks. Students work more independently, striving for their goals by evaluating themselves. PRESETT helps students to improve their abilities in reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. In my classes, I observed the improvement of students' fluency and confidence in language. Particularly, the Integrated skills course is one of the most interesting and useful modules. While preparing a project task, students learn how to organize the time, to work with others, to be creative, to search for information and other valuable skills.

The curriculum contains new modules, many of which we never had before. The Listening and Speaking skills course is also very important in learning the foreign language. If students know grammar very well it does not at all mean that they know the language. For that, students should improve their listening and speaking skills in classes with the help of audio and video recordings.

In conclusion I want to say that in the PRESETT curriculum students learn the language in a complex way, where all language skills are taught in integration.



Malika Yunusova English Teacher The Uzbek State World Language University

I always thought that there is only one way of teaching and learning English. The reason why I am saying this is that my teacher always had the same routine of teaching every class. For example, my teacher asked me to learn grammar rules, some poems and exercises by heart. Typical exercises were for translating from one language to another. First we translated at home, then all students used to read their translations one by one in class. Then, the teacher used to give his/her own version and we copied it out to our notebooks. Next day we used to learn those translations by heart. We did a lot of drilling exercises to improve pronunciation. I remember how awful and boring it was for all the students.

After I started teaching I understood how to teach differently. Through participating in DUET inservice sessions, teacher training events and UzTEA conferences I realized what Communicative Language Teaching means. These professional development events really helped me a lot. The culmination was my involvement in teaching experimental PRESETT groups. I had to change my traditional methods, reflect on my teaching, and continuously work on my professional development.





#### ALUMNI VOICES



Madina Isamukhamedova, PRESETT Experimental group Alumna, 2010-2014 Currently Master's student The Uzbek State World Languages University

I had an opportunity to study in the experimental groups between 2010 and 2014 at the Uzbek State World Languages University. Studying under the principles of PRESETT not only helped me to develop as a future teacher, but to grow as a person as well. All the subjects we covered at the university have made an influential contribution to me as a future teacher. I strongly believe that every lesson was useful and effective. For instance, from subjects like Testing and Assessment and Teaching Approaches I have learnt the principles of assessment, giving feedback, using modern and interactive technologies instead of outdated methods while teaching. Moreover, the course on Teaching Different Age Groups and Lesson Planning have taught me how to compose effective lesson plans, how to build strong communication with students and be a persuasive teacher.

Having graduated from the Bachelor's Degree I got work in one of the local lyceums. I was given a number of sophomore groups to teach the English language. The English lessons in the lyceum were subdivided into skills: students had separate classes for Grammar, Listening and Speaking, Writing, Reading, Vocabulary and Cross Cultural Issues. As I entered upon my duties I faced no difficulties dealing with the aspects given. I have had experience to teach almost all the aspects and it was not so complicated for me to work on each subskill. Moreover, dealing with students gave me a great pleasure: I saw their sparkling eyes of interest as I used plenty of new methods and games while teaching.

PRESETT shaped my personality as well as teaching abilities. Most subjects were focused on developing students' critical thinking, creativity and better language acquisition. I have learned to work in groups, manage my time, prioritise tasks, plan and avoid procrastination.

#### PROJECT MEMBERS' VOICES

How Curriculum Writing has Influenced my Way of Teaching



Gulnora Nasirova Teacher, Tashkent State Pedagogical University named after Nizamiy PRESET Project team member 2008 - 2013

As an English language teacher with 15 years' experience I can divide my teaching into two periods: my teaching before the new curriculum, almost 8 years, and teaching according to the new one.

While graduating with honours at the language university in Andijan, I was sure of my classroom language, teaching methodology (which I copied from my teachers), the course book (the same one which I'd been taught for 5 years), documentation: group register, due to the fact that sometimes being a group monitor while studying I was asked by lecturers to fill in the register, so, I started my career with full self-confidence.

In order to develop my professional skills, I often, attended training courses, seminars, observed my colleagues' classes just to copy new activities (knowing nothing about its objectives, aims) in my own classroom. As the years went by, I became dissatisfied with my teaching, classroom activities, tasks for assessment, my students' achievements. What was the reason?! I worked hard, in the lessons tried to keep to English rather than Uzbek or Russian, the atmosphere in the classroom and my relationship with my students were positive, students were supportive, full of enthusiasm, did all their homework, class work, they were very active but I saw no results. The good learners knew by heart all the grammar rules and structures, their store of lexis was rich enough, and despite this they had problems with accuracy and fluency. Moreover, as a teacher I did not know





what to do, what the problem was, but I was 100% that there was something wrong with my students and not with me.

I had been involved in two big projects by the British Council (my students actually nominated me as a good teacher for the Baseline Study project). The third one was the PRESETT curriculum development project and I was invited as an assessment specialist, and was ready to develop some kind of official document for "stakeholders at the top", but I did not suppose it could influence me and my colleagues in our roles as teachers of the English language at the Universitv.

Working on the new curriculum for almost five years I have discovered a lot of new things about education. Step by step I began to find solutions to my concerns about teaching and learning. I began to regard them as a continuous process and as inseparable. I understood the problem was with me as well, and not only with my students.

Unfortunately it was not too easy to change my teaching methods and strategies like reading and translating, sentence based tasks, using one course book for all modules, having methodology classes in Uzbek / Russian languages, product based writing, teaching practical phonetics by asking to learn by heart diphthongs and all 44 sounds, repeating isolated words in order to practice phonemes, reading a book (fiction) for the home reading module, which was chosen by a head of the department, and so on.

Even if someone has an eagerness to learn something new in teaching and to apply it in teaching, it is not a painless process. It is difficult to give up your teaching principles, methodology you have practised for many years, to re-establish your beliefs about teaching, teachers, and learners; to begin to think differently.

Teaching a language, for me, turned out to be more than just using different activities during a lesson, always keeping to English with students, and evaluating after each unit of the course book. I radically changed my understanding of what it means to be a Good Language Learner and a Good Language Teacher. I found out other alter-

native ways of assessment not only using multiple choice questions and dictations. I totally changed my attitude towards writing and assessing writing (I was an error/mistake hunter; misspelling was my focus when I assessed writing). While working on the new curriculum for all four years, I was impatient to pilot it with my colleagues at my university, get teachers' and students' feedback on each module. Feedback from learners and teachers was in general positive but there was certain resistance even from teachers. As I stated above, it is difficult to start thinking differently.

In addition, as a team member, I have developed personally too. I became more patient, more sociable; I have developed some transferable skills like making presentations, IT skills, working as a team, which helped me in my private life as well.

I'd like to mention here DUET in-service courses as well, which helped me a lot in my second period of teaching.

Through all this, I have come to understand that changes do not happen in a day, not in a year. It takes time and it involves learning, investigating, trialling, analyzing, implementing and digesting.

For personal reasons I have moved to Tashkent from Andijan and was invited to work for one of the state teacher training universities. As everybody knows, it is not easy to find a good job. But my experience within the project helped me to get the promotion. There, they started to implement the new curriculum three years ago and so, I have classes with students in Years 1, 2, 3 according to the new curriculum.

I am really proud of being a part of that project team; looking back I cannot believe that we did it with the support of our government, and the British Council. I am profoundly proud of my contribution to the development of my country, specifically in the area of education.





### **RENEWING LANGUAGE EDUCATION THROUGH PRESETT**

Karakalpak State University Ph. D. doc. D. Khadjieva, A. Smaylov, 4th year student



Following our President's decree on the 10th of December, 2012 about measures for further enhancement of the system of teaching of foreign languages, there is now a special focus on English language learning and teaching in every part of our country.

One of the achievements is the establishment of the new PRESETT curriculum in the foreign language faculties of higher education institutions. In terms both of standards and content, it is closely related to modern approaches to the education of future English teachers in Europe an countries.



We regard the PRESETT curriculum as a rainbow across our education land. Just as a rainbow is composed of several kinds of colours, PRESETT contains various features and components.

In our University the PRESETT curriculum has led to positive results in the learning and teaching of English.

In our language courses we have acquired all the skills to express our opinions in the target language, and are aspiring to be fluent speakers of English. We used to consider writing as boring, but with the help of the new PRESETT Programme it turned out to be really interesting and we enjoy producing different pieces of wri-ting. We especially like the Integrated Skills course, where we have developed all four skills.

In our new Discourse Analysis course, we have learned how to analyse both written and spoken discourse.

In the methodology courses we can show our abilities both in learning and teaching. We have given presentations using laptops and projectors on topics in the course. This has helped us todevelop our body language, use of eye contact, our self-confidence and self-control, our way of speaking, our voice tone, and our teacher presence. We have also learned to observe classes and to give feedback.

The British Council has supported us with a considerable number of course books and methodological aids, and we also havea real chance to communicate with native speakers of English when the representatives of the British Council visit us.





# BRITISH COUNCIL PRESETT Newsletter





All in all, the most challenging, demanding responsibility and clear organisation is research writing. After choosing topics suggested by our supervisors we have done a great investigation. library research, data collection and data analysis. In addition we have carried out our research during our teaching practice with college, lyceum and school pupils. Finally, the most exciting day comes when we defend our research papers in front of the state commission. It is an unforgettable day in each student's life as every graduate will get the fruits of his hard work. As the English proverb says "You reap what you sow".

Every year in April our faculty organises an "Annual English Week" activity which involves students in demonstrating different skills. They may act role plays, organise funny performances, sing English songs, make video recordings, prepare interesting English-centred posters and we celebrate the birthdays of the great British poets Robert Burns and William Shakespeare. In addition, we have published articles on impor-



tant topics of teaching in PRESETT groups in different journals published by our University and in foreign countries. For instance, this year, 4th year student Rose Kurbanbaeva's article on the topic "Analysing written texts in the classroom" has been published in aninternational journal in Sweden.

In conclusion PRESETT is playing a special role in the development of the education system in our country and we can be proud of it. We hope the new curriculum will continue in this way and bring about progress in learning and teaching foreign languages effectively by boosting new methods and approaches. PRESETT is a bright light in Uzbekistan's valley of education.





# BRITISH COUNCIL PRESETT Newsletter



### **NEW GENERATION SCHOOL TEACHER:** A REPORT FROM UKRAINE

We are very busy in Ukraine with a reform project aimed at improving and updating the Pre-Service Training Programme for future teachers of English. The project is managed by the British Council on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Science, and the project team is made up of teachers of English and Methodology from universities across the country, supported by a local and a UK consultant.



Between March 2013 and February 2014, the project team carried out a baseline study, which involved:

- · collecting and analysing documents relating to the preparation of future teachers of foreign languages: standards, curricula, and syllabuses
- · studying the interests, needs and attitudes of stakeholders: primary (students and school teachers, university students and lecturers), and secondary (Ministry of Education and Science Ukraine, Departments of Education, Rectors of Universities)
- · exploring the Uzbek experience of reforming initial English language teacher training through a visit to the State University of World Languages Tashkent, Uzbekistan in December 2013 (this gave us a great deal of impetus in our plans to reconceptualise our methodology curriculum)
- undertaking a study visit to Norwich Institute for Language Education Norwich, United Kingdom, in March 2014.

The Baseline Study revealed an imbalance in the curriculum for preparing foreign language teachers in Ukrainian universities, with only 3 – 5 % of the available time devoted to language teaching methodology and the rest of the time spent on largely theoretical studies in either philology or pedagogy. In addition, the team found that methodology courses were delivered as lectures in the mother tongue, with little practical relevance to students as future teachers, and in many cases were not up to date in terms of content. Assessment on these courses focused on students' command of the oretical knowledae.

Based on these findings, the team made the following recommendations:

- · to establish modified or new state standards in language teacher education at Bachelor's and Master's level
- · to design a unified core curriculum for Methodology which will take into account the practical needs of future language teachers as well as trends and practices in other countries.

After a succession of in-country workshops, and a number of revision stages, work on the new methodology curriculum is now nearing completion and it will be piloted in a selected crosssection of universities starting in September 2016. The main characteristics of the new curriculum are:

- a flexible modular approach, with 22 modules spread over years 2-4 of bachelor-level study
- progression through studies planned in a way which reflects students' journey from language learners to language teachers
- · greater integration of theory and practice
- entirely new modules in areas that have hitherto been neglected, e.g. Learner Autonomy, Second Language Acquisition, Special Educational Needs, Classroom Action Research and Continuing Professional Development
- · an explicit, staged framework for school experience and teaching practice





- an innovative, varied and integrated approach to assessment, with a much stronger emphasis on practical outcomes and transparent assessment criteria
- a strong recommendation to move away from lectures to a more student-centred, task based approach to the implementation of the curriculum.

With piloting now looming, the project team has had to focus increasingly on dissemination strategies, which involves them in honing their skills as trainers. The curriculum is being introduced through exposure to same training sessions and key principles at summer schools and winter schools targeted in the first instance at teachers who will be involved in piloting. We have also conducted a thorough review of the final drafts of all the modules by sending them out for evaluation and comment to more than twenty teachers in piloting institution. The feedback from training and the module review has helped the team to identify shortcomings and gaps in the materials. Participants in the summer and winter schools have been articulate about their own professional learning, too, as this quotation from a teacher in Kharkiv reveals:

"I've always been inclined to reflection (both in action and on action) but having attended the schools in Kyiv and Drahobrat I've become even more aware of my teaching style and the ways it could be improved. The question which is currently at the forefront of my mind is whether my classes are learner-centred enough. As yet I can't honestly give a positive answer to this question but I know that I'm on the right track. I think twice now before launching into detailed explanations and thus hogging the talking time – instead I try to elicit the answers from the group. I bite my tongue so as not to interrupt a student in an attempt to prevent a possible mistake - I let students make their own mistakes and thus learn from them. I try to be more careful with my classroom language, e.g. not to ask empty questions such as Do you understand? Is that clear? Are there any questions?, the answers to which don't usually reflect the true degree of learners' comprehension. All this goes to show that thanks to the schools I'm slowly but surely moving towards learner-centred teaching."

We can safely say that our new methodology curriculum is arousing enthusiastic interest among both language and methodology teachers, many of whom have never had the opportunity to rethink their practices or to be exposed to alternative approaches to teaching, and as our ideal profile of the new generation of teachers emerges, we hope that there will be a sustained impact on the teaching and learning of languages across the whole educational system in Ukraine.

The Ukrainian PRESETT team December 2015 (for more information, please see our project website: http://ngschoolteacher.wix.com/ngscht or contact Viktoriia Ivanishcheva: Viktoriia.lvanishcheva@britishcouncil.org.ua)





### **OUR PRIDE - PRESETT GRADUATES**





Chingiz Urazimbetov teaching in the academic lyceum 2 in Chimbay



Malika Kalmenova teaching in the secondary school 31 in Nukus





Dilfuza Makhmudova teaching in the academic lyceum in Namangan



Education UK is the British Council's official website for international students interested in studying at a UK university, college, boarding school or English language school.

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