Current trends of teacher education in the Ukraine and EU countries under conditions of postpandemia and russian invasion

Сучасні тенденції педагогічної освіти в Україні та країнах ЄС в умовах поспандаємії та російського вторгнення

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Abstract

The article is dedicated to the determination of what are the general (European) and local (Ukrainian) trends in teachers’ education. The formulation of the goal is determined by the need to find out how the challenges faced by Ukrainian universities in the conditions of the war and post-pandemic affect the development trends of European pedagogical education as a whole. The object of study was trends of pedagogical education in Ukraine and Europe. The authors analyzed processes of adaptation of university pedagogical education to functioning Ukraine – in conditions of war and post-pandemic, and in Europe – in conditions of massive integration of the Ukrainian university community, both students and teachers, in European institutions of higher pedagogical education. The comparative analysis demonstrated, that educational programs, lists of educational literature, including those with the possibility of using electronic textbooks, manuals, and

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educational applications, need to be further updated in Ukrainian Universities. The investigation proved out, that continuity needs the implementation and support for the development of an effective system of digital transformation in Ukrainian universities in the following directions: the digital educational environment is accessible and modern; development of digital competencies of participants in the educational process; the content of ICT education meets modern requirements etc.

Keywords: development trends, teacher education, post-pandemic period, university education.

Introduction

The development of modern pedagogical education in Ukraine and in Europe today is determined not only by the global trends of globalization, integration and unification, the requests of Ukrainian and European society for educational services, but also primarily by the extremely difficult conditions in which Ukrainian higher education is forced to function, and for European institutions of higher education, the question of integration and direct involvement of both Ukrainian teachers and students in the educational dimension of European education arose on a much larger scale than was the case until February 24, 2022.

It should be noted that in the last two and a half years after the beginning of the pandemic, Ukrainian higher education institutions adapted the educational process to work in a mixed format: at the beginning of the 2021–2022 academic year, a number of universities started the educational process in an offline format, later in October–November 2021 most universities have returned to the format of distance teaching and learning. However, the events of February 24, 2022 forced Ukrainian institutions to put the educational process on hold due to the rude invasion of Russian troops on the territory of our state, and the explosions that forced Ukrainians to leave their homes stopped the full functioning of all industries in the country and society as a whole.

The administrations of all institutions of higher education made operational decisions regarding the specifics of transformations of the educational process in the unpredictable conditions of the war, most universities took a 2- to 3-week vacation (Skarlet, 2022), which allowed all participants in the educational process to recover from the initial shock during this time. Therefore, already at the end of March and the beginning of April 2022, universities began to gradually return to the remote mode of learning and professional activity. The relevant resolutions and recommendations of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and the Government played a significant role in the efficiency of making the necessary organizational decisions, including: the resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine “On the peculiarities of the accreditation of educational programs for the training of higher education seekers under martial law” from March 16, 2022 (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, 2022a); the decision of the Union of Rectors of Ukraine, which provided support for the initiative of the Ministry of Education and Culture regarding the cancellation of DPA, external examinations in high school, simplification of admission to the master’s
degree in 2022, cancellation of graduation from medical universities according to the “Krok” system; giving universities the right to independently determine the amount of tuition fees (if necessary) (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, 2022b), etc.

The return of universities to work in wartime conditions caused mixed reactions in the teaching and student community, given the fact that critical infrastructure of the state was destroyed as a result of the Russian invasion, including universities in various regions of Ukraine. In this context, a number of studies were conducted on the readiness of the university community to return to work and study in wartime conditions. Thus, according to the study by N. Melnyk and co-authors of the project “Higher education in the post-pandemic period: transformations, challenges and prospects” (state registration number: 0122U001803)” the monitoring study demonstrated readiness (more than 54 % among the scientific and teaching and 37 % among the student contingent of respondents university community to study and professional activities in war conditions, regardless of psychological tension and physical fatigue due to stress (Melnyk, 2022; Kovtun, Kokareva & Ladogubets, 2022).

However, the focus of the survey in these studies was on the university community as a whole, as it was important to gather information about the primary challenges and responses of the university community. At the same time, we note that these studies and surveys were carried out mainly among institutions of higher education of the humanitarian profile, which prepare future teachers, social workers, psychologists, philologists, etc. In the initiated research presented on the pages of this article the purpose is not the challenges to scientific and pedagogical personnel that arise in the conditions of war and in the post-pandemic period in Ukrainian universities, but rather the determination of what are the general (European) and local (Ukrainian) trends in teachers’ education that we can observe in Ukrainian and European pedagogical universities.

The formulation of the goal is determined by the need to find out how the challenges faced by Ukrainian universities in the conditions of the war and post-pandemic affect the development trends of European pedagogical education as a whole, do they affect at all and do they have a global or local character?

Therefore, the object of study is the development trends of pedagogical education in Ukraine and Europe.

The subject of research – processes of adaptation of university pedagogical education to functioning in conditions of new social challenges (in Ukraine – in conditions of war and post-pandemic, and in Europe – in conditions of massive integration of the Ukrainian university community, both students and teachers, in European institutions of higher pedagogical education).

Methodology

The research methodology involved the gradual application of a set of interrelated methods, such as: theoretical – collection and processing of factual research material – studying and analysis of scientific articles, monographs and materials of dissertation research of Ukrainian and foreign scholars on the modern tendencies teachers’ education development, analysis of the results of empirical data, statistical and differential analysis of data collection, comparative analysis of the results; empirical – electronic questionnaires, questionnaires, direct communication with students of Ukrainian and European pedagogical universities. The research methodology involved three stages: the first – monitoring the current state of pedagogical education in Ukraine and Europe (definition of monitoring criteria); the second is the determination of the primary reactions of university pedagogical education to the challenges faced by the scientific and pedagogical community and students in Ukraine and Europe after the pandemic and with the beginning of the invasion of Russian troops into Ukraine; analysis of modern conceptual and organizational changes in university pedagogical education in Ukraine and European countries.

Research conceptual background

When determining the categorical apparatus of the initiated research, it is important to outline the main concepts that determine the levels and structure of the implementation of scientific work. Synthesizing the interpretation of the concepts “development” – the general principle of explaining the history of nature, society and knowledge, these are two forms of development: evolution – gradual quantitative changes of an object; revolution – qualitative changes in the structure of the object, progressive (upward) development and regressive (downward) development (Busel, 2009, p. 1235); the concept
of “trend” is the direction of development (irreversible change) of any phenomenon, thought, idea (Busesl, 2009, p. 1440) According to Oxford Learners’ Dictionary “…trend is the direction of change or development of a situation is called a trend , thus, trends in education are teaching and learning methods being highly applicable and bringing great value to people” (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2022); as well as the concept of “pedagogical education” – a system of training pedagogical personnel (teachers, educators, etc.) for secondary schools and other educational institutions in pedagogical universities, institutes, colleges of various types and forms of ownership (Goncharenko, 1997, p. 252) and the process of teaching or learning the skills you need to be a teacher in a school (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2022). We offered the following general formulation of the concept of the trend of the development of pedagogical education. We understand the development trends of pedagogical education as a complex process of irreversible changes occurring in the system of professional training of specialists in pedagogical professions, which are characterized by quantitative and qualitative indicators and lead to transformations in the structure with progressive or regressive features.

Results

Current trends of teachers’ education in Ukrainian Universities

The large-scale invasion of Russia, which began on February 24, 2022, caused a complex of serious problems in Ukrainian education. First of all, this concerns the forced displacement of a significant number of the population of Ukraine and the destruction and damage of educational institutions as a result of military operations.

Over 10 million (Ukraine Data Explorer, 2022) people changed their place of residence under the pressure of circumstances: 6.5 million within the country, 3.9 million went abroad. These are mostly women and children. UNICEF reports (UNICEF, 2022) that more than half of the entire child population of Ukraine – 4.3 million children out of a total of 7.5 million – were forced to leave their homes. At the beginning of May (Koshkina, 2022), it was confirmed that more than 23,000 teaching staff and more than 600,000 students had gone abroad. But these data are not accurate. Directors and rectors say that the whereabouts of about 10–15 % of pupils and students have not been identified. 1 748 educational institutions (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, 2022d) suffered from bombings and shelling, 144 of them were completely destroyed. 34 institutions of higher education (HEIs – institutes, universities and academies), 42 institutions of professional pre-higher education (colleges) and 65 separate structural subdivisions moved (Koshkina, 2022). Every week, the number of victims of the war and displaced persons of the ZVO is increasing.

There is no doubt that the Russian armed aggression in 2022 will lead to significant changes in the higher education system of Ukraine as a whole. First of all, the reduction of state expenditures on higher education and budgetary places in higher education institutions, a decrease in the income of the population, a significant increase in “educational migration” can cause a significant decrease in the demand for domestic higher education with corresponding consequences for teachers, administrations and the network of higher education institutions. At the same time, the war rapidly accelerated the course of natural trends in the development of the higher education system regarding the optimization and correction of its structure, scope, and content.

The most obvious negative consequence of the relatively high mass of higher education was the devaluation of the received qualifications. More and more people have diplomas of higher education, and the number of jobs for them is not increasing – therefore, competition is becoming fiercer, unemployment among graduates of higher education is spreading. In fact, the inflation of higher education was taking place.

The situation has worsened due to the improper connection between the structure of teachers training in higher education institutions and the demands of the economy – this is a long-standing problem of Ukrainian higher education. There is no doubt that there is a need to bring the state order for the training of teachers in line with the real needs of the national economy, and especially in the conditions of war, with the need for the development of the war economy and post-war recovery.

Therefore, the state should first of all provide the opportunity to obtain higher education free of charge (in whole or in part):

1. by specialties and in volumes that are really needed by the state sector of the economy and systems of providing critical public goods (defence, education, medicine, etc.).
Restructuring and optimization of the state order for the training of teachers under the conditions of real decentralization of the higher education system, autonomy of higher education institutions, reduction of corruption and introduction of an independent system of quality control of education will not only have a positive effect on the state budget, but will also be accepted by society.

The war has intensified and expanded the challenges already facing education due to the COVID-19 epidemic. For the Ukrainian educational system, this test became a kind of incentive that opened a window of new opportunities, becoming a catalyst for long-overdue modernization changes in education. First of all, it is about the development of digital and distance education, in particular online. But the prospects for the transformation of education are not limited only to these areas. The development of non-formal and informal education, the creation of mechanisms for recognizing its results in the formal education system also require close attention. It is time to test and widely implement modern teaching methods using information technologies (Melnyk et al, 2022).

Proposals regarding the implementation of state policy in the field of pedagogical education, which are determined by the laws of Ukraine “On education”, “On higher education” with amendments to these laws already in the conditions of martial law in March of this year, according to which beside the constitutional and legally enshrined right to affordable and high-quality education is one of the important factors influencing the income and employment of the country’s population are added the task on the creation of a safe educational environment (Safe Educational Environment: New Dimensions of Safety from the State Education Quality Service; Proposals regarding the physical safety of participants in the educational process, in particular during the journey to the educational institution), organization of education in various favourable forms of distance and mixed learning, taking into account the circumstances of active hostilities or occupation, the need to monitor the implementation of state guarantees, raising parents’ awareness of the conditions for children’s education during wartime.

Ensuring the students’ rights on education – There were peculiarities of admission to study for higher education of persons, whose place of residence is temporarily occupied territory, inhabited territory points on the contact line or who moved from such territories after January 1, 2022, in terms of passing the annual assessment

- distance education (according to the method of organizing the educational process);
- online education (by means of implementation);
- mixed education (combination of traditional and online means of education) (Melnyk et al, 2022).

To succeed in the innovation economy, a person must possess new competencies – constantly updated, even compared to the recent past. The formation of the knowledge economy and globalization processes affect the structure of the labour market, increasing the dependence of successful employment and effective professional activity of a person on the accumulated human capital, the most important role in the formation of which is played by the level and Modern trends in teachers’ education in Ukraine, the initiatives of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine are also determined; proposals and recommendations were developed regarding the beginning of the school year and solving the problems of participants in the educational process under martial law in such areas as:

The investigation on challenges for scientific and pedagogical staff of universities after pandemia 2019 prove out the uneven readiness of staff and departments for online mode, lack of technical equipment and other difficulties, many students gain a completely different educational experience in the Internet environment, and it is important for universities to identify weaknesses and develop the right monitoring methods in new conditions (Melnyk et al, 2022), but at the same time the research proved that the main trend in modern teachers’ education is the introduction of the “lifelong learning” model, which enables a person to adapt and develop their competencies and professional skills in accordance with rapid changes in the economy, technologies and labour markets. This model contains the following subsystems:

- non-formal education (by degree of institutionalization);
and the state final attestation, obtaining a state-
style document about the full general secondary
school education (if the person did not receive a
document on education in accordance with
legislation), are determined in accordance with
the Admission Procedure for obtaining higher,
professional pre-higher and professional
(vocational and technical) education of persons,
who live in the temporarily occupied territory of
the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city
of Sevastopol, the temporarily occupied territory
certain districts Donetsk and Luhansk regions,
territories of settlements on the line collision,
approved by the order of the Ministry of
Education and Science of Ukraine dated
01 March 2021 No. 271, registered in the
Ministry of Justice of Ukraine 15, April 2021
under No. 505/36127 (hereinafter – order
No. 271). (Ministry of Education and Science of
Ukraine, 2022c).

Ensuring the rights of teaching staff – the
recommendations included the instructions on
that the educational process is organized in a safe
educational environment and Methodological
recommendations regarding the organization of
the educational process in Universities in the
2022/2023 academic year – recommendations of
the Ministry of Education and Science.
The organization of the educational process can be
carried out in face-to-face and remote modes, or
in a mixed form that combines face-to-face and
distance modes. Such a combination is possible,
in particular, for different types of classes
(practical, laboratory classes are conducted face-
to-face, lectures are conducted remotely)
(Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine,
2022c). But as resent questioning has shown
that some right on teaching staff have been
brakes especially as for that financial protection
and social package (Melnyk, Kovtun, Kokareva,
Ladogubets & Luzik, 2022; Melnyk et al, 2022.).

The priority is the observance of academic integrity (Sorokina, Atyukhova & Degtyareva,
2017), the realization of the right of every student
of education to a fair, impartial, objective,
independent, non-discriminatory and honest
evaluation of the results of his studies, regardless
of the type and form of his education in the
conditions of distance and mixed learning
(Nedypich and Vasylenko, 2022).

Current trends of teachers’ education in
European Universities

The Covid-19 pandemic has created challenges
and caused disruption across the Higher
Education sector; university campuses closed,
and face-to-face teaching and assessment shifted
to an online format. Learning from our students’
experience during this period will help us shape
future hybrid delivery so that it best fits
Bioscience students. This pedagogical study
explored Aston University’s Bioscience
students’ experiences of studying from home,
and the impact of the lockdown on mental
wellbeing and quality of life. 151 students
completed an online survey during August 2020,
which included open and closed questions.
Analysis of survey data revealed that a majority
of students reported positive experiences of
online open-book assessments and most would
welcome this format in the future. The majority
of students faced no technical issues,
predominantly stating that they also had good
internet connectivity. Shifting to remote learning
and online classrooms uncovered conflicting
preferences; despite wanting more interactive
lectures, only half of the students were
comfortable interacting using video cameras.
Free text responses provided an insight into how
some students reported an inadequate home
working space/environment and lacked
necessary items such as a desk, highlighting how
remote working may intensify social and digital
inequality – particularly for students from more
deprived households. Wider detrimental
experiences of lockdown included dissatisfaction
with access to healthcare, decreased
concentration, sleeping difficulties and a decline
in mental wellbeing. Education strategies going
forward will need to address the mental health
needs of students who have suffered during the
pandemic (Bashir et al., 2021).

The analysis of A. Zancajo and others (2022) has
allowed us to identify three preponderant areas of
response: the digitalization of the educational
system, educational inequalities, and teachers’
development. The agendas and policy
instruments that international organizations have
so far pushed for in relation to each of these areas
do not differ substantially from the agendas and
instruments they promoted in the pre-pandemic
era. It is still early to assess the deepness of the
transformations in course, but in most cases,
pervailing responses represent the intensification
of change processes initiated before the
pandemic. Nonetheless, the type and intensity of
country responses vary among the European Union
member states. Although the pandemic
represents a common thread, countries have
experienced the crisis differently according to the
characteristics of their educational systems and
the main problems the crisis has revealed.
The investigation of OECD (2022) demonstrates that COVID-19 crisis has resulted in a significant increase in online learning by adults. Much of the training that had started as face-to-face in classroom environments has been pursued online. Furthermore, individuals are being encouraged to use the time freed up by short-time work schemes to take up new training. As such, the crisis provides a powerful test of the potential of learning online. It also highlights its key limitations, including the prerequisite of adequate digital skills, computer equipment and internet access to undertake training online, the difficulty of delivering traditional work-based learning online, and the struggle of teachers used to classroom instruction.

The digital competencies formation in European pedagogical universities. According to the investigation of Artacho, Martínez, Mart and others (2020) the arrival of information and communication technologies to the educational atmosphere has led to the development of the digital competence of teachers, which is one of the educational challenges teacher training has to face now. The authors have developed an evaluation of the development of digital competence in teachers of the Lifelong Learning stage in the community of Andalusia (Spain), which were based on existing dimensions of digital teacher competence and consists of 91 item. The authors grounded the different dimensions and the competencies such as Information and Information Literacy, Communication and Collaboration etc. The investigation’s results showed a deficit of teachers in the five digital dimensions. The authors proved that there was a direct relationship between previous information and communication technology (ICT) training and the dimensions of communication and collaboration, and content creation. The investigation helped to understand that the teachers concerned with preserve ICT training in LLL perspective. At the same time the authors also emphasized, that the development of digital teaching competence continues to be a challenge for the education system which must be addressed to, and it shall continue to be a key issue in the training of current teachers, as it is indeed a fundamental pillar for promoting a new way of teaching, being the only way to develop an areal teaching innovation panorama (Artacho et al, 2020).

The problem of relationship between university students’ perceptions of their academic environment, their approaches to study, and academic outcomes was investigated at both university and faculty levels by the group of scientist Lizzio, Wilson & Simons (2002). The responses of a large, cross-disciplinary sample of undergraduate students were analysed using higher order path and regression analyses, and the results confirmed students’ perceptions as influencing both ‘hard’ (academic achievement) and ‘soft’ (satisfaction, development of key skills) learning outcomes, both directly and mediated through their approaches to study. Perceptions of heavy workload and inappropriate assessment influenced students towards surface, and perceptions of good teaching towards deep, approaches to study. Students’ perceptions of their current learning environment were a stronger predictor of learning outcomes at university than prior achievement at school. (Lizzio, Wilson & Simons, 2002).

According to Koger et al., (2012) educational environment is a set of spatially-objective, social, information, psychological and pedagogical influences and conditions of personality formation serves as. The functions of educational environment are adaptive, formative, educational have been anylyse by Koger et al., (2012).

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has triggered international condemnation and what risks to be the worst humanitarian crisis on the European continent in 20 years. The European Students’ Union, together with the Global Student Forum and the Ukrainian Association of Students issued a joint statement condemning the invasion, and many ESU member unions published their statements against the war. The response of the European civil society has been a big mobilisation across the frontiers to provide help and support to people fleeing Ukraine and to those remaining in the country (The European Students’ Union, 2022). Among the useful measures of Ukrainian students and scholars support were flexibility way of transferring from Ukrainian University to European one, the financing of the scientific projects, which have been started in Ukraine, financing of scientific projects by different foundations and Universities alliances, the invitation and opening of the vacations to Ukrainian staff fleeing from war, the proposition of international internships etc. At the moment, one of the best ways to support the Ukrainian higher education community is through international credit mobility’s, also known as KA107, as Ukrainian Universities already have strong links with many Universities of Erasmus+ programme countries. International Credit Mobility scholarships is considered is one of the best practice in EU fot
substantial financial support, as it covers all the basic needs of Ukrainian students and faculty while allowing them to continue with their studies and academic careers (The European Students’ Union, 2022).

These last processes are determining the current teachers training trend in the European countries, influencing greatly on the Ukrainian pedagogical better and quicker integration into European universities’ communities dementias that it has been eve before.

Discussions

The grouted analysis of the trends of teachers’ education in Ukrainian and European pedagogical Universities allows to create the comparative table of the distinguished trends and to see in which points are these trends simile and where they differ.

Table 1.
Similarities and deference’s of current trends of teachers’ education in Ukrainian and European Universities

| № | The trend                                                                 | Current trends of teachers’ education in Ukrainian Universities | Current trends of teachers’ education in European Universities |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | The development of digital and distance and online education, under conditions of post COVID-19 period | +                                                              | +, creation of virtual learning                                   |
| 2 | The introduction of the “lifelong learning” model                        | +                                                              | + and sustainable society development conception                 |
| 3 | New competencies development                                              | +                                                              | + and creation competencies for the future                       |
| 4 | The implementation of state policy in The field of pedagogical education | +                                                              | +                                                              |
| 5 | A safe educational environment                                            | +, rethinking rebuilding and development new safe educational environment | +, the opportunity to enter to the universities for students who temporary moved from the occupied feretories and students who moved abroad and continue studying (or entered this year) | +, the opportunity to enter to European universities for students who temporary moved from the Ukraine and its occupied territories, students who moved abroad or entered this year |
| 6 | Ensuring the rights of education students                                 | +, not always are protected financially (getting salaries), not always are aware of the shelters place at the universities; not always staff are asked about if they want to work on line | +, all social package are survived                                |
| 7 | Ensuring the rights of teaching staff                                     | +                                                              | +                                                              |
| 8 | The observance of academic integrity                                     | +                                                              | +                                                              |
| 9 | Reviewing of the educational process in Universities                     | +                                                              | +                                                              |

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As we can see in the Table 1, the comparative analysis also demonstrates that educational programs, lists of educational literature, including those with the possibility of using electronic textbooks, manuals, and educational applications, need to be further updated in Ukrainian Universities what is visible from the lines 1, 3, and 9. The implementation of an individual approach in the educational process, its personalization and the development of the cognitive activity of those who gets teacher education, including for students with special educational needs, will be implemented in the future what is presented by lines 4–6.

The continuity needs the implementation and support for the development of an effective system of digital transformation in Ukrainian universities in the following directions: the digital educational environment is accessible and modern; development of digital competencies of participants in the educational process; the content of ICT education meets modern requirements; services and processes in the field of education are transparent, convenient and efficient; introduction of electronic document flow (lines 1, 3). In the conditions of conducting an information hybrid war, it remains important to ensure the conditions for providing access to the participants of the educational process to the safe use of the Internet, the formation of skills of safe behaviour on the Internet, providing computers with licensed programs, technical means and other control tools that limit access to sites with unwanted content during the online behavior of children and adults.

Heads of universities actually took responsibility for making management decisions in the new conditions of Ukrainian universities education process (studying and work), adapting regulatory documents and recommendations of central executive bodies in the field of education (lines 9). They are recommended to use external (including scheduled/unscheduled institutional audit) and internal (conducting the procedure of self-assessment of educational and management processes, development of the internal system of ensuring the quality of education in educational institutions) tools for the development of the education quality system, adapting them to the conditions of conducting educational and management activities in the conditions of martial law and the post-war period (line 4).

Conclusions

The investigation demonstrated that in general current trends of teachers’ education in Ukrainian and European Universities are almost similar, which proves, that Ukrainian pedagogical education in universities has been well integrated into the European educational and scientific space, is developing taking into account the trends and advanced practices of universities of leading European universities. The indicated trends are also related to the fact that in the last decade in the Ukrainian scientific community, not only the implementation of comparative pedagogical research was intensified, but also the trajectory of international cooperation and cooperation was built, the industry of developing scientific projects and finding partners developed, which has a positive effect on the overall quality of higher pedagogical education in Ukraine, although the issues of student and teacher academic mobility remain open for discussion. However, the problem of academic mobility is a matter of a separate scientific analysis and requires an in-depth study of the root causes of the low interactivity of such mobility in Ukrainian universities, in particular in the pedagogical space, which is a perspective for further scientific research by the authors of this scientific project.

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