The effectiveness of guided question technique to improve student' ability in writing descriptive text in the seventh grade of SMPN 1 Pabelan

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Keywords: *Guided Question Technique, Writing Ability, Descriptive Text*	A B S T R A C T The objectives of the study were to find out the effectiveness of using the guided questions technique to improve students' ability in writing descriptive text and the profile of students' ability to write descriptive text before and after using the guided question technique the seventh grade of SMPN 1 Pabelan in the academic year 2023/2024. The researcher utilized a true experimental research method for this research. This research used a random sampling technique to obtain a sample. In seventh grade, there are 6 parallel classes, each class takes 5 students as samples. So, they were collected into one class as a control class and an experimental class. A test was employed as the means for gathering the data. The students' descriptive writing skills were assessed before treatment using a pretest. Following the treatment, their abilities were measured again using a post-test. Statistical analysis was conducted on the collected data from the test. The result showed the differences in students' writing ability before and after using the guided question technique. The student's lowest pretest result was 30. After using the guided question technique, the student's post-test result showed the number 80. Meanwhile, after taking part in the lesson using the guided question technique, the lowest post-test result was 80, the highest post-test result was 95. This shows that the use of the guided question technique is effective in improving students' ability to write. The data analysis revealed that the research hypothesis was confirmed as the T –Test value of ±25.154 was greater than the T – Table value of 2.045. The table has 29 degrees of freedom (df). This means that using guided questions techniques is effective enough to improve students' writing skill

1. INTRODUCTION

Language plays an important role in students' cognitive, social, and emotional development of students and is a pillar of academic success. Language learning in schools involves sequences where failure to master at any point means increasing difficulty and failure later on(Cartwright, 2010). Language learning is necessary for students to navigate the world for themselves and others. It can help the students to know themselves, their culture, and other people's culture. The mastery of language will also help students to express ideas and feelings and participate actively in people's lives. They can use analytical and imaginative abilities to develop their potential.

English, as a world language, is a means of communication in a globalized world(Windi & Suryaman, 2022). When someone communicates with English speakers, they must understand what is heard and conveyed. It has the aim to express information, ideas, and feelings and to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The goal of learning English is to communicate in that

language. There are four skills in language learning to communicate which include speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Those four skills will facilitate someone in responding or creating discourse on life and international community relations.

English is a compulsory subject taught from elementary school to university(Wardani et al., 2017). Students must master four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. As a language skill, writing plays an important role in formal communication. Therefore, English lessons are directed to develop competent communication (communicative competence) by hoping that students can communicate and talk in English at all literacy levels when they graduate. In learning English, four competencies must be learned, namely listening, speaking, writing, and reading (Kurniasih, 2016) . One of the basic competencies learned in the seventh grade of junior high school is writing descriptive text. The students must have writing skills, it is very important because they can communicate their knowledge, experiences, ideas, and feelings, in a set of writing(Asiah et al., 2020). Writing is taught to English language learners for several reasons: reinforcement, language development, learning style, and most importantly, as a crucial skill(Deviani, Sofian, 2017). There are four steps in writing. Firstly, the writers create ideas. Secondly, the writers organize their ideas. Thirdly, the writers make a rough draft. In the last step, the writers edit, revise, and refine the draft(Oshima et al., 2007). People use writing for several purposes variety, it has a lot of different forms of producing(Harmer, 2010). These students are expected to master the basic competencies set out in the 2013 curriculum. So the teachers are encouraged to create a pleasant learning atmosphere and use learning models that require students to be active in the process(Hardi et al., 2022). Learning is an educational process that provides opportunities for students to develop their potential to become competent, in terms of attitude, knowledge, and skills in writing. Writing is a method of moving the mind or feelings into written form or figure to be studied or understood through someone. From the above, it may be concluded that writing is a method of moving thoughts or feelings in the shape of symbols (letters or numbers), which describes a language to be read and understood by way of others(Pasaribu, 2019). Some internal factors influence writing activity for the writer or students(Nicolás-Conesa et al., 2014). With the existence of an independent curriculum, it is expected that learning in urban or rural areas, and public and private schools are equal in learning achievement. But sometimes human resources are also different, so they will get different achievements (http.kemendikbud.go.id).

English in Indonesia is categorized as a foreign language, and the students still have many difficulties in learning, especially those who come from rural areas and have just entered junior high school. There is material for writing descriptive text in the English syllabus for seventh grade of junior high school. A descriptive text is a text that contains some detailed information about something, there are people, places, things, and animals. There are two generic structures in descriptive text. The first is identification, this part has the purpose to explain the topic's general description and the unique qualities of the person, thing, or placement discussed. The second is description, which describes the illustration of people's explanation, features of physics, explanation of the purpose, features explanation and their use, explanation of interesting facts description of properties. In the part of identification, the students identify the characteristics of the subject. Here, the student tries to present the substance. In the part of the description, the students may describe characteristics, a particular part, and the object's qualities (Rusmawan, 2017). The main purpose of the descriptive text is to explain or describe an object particularly based on the observed facts(Fadilah & Zuhra, 2022).

There are some learning models and techniques in improving students' writing skill in descriptive text. The teacher can apply one of the models or techniques based on the competence that will be reached. One of the factors that influence students' competence and achievement is teaching and learning method employed in teaching and learning process(Lukmawardani & Badriyah, 2022). One of the competencies is writing and the students are still confused about how to write. Besides, students also have difficulties related to the time allocation when they have to write(Rahmawati, 2021). They also have some difficulties in translating and making paragraphs(Vera & Satriani, 2019). The teacher tries to use the guided question technique to guide students to improve their skills in writing descriptive text. Guided questions can help students develop ideas and writing skills. Guided questions are key questions that seek understanding (Traver, 1998). These key questions encourage students to provide answers or responses. This method uses a series of questions to get students to think about a specific topic. With this technique, students are stimulated to think critically about a certain topic, so that they can find ideas for writing. Fadilah & Zuhra (2022) said that after students are given treatment with the guided question technique, they can develop their ideas to make better descriptive texts, and they have no difficulty in writing texts. The average results show that the use of the guided question technique is very effective. Also, the same result said by(Indrasari & Julita, 2018), that the use of questions and answers had a massive effect on students' ability to write descriptive text is proven by the results of students' post-tests after being given treatment with guided question techniques in learning. The students have increased their ability to write descriptive text. The other study said that the questions technique is very helpful for ESL learners. They felt comfortable and easier to write paragraphs(Maharaj & Alsolami, 2018).

This study examines students' writing ability before and after using the Guided Question Technique and evaluate its effectiveness to improve students' ability in writing descriptive text. In this research there are differences with the results of research conducted by previous researchers. Even though it takes the same topic, this research uses research subjects in different classes and uses different research methods from previous research.

2. METHOD

This research uses true-experimental research with a pretest-posttest control group(Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This research uses one class as a control and treatment group.

2.1 Population and samples

The population in this study comprised seventh-grade students of SMP N 1 Pabelan during the 2023/2024 academic year. There were 203 students, distributed across six parallel classes (VII A–VII F). Each class, except VII F, consisted of 34 students, while VII F had 33 students. The distribution of the students in each class is presented in Table

Table.1 The population of the students of SMP N I Pabelan

No	Class	Number of students
1	VII A	34
2	VII B	34
3	VII C	34
4	VII D	34
5	VII E	34
6	VII F	33
	TOTAL	203

Given the relatively large number of students, it was necessary to select a representative sample for the study. The sampling method employed was random sampling, ensuring that each student had an equal and independent chance of being chosen. This method helps to minimize selection bias and enhances the generalizability of the findings. From each of the six classes, five students were randomly selected, resulting in a total sample size of 30 students. This approach maintains proportional representation across all classes while keeping the sample manageable for in-depth analysis. The distribution of the sample is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The sample of the Seventh Grade Students at SMP N I Pabelan

No	Class	Number of students
1	VII A	5
2	VII B	5
3	VII C	5
4	VII D	5
5	VII E	5
6	VII F	5
TOTAL		30

Random sampling was chosen to ensure that the sample accurately represents the overall population of seventh-grade students at SMP N 1 Pabelan. This technique eliminates researcher bias and increases the likelihood that the findings can be generalized to all students in the same academic level. Additionally, by selecting an equal number of students from each class, class-based variation is balanced, preventing any specific class from having an undue influence on the study results. This method enhances the validity and reliability of the study, allowing for meaningful conclusions to be drawn about the broader student population.

2.2 Instrument and data collection

This research used an instrument to find the effectiveness of using guided question technique in improving students' writing ability. The instrument was given to students as pretest and posttest. This study's investigation uses one group only. In this investigation, a single group functioned as both the control group before the introduction of the test treatment and the group experiment following its introduction. Test results or other information obtained before treatment is categorized as data from the control group, whereas information gathered following treatment is categorized as data from the group experiment.

Meanwhile, the sample subjects were students in the seventh grade (VII), where the students of class VII are chosen randomly. In this case, the research took a group of class VII as a controlled with genre-based approach and experimental group treated with a guided question technique.

2.3 Data analysis technique

The type of instrument used in the study, tested to measure the ability to write descriptive text. The format of the writing test is an instruction to students to create descriptive text based on the topic given by the writer. The instrument was previously consulted with relevant experts to verify the validity of the content and then tested on seventh-grade students at the same school to confirm its empirical validity. In addition, the test was conducted in two stages, initially a pre-test was performed before treatment to determine the ability of the student and was used as the first study

data. The second stage was a post-test, conducted after treatment, aimed at achieving an increase in the ability to write descriptive text.

As a result, the data obtained from the test results were processed and given a score for each student's answer according to the rubric ratings and guidelines used. Further data processing was performed using SPSS.28.00

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

This research was conducted using a Pretest-Posttest Control group Design, namely, there is an initial test (pre-test) given after the students have followed learning with a genre-based approach in writing descriptive text to find out the initial state. After that, students were given treatment in the form of guided question techniques in writing descriptive text, and then a final test (post-test) was given to find out the effectiveness of the guided question technique on students' results in writing descriptive text after being given treatment.

The following are the pre-test and post-test results obtained by students in writing descriptive texts based on an assessment rubric with five aspects.

Table 3 reveals the result of students' pre-test. These pre-test results were obtained after students participated in learning with a genre-based approach. Students are given pre-test questions in the form of essays. The pre-test scores assess students' writing abilities across five aspects: Content, Organization, Vocabulary, Language Use, and Mechanics.

Table 3. The result of the Pre-test

No	Respondent	Aspect of Assessment					Score total
		Content	Organization	Vocabulary	Language use	Mechanics	
1	APP	10	5	10	5	5	35
2	AAF	15	5	10	5	5	40
3	AMA	10	10	10	5	5	40
4	AA	10	5	10	5	5	35
5	AAW	10	10	10	5	5	40
6	DAS	10	5	5	5	5	30
7	DRA	20	15	15	15	10	75
8	DAB	15	10	10	5	5	45
9	FTN	15	10	5	5	5	40
10	FOY	15	5	10	15	5	50
11	FDP	15	10	15	5	5	50
12	IPR	20	15	15	15	15	80
13	KP	10	5	5	10	5	35
14	KRP	15	5	5	5	5	35
15	KN	15	10	5	5	5	40
16	KAS	10	5	5	5	5	30
17	LAK	15	5	5	5	5	35
18	MSA	15	5	10	5	5	40
19	MAF	10	5	5	5	5	30
20	MDP	15	5	5	5	5	35
21	MDB	15	10	10	5	5	45
22	MRA	10	5	5	5	5	30
23	NSA	15	10	5	10	5	45

No	Respondent	Aspect of Assessment					Score total
		Content	Organization	Vocabulary	Language use	Mechanics	
24	NRD	10	5	5	5	5	30
25	NAR	10	5	5	5	5	30
26	OWP	15	10	5	10	5	45
27	RMP	15	5	10	10	5	45
28	SIA	15	5	5	5	5	35
29	SVR	10	10	5	10	5	40
30	ZF	10	10	5	10	5	40

The total scores range from 30 to 80, indicating variation in writing proficiency among the respondents. The highest score, 80, was achieved by respondent IPR, while the lowest score, 30, was recorded by six students (DAS, KAS, MAF, MRA, NRD, and NAR). The majority of students scored between 30 and 45, reflecting an overall moderate to low writing ability.

In terms of specific assessment aspects, content scores varied between 10 and 20, with most students scoring 10 or 15, indicating a general struggle in developing and organizing ideas. Organization scores were predominantly low, with many students receiving only 5 or 10 points, suggesting difficulties in structuring their writing logically. Vocabulary scores showed slight variation, with most students scoring 5 or 10, demonstrating a limited range of word choices. Language use, which includes grammar and sentence structure, was one of the weakest areas, as most students scored between 5 and 10, highlighting significant grammatical challenges. Lastly, mechanics, which assess spelling, punctuation, and formatting, had consistently low scores, with almost all students receiving 5 points, indicating frequent errors in basic writing conventions.

A notable trend in the data is that only two students, DRA and IPR, scored above 70, showing stronger writing proficiency compared to their peers. The rest of the students displayed varying levels of difficulty across different aspects of writing, with most struggling particularly in language use and organization. These results suggest a need for focused instruction in content development, grammar, and mechanics to improve students' overall writing performance.

Meanwhile, table 4 below shows the result of the post-test. The following are the results of the students' post-test after they received learning using guided question techniques. Students are asked to write simple descriptive texts related to people.

Table 4. The result of the Post-test

No	Respondent	Aspect of Assessment					Score total
		Content	Organization	Vocabulary	Language use	Mechanics	
1	APP	20	15	15	15	15	80
2	AAF	20	15	15	15	15	80
3	AMA	20	15	20	15	10	80
4	AA	20	15	15	15	15	80
5	AAW	15	15	15	15	15	75
6	DAS	20	15	15	15	10	75
7	DRA	20	15	20	20	20	95
8	DAB	20	15	15	15	15	80
9	FTN	15	15	15	15	15	75

No	Respondent	Aspect of Assessment					Score total
		Content	Organization	Vocabulary	Language use	Mechanics	
10	FOY	20	15	15	15	15	80
11	FDP	20	15	15	15	10	75
12	IPR	20	15	20	20	20	95
13	KP	20	15	15	15	15	80
14	KRP	15	15	15	15	15	75
15	KN	20	15	20	15	10	80
16	KAS	20	15	15	15	10	75
17	LAK	20	15	15	15	15	80
18	MSA	20	15	15	15	15	80
19	MAF	15	15	15	15	15	75
20	MDP	20	15	15	15	15	80
21	MDB	20	15	15	15	15	80
22	MRA	20	15	15	15	15	80
23	NSA	20	15	15	15	15	80
24	NRD	20	15	15	15	10	75
25	NAR	20	15	15	20	15	85
26	OWP	20	11	15	15	15	80
27	RMP	20	20	15	15	10	80
28	SIA	15	5	15	15	15	75
29	SVR	20	15	15	15	15	80
30	ZF	20	15	15	15	15	80

The post-test results indicate a significant improvement in students' writing performance, with scores ranging from 75 to 95. The majority of students scored 80, demonstrating consistent progress across all assessed aspects. The highest scores of 95 were achieved by DRA and IPR, reflecting strong proficiency in content development, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Additionally, NAR scored 85, positioning them among the highest achievers in the class.

In terms of content, most students scored 20 points, suggesting better idea development and coherence in their writing. Organization and vocabulary were also notably improved, with nearly all students scoring 15 or higher, indicating a stronger ability to structure their writing logically and use a more varied vocabulary. Language use, which includes grammar and sentence structure, showed a marked enhancement, with scores mostly in the 15-20 range, reducing the grammatical errors observed in the pre-test. Mechanics, which previously had low scores, improved to 10-15 points for most students, showing fewer issues with spelling and punctuation. Overall, the post-test results reflect a significant improvement in students' writing skills, suggesting that the instructional approach effectively enhanced their abilities. The consistent increase in scores across all assessment aspects indicates better comprehension and application of writing conventions, with a notable rise in proficiency for students who previously struggled.

Furthermore, the researcher also calculate the N-gain score which is displayed in table 5 below.

Table 5. N-Gain Score

No	Respondents	Pretest	Posttest	Post - Pre	Score ideal (100-Pre)	N – Gain score	N - Gain score (%)
1	APP	35	80	45	65	0,69	69,23
2	AAF	40	80	40	60	0,67	66,67
3	AMA	40	80	45	60	0,75	75,00
4	AA	35	80	45	65	0,69	69,23
5	AAW	40	75	35	60	0,58	58,33
6	DAS	30	75	50	70	0,71	71,43
7	DRA	75	95	20	25	0,80	80,00
8	DAB	45	80	35	55	0,64	63,64
9	FTN	40	75	35	60	0,58	58,33
10	FOY	50	80	30	50	0,60	60,00
11	FDP	50	75	30	50	0,60	60,00
12	IPR	80	95	15	20	0,75	75,00
13	KP	35	80	45	65	0,69	69,23
14	KRP	35	75	40	65	0,62	61,54
15	KN	40	80	45	60	0,75	75,00
16	KAS	30	75	50	70	0,71	71,43
17	LAK	35	80	45	65	0,69	69,23
18	MSA	40	80	40	60	0,67	66,67
19	MAF	30	75	45	70	0,64	64,29
20	MDP	35	80	45	65	0,69	69,23
21	MDB	45	80	35	55	0,64	63,64
22	MRA	30	80	50	70	0,71	71,43
23	NSA	45	80	35	55	0,64	63,64
24	NRD	30	75	50	70	0,71	71,43
25	NAR	30	85	55	70	0,79	78,57
26	OWP	45	80	35	55	0,64	63,64
27	RMP	45	80	40	55	0,73	72,73
28	SIA	35	75	40	65	0,62	61,54
29	SVR	40	80	40	60	0,67	66,67
30	ZF	40	80	40	60	0,67	66,67
	Average	40,83	80,83	40,00	59,17	0,68	67,78

Table 7. N –gain effectiveness interpretation category

N –gain effectiveness interpretation category	
Percentage (%)	Category
< 40	Ineffective
40 - 55	Less Effective
56 - 75	Effective enough
>76	Effective

Source: Hake 1999

The N-Gain Score analysis shows an average gain of 0.68 (67.78%), categorizing the intervention as "Effective Enough" based on Hake's (1999) interpretation. Individual scores range from 58.33% to 80%, with DRA (80.00%) and NAR (78.57%) in the "Effective" category, indicating strong improvement. Most students scored between 60% and 75%, confirming moderate to high

learning gains. Based on the above table, shows that the N-gain score is 67. 78 which included in percentage 56 - 75. The results highlight the effectiveness of the teaching by guided question technique in enhancing students' writing skills across all assessment aspects.

The calculation of the paired samples T-test can be seen in the following table:

Table 8. Paired T-test

	Paired Differences							Significance	
			Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
	Mean	Std. Deviation		Lower	Upper	t	df	One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
Pair 1 pretest - postest	--40.000	8.710	1.590	-43.252	-36.748	±25.154	29	<.001	<.001

Based on the table above, it is known that the sig value is 0.001 < 0.5, meaning that Ha is accepted and H0 is rejected, which indicates that there is a significant average difference between pre-test and post-test learning outcomes related to the effectiveness of the guide question technique in descriptive writing.

Table 9. Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	pretest	40.83	30	11.603	2.118
	postest	80.83	30	4.749	.867

The table above shows the average score of students' writing ability before and after using the guided question technique (GQT). It can be seen that the mean score of the pre-test is 40.83 with the 11.603 standard deviation and 2.118 standard error mean. The average score of the post-test is 80. 83 with the 4.794 standard deviation, and .867 standard error mean.

Table 10. Finding Research

The mean score of the Pre-test	40.83
The mean score of the Post-test	80.83
N-gain score (%)	67.78
2-tailed sig. value	0.001
T-test	±25.154
T-table	2.045

Overall, based on the table presented, started from Table 1, it can be seen that the average score of students' pre-test is the most students still considered as low average score. The minimum score is 30, and the maximum score is 80. There are only two students who are categorized as getting excellent scores. It can be inferred that there are many of the students are having difficulty in writing descriptive text.

After students are given treatment with guided question techniques, they are asked to write descriptive text as a post-test. Based on Table 2, the lowest score is shown at 75, while the highest score is 95. So, it can be said that the student's scores increased after receiving treatment in the form of guided question techniques.

It also can be seen in table 8, table 9, and table 10, based on the paired sample T-test calculation that the researcher conducted, it is discovered that the result is Ha is accepted, and H0 is rejected. This is proven with the sample paired T-test calculation results, where the 2-tailed significant value is 0.001 which is lower results, than 0.05 (0.001 > 0.05). Then, the T-test value is ±25.154 which is lower than the T-table value, which is 2.045 (±25.154 > 2.045). This can be interpreted that there is a significant difference in students' writing ability after being taught by the guided question technique. Moreover, the N-gain value was obtained, which is 67.78%. The N gain value is included in the percentage 56-75 and categorized in the medium category. It is concluded that teaching students using the guided question technique can be said effective in teaching writing ability for the teachers and the students because there is a significant enhancement in the medium of effectiveness.

3.2 Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the guided question technique significantly improves students' writing skills in descriptive texts. The statistical analysis revealed that the mean pre-test score was 40.83, while the mean post-test score increased significantly to 80.83, indicating a substantial improvement in students' writing performance. The N-gain score of 67.78% further supports the effectiveness of the intervention.

Furthermore, the results of the t-test show that the t-test value (±25.154) is much higher than the t-table value (2.045) at a 0.05 significance level, with a 2-tailed sig. value of 0.001. Since the significance value is below 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, confirming that the guided question technique had a statistically significant impact on students' writing abilities.

These findings align with previous research. (Alwahibee, 2019) found that using guided writing templates helped students enhance their writing skills. Similarly, (Saragi et al., 2021) demonstrated that the guided questioning technique, particularly when combined with film media, effectively improved students' ability to write narrative paragraphs. (Pertiwi & Kareviati, 2021) also reported that students perceived leading questions as a helpful method for developing their writing skills. The results of the present study reinforce these findings, providing strong statistical evidence that structured questioning can enhance students' ability to organize and express their ideas more effectively in writing.

The significant improvement observed in this study can be attributed to the scaffolding provided by the guided questions, which helped students generate ideas, structure their sentences correctly, and produce more coherent texts. Many students, particularly beginners, struggle with writing due to difficulties in idea development and text organization. By providing a structured framework, the guided question technique reduces cognitive load and enables students to focus on content development rather than struggling with where to begin.

While these results confirm the effectiveness of the guided question technique, some limitations must be considered. The study was conducted in a limited classroom setting with Grade 7 students and focused only on descriptive texts. Future research could explore the application of this technique to other types of writing, such as narrative or argumentative texts, and examine its long-term impact on students' writing development. Additionally, comparing the effectiveness of guided questioning with other writing strategies could provide further insights into its pedagogical advantages.

Overall, the statistical findings provide strong evidence that the guided question technique is an effective instructional approach for improving students' descriptive writing skills.

Given its significant impact, educators should consider incorporating guided questioning into their writing instruction to enhance students' writing proficiency and overall language development.

4. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study highlight that one of the primary challenges students face in writing descriptive texts is their difficulty in organizing and expressing ideas. Many students struggle to begin writing because they are unsure of what to write and how to structure their thoughts. The implementation of the guided question technique provided a structured approach that helped students generate ideas more effectively and organize their writing with greater ease. Based on the research conducted on seventh-grade students at SMPN 1 Pabelan, the following conclusions can be drawn.

Prior to using the guided question technique, students' writing skills were relatively low, as reflected in their pre-test scores. Many students faced challenges in expressing their ideas coherently due to a lack of structured guidance. Their scores were below the minimum criteria for completeness, indicating the need for an effective instructional approach to support their writing development. Furthermore, the effectiveness of the guided question technique is evident in the significant improvement in students' writing ability. The comparison between pre-test and post-test scores demonstrates a substantial increase.

Overall, the guided question technique has proven to be an effective instructional strategy for teaching descriptive text writing. It allows students to be more actively engaged in the learning process and fosters a student-centered learning environment. By guiding students through structured questioning, this technique enhances their ability to develop and organize ideas, ultimately leading to improved writing skills. Therefore, it is recommended that educators incorporate guided questioning into their teaching practices to support students in becoming more confident and proficient writers.

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