



# Exploring the Arabic Learning Strategies at Senior High School

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## ABSTRACT

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### Keywords:

Arabic learning;  
Language acquisition;  
Learning strategy;  
Pedagogical approach.

This research aims to reveal and describe the Arabic language learning strategies implemented at Al-Falah Senior High School Padang. This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach, The data collection methods used in this research are interview with head and two arabic teachers. Then, observation by directly observing Arabic language learning activities carried out in this Madrasah. The data analysis technique steps used in this research are: Data Collection, data collection activities in this research are by using interviews, observation and documentation. then Data Reduction, Data Presentation, Verification and confirmation of conclusions. The research findings are the Arabic learning at this school shows a comprehensive approach through combining the Merdeka and 2013 curriculum. Although various learning methods and media have been implemented, including Sam'iyah Syafawiyah, Qawa'id wa Tarjamah, and projectors LCD and computers, the main challenge lies in the lack of student interest, It is caused by the low relevance of the material to their needs or interests,. Learning evaluation includes assessment of attitudes, knowledge competencies, and skills, providing a holistic picture of student progress. Although efforts are made through extracurricular and special programs, in-depth evaluation of learning strategies in dormitories is crucial to increasing learning effectiveness. The implications of this research indicate the need for enhancing teaching strategies and student motivation to overcome the challenge of insufficient interest in learning Arabic at this school, By focusing on designing materials relevant to daily life and conducting ongoing evaluations of extracurricular Arabic language programs in the boarding school..



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## A. INTRODUCTION

As one of the six official languages of the United Nations, the Arabic language depicts a rich and profound history, playing a significant role in the development of the world (Hassan, 2012). Arabic is the language used in the Quran, Hadith, and other classical texts, making it highly significant for the Muslim community (Bassiouny & Katz, 2012). This aligns with the viewpoint of Ismail Suwardi Wekke, who asserts that Arabic plays a crucial role in Islam as it is employed for communication regarding matters related to the Islamic faith (Wekke, 2019). So that, Arabic is one of the foreign languages studied in Indonesia, being taught in both public and private schools

as well as in Islamic boarding schools (Hasibuan & Jundi, 2023a). Specifically, in madrasahs Arabic is a compulsory subject and is examined at the national level (Wekke, 2016).

A teacher or educator plays a crucial role and has primary responsibilities in conducting the teaching and educational process optimally (Alyahyan & Düşteğör, 2020). Kim emphasizes that for educational activities to be effective, achieve desired goals, and run smoothly, a teacher must understand the essence of the teaching and learning activities (Kim & Park, 2017). This includes understanding what is taught, to whom the material is taught, the objectives of learning, how to measure success, and the teaching methods used (Hasibuan & Fitriani, 2023). To achieve optimal results, all these aspects need to be carefully organized and planned, involving appropriate strategies so that the learning process can be efficient and effective (Noor et al., 2021). With a deep understanding of the essence of teaching and learning activities, a teacher can make a positive contribution to shaping a generation of quality individuals capable of reaching their maximum potential (Hasibuan, Haerullah, et al., 2023).

Apart from being a teacher, teachers also act as learning facilitators who can motivate and inspire students to understand and master Arabic. In the context of Arabic language learning strategies, the teacher's role becomes very vital because of their ability to choose and implement learning strategies that suit the needs and characteristics of students. Teachers also have a role in creating a conducive and supportive learning environment, so that students can more easily understand the learning material. Therefore, learning strategies in teaching Arabic really depend on the role and skills of the teacher in applying them.

Learning strategies encompass a planning process consisting of rules, steps, and tools implemented from the beginning to the end of the learning process within the classroom with the aim of achieving desired outcomes (Lesort et al., 2020). The implementation of learning strategies aims to enable learners to absorb learning materials more effectively and efficiently (An et al., 2020). In this context, learning strategies that involve less student participation or are monotonous may potentially make them feel bored and lose motivation in learning (Canbay, 2020). The impact of this can lead to failure in achieving learning objectives optimally. Therefore, the importance of learning strategies cannot be overlooked because through the selection of appropriate strategies, the learning process can become more dynamic, interactive, and tailored to the needs of learners, opening opportunities for the achievement of learning objectives with satisfactory outcomes.

In the context of Arabic language teaching, learning strategies serve as the primary foundation in the effort to convey instructional materials to students with the goal of ensuring that the content is understood and accepted effectively (Abboud, 1971). The responsibility of instructors to apply these strategies requires proficient skills and abilities. Strategies are considered effective tools or solutions, and with proper practice and focus, anyone can become adept at improvising them (Buehl, 2023). The success of Arabic language learning heavily depends on the strategies applied (Hasibuan, Fitriani, et al., 2023). Therefore, strategies play a central role in achieving optimal methods and content in the process of teaching the language.

However, it is important to remember that Arabic is a foreign language taught in Indonesia (Kamusella, 2017). Despite being a subject in formal schools, there are differences in the learning process compared to non-formal curricula, such as those in Islamic boarding schools, where more time is allocated for Arabic language learning (Hasibuan & Jundi, 2023b). Challenges and issues in Arabic language learning cannot be avoided (Al-Qatawneh et al., 2020). Noor Amirudin reveals that one of the problems frequently encountered in teaching Arabic or foreign languages is related to enrichment, methods, and teaching strategies (Admin & Amirudin, 2017). Therefore,

understanding and adapting teaching strategies become crucial keys in overcoming various challenges in the process of learning the Arabic language in Indonesia.

Arabic language learning in Indonesia faces a number of problems that affect the effectiveness and quality of teaching (Ritonga et al., 2021). One of the main problems is the lack of qualified and experienced Arabic teachers. Many schools, including SMA Al-Falah Padang, have difficulty finding Arabic teachers who can teach well and understand students' needs thoroughly. This can result in limitations in the teaching methods used, as well as a lack of variation in the learning strategies applied. Apart from that, the lack of adequate resources and learning facilities is also a serious problem in teaching Arabic (Hasibuan et al., 2024). Available textbooks may be limited, lack of access to relevant and up-to-date teaching materials, and lack of technological support in the Arabic language learning process can hinder teaching effectiveness (Balakrishnan & Gan, 2016).

The relevance of this problem to the research focus of identifying Arabic language teaching strategies is very strong. By understanding the problems faced in learning Arabic, research can be more focused on finding the right solution. This research will involve in-depth analysis with the aim of exploring various effective teaching methods and strategies. The use of modern technology, creative educational resources, and innovative learning approaches will be the focus in identifying the best ways to teach Arabic. Thus, it is hoped that the results of this research can make a significant contribution in improving the quality of Arabic language education, which in turn will have a positive impact on students' understanding and mastery of Arabic, so that they can apply Arabic in various contexts of daily life and strengthen their Islamic identity.

## **B. METHODS**

The participant of this research involved the head of Al Falah senior high School Padang, 2 Arabic language teacher's at this madrasah, They are Mr. MA and Mrs. HD. And the class X students. The total number of class X students are 74 consist of 1 male classes and 2 female classes. The reason this class was chosen as sample, it was because this class is implementing the mardeka curriculum and then the studets in this class have different backgrounds, not all students have a previous background in Arabic. This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach, which aims to describe and analyze the Arabic language matriculation program's classroom learning process from both the tutor's and student's perspectives (Rukajat, 2018). This approach is suitable for this research since it allows for a comprehensive understanding of the strategy of arabic learning in this school.

The data collection methods used in this research are observation and interview (Jamshed, 2014). The initial data collection process was carried out through interview techniques with the head of Al Falah Senior High School Padang and 2 Arabic teachers at this madrasah, who then recorded information that substantively supported and strengthened the aspects studied. Furthermore, the observation technique was carried out by directly observing Arabic language learning activities carried out in this Madrasah. By combining data from interviews and observations, it is hoped that the data collected will have greater accuracy and depth, as well as provide a comprehensive picture of the Arabic language learning strategies implemented at this institution (Cowie, 2009).

Data collected from observations will be analyzed using deduction and description methods (Miles, 2014). The data analysis technique steps used in this research are: Data Collection, data collection activities in this research are by using interviews, observation and documentation. then Data Reduction, Data Presentation, Verification and confirmation of conclusions. On the other hand, data collected from recorded interviews will first be transcribed. Then, the data will be

simplified by removing information that is not relevant to the research focus. The simplified data will then be summarized and analyzed. Next, data from both methods will be compared, and a narrative will be created to draw conclusions (Merriam, 1988).

## C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Arabic Learning Curriculum at Al Falah Senior High School Padang

Arabic language learning at Madrasah Aliyah Swasta al-Falah consists of compulsory Arabic and specialization Arabic. Arabic language requires teaching materials to consist of mufradat, maharah istima', maharah kalam, maharah qira'ah and kitabah. Meanwhile, the Arabic specialization learning material is specifically about nahwu and sharf and is taught to IPK majors. For classes XI and XII, classes are divided based on majors, namely religion, science and social studies. This kind of thing gives students the opportunity to study Arabic according to their interests and needs in the future (Jundi & Hasibuan, 2023). With this approach, al-Falah Senior High School not only provides a strong foundation in mastering Arabic but also provides space for skill development according to each student's career choices.

The curriculum used is the Merdeka curriculum and the 2013 curriculum. The Merdeka curriculum is used by class X, while class XI and class XII use the 2013 curriculum. In the Merdeka curriculum, educators no longer use lesson plans but use teaching modules. This is because in the Merdeka curriculum the teaching materials are prepared simply and focus on the four goals that must be achieved by students and in the learning process they pay great attention to the character of all students (Masturoh & Mahmudi, 2023). At class XI and XII are 2 hours of lessons a week, where 1 hour of lessons is equivalent to 40 minutes. Even though the curriculum used by Al-Falah Senior High School Padang is not too different from madrasas in general, there is innovation in implementing the independent curriculum. However, in the learning process, according to an Arabic language teacher, there are no significant differences compared to the previous approach. This is because the independent curriculum is still in the testing stage and is not yet considered efficient to be implemented as a whole.

### 2. Arabic Learning Components at Al Falah Senior High School Padang

#### a. Objectives Learning

The general objectives of learning Arabic at Al-Falah Senior High School are: (1) Develop communication skills in Arabic, both orally and in writing, which includes four language skills, namely listening (*istima'*), speaking (*kalam*), reading (*qira'ah*), and writing (*kitabah*); (2) Raising awareness about the importance of Arabic as a foreign language to become the main tool for learning, especially in studying sources of Islamic teachings; and (3) Develop an understanding of the interrelationship between language and culture and broaden cultural horizons.

Meanwhile, the learning objectives are precisely tailored to the goals of the instructional materials being presented. With reference to the Arabic language learning objectives outlined earlier, there is a sincere expectation that the instructional process will align seamlessly with these objectives. This alignment is crucial as learning objectives serve as the benchmarks to be achieved throughout the educational journey (Hasibuan, Jundi, et al., 2023). They represent the desired outcomes and accomplishments that students are meant to achieve as they engage with the learning materials. Therefore, the meticulous adaptation of learning objectives ensures a purposeful and effective learning process (Dörnyei, 2020).

However, according to the Arabic language teacher at Al-Falah Senior High School, the learning objectives have not been well-achieved. This is attributed to the students' insufficient grasp of *qawaid* (Arabic grammar rules) and the lack of reinforcement in both the school and dormitory environments. Additionally, the educational backgrounds of Al-Falah Senior High School students play a significant role in hindering the attainment of Arabic language learning goals. Not all Al-Falah Senior High School students are graduates of Tsanawiyah madrasahs, meaning that those who completed their education at the junior high school level have to start learning Arabic from scratch. Furthermore, the lack of interest among students in Arabic and the perception that it is a challenging subject also act as barriers to achieving Arabic language learning objectives Al-Falah Senior High School in Padang.

#### b. Material Learning

In general, the teaching material for class X comes from the Arabic language textbook for 2013 Curriculum by Moh. Ilyas, published by the Directorate of KSKK Madrasah, Directorate General of Islamic Education, Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia in 2020, but also supported by other Arabic books such as: *Al 'Arabiyyah Baina Yadaik* book volume 1 by Dr. Abdurrahman Bin Ibrahim, Dr. Mukhtar Ath Thahir, and Dr. Muhammad Abdul Khaliq Muhamad, *Matan al-jurumiyah* by Abu Abdillah Sidi Muhammad bin Daud Ash-Shanhaji. The teaching materials are:

الدرس الأول: التحيات والتعارف، الدرس الثاني: الأسرة والبيت، الدرس الثالث: المدرسة والبيئة المحيطة بها، الدرس الرابع: الحياة اليومية، الدرس الخامس: الهواية، الدرس السادس: الطعام والشراب

Meanwhile, the Arabic language subject for XI and XII grades consists of compulsory Arabic and specialized Arabic. Compulsory Arabic is taught to students of all majors, while specialized Arabic is specifically designed for the religious program (IPK major). The teaching material for compulsory Arabic in 11th grade is derived from the Arabic language teaching book authored by Risna Rianti Sari and Hasyim Amrullah, published by the Directorate of KSKK Madrasah, Directorate General of Islamic Education of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia in 2020. The content covers:

الدرس الأول: التسوق، الدرس الثاني: الصحة، الدرس الثالث: السفر، الدرس الرابع: الحج والعمرة، الدرس الخامس: تكنولوجيا الإعلام والاتصال، الدرس السادس: الأديان في إندونيسيا

As for the teaching material for specialized Arabic in the 11th grade, it is sourced from the Arabic language teaching book (Nahwu and Sharf) authored by Mastur, published by the Directorate of KSKK Madrasah, Directorate General of Islamic Education of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia in 2020. The content includes:

الدرس الأول: الخبر المقدم والمبتدأ المؤخر، الدرس الثاني: كان وأخواتها، إن وأخواتها، الدرس الثالث: التوابع (النعته، العطف، البدل، التوكيد)، منصوبات الأسماء، الدرس الرابع: المفعول به، المفعول المطلق، الدرس الخامس: المفعول لأجله، المفعول فيه، المستثنى، الدرس السادس: التمييز، مجرورات الأسماء (حروف الجر ولإضافة)، الاسم غير المنصرف، الدرس السابع: المضارع المرفوع، المضارع المنصوب، المضارع المجزوم، الدرس الثامن: الصفة المشبهة، اسم التفضيل، اسم المبالغة، النسبة.

The teaching material for XII grade is sourced from the Arabic language teaching book authored by Alfiatus Syarofah and Muhammad Yasin Fatchul Barry, published by the

Directorate of KSKK Madrasah, Directorate General of Islamic Education of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia in 2020. The content includes:

الدرس الأول: الرياضة، الدرس الثاني: الشباب، الدرس الثالث: الشعر العربي، الدرس الرابع: الحضارة الإسلامية، الدرس الخامس: الدراسة في الجامعة.

The teaching material for specialized Arabic in the 12th grade is sourced from the Arabic language teaching book (Balaghah) authored by Moch. Fajarul Falah, published by the Directorate of KSKK Madrasah, Directorate General of Islamic Education of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia in 2020. The content includes:

الوحدة الأولى: الفصاحة، البلاغة، التشبيه وأنواعه، الوحدة الثانية: الاستعارة (التصريحية، المكنية)، المجاز وأنواعه (المرسل، المركب، العقلي)، الوحدة الثالثة: الكناية وأنواعها، الخبر وأنواعه، الوحدة الرابعة: الإنشاء وأنواعه، القصر وأنواعه، الوحدة الخامسة: التورية، الطباق، المقابلة، الوحدة السادسة: تأكيد المدح بما يشبه الذم، تأكيد الذم بما يشبه المدح، الجناس وأنواعه، الوحدة السابعة: السجع، الاقتباس

This nuanced curriculum not only addresses language proficiency but also integrates cultural, social, and religious aspects, providing students with a well-rounded understanding of the Arabic language and its applications in various contexts (Zurqoni et al., 2020). Nevertheless, challenges in achieving learning objectives, as highlighted by the Arabic language teacher, underscore the need for ongoing evaluation and potential adjustments to optimize the effectiveness of the language learning experience at Al-Falah Senior High School.

#### c. Method Learning

At Al-Falah Senior High School, a variety of Arabic language learning methods are employed to attain the learning objectives. The selection of these methods is based on principles, rules, and procedures that allow each teacher to adapt them according to the language and societal context. Some of the methods utilized include *Sam'iyah Syafawiyah*, *Qawa'id wa Tarjamah*, and *Qira'ah*. *Sam'iyah Syafawiyah* method is often applied in the teaching of listening and speaking skills (*maharah istima' and maharah kalam*). According to the experience of Arabic language teachers at Al-Falah Senior High School, this method proves to be more effective in Arabic language learning, particularly in the aspects of listening and speaking skills (Owens, 2015). This effectiveness is reflected in students' quicker comprehension of learning materials, as well as their increased engagement and activity during the learning process (Hasibuan & Rosyidi, 2023).

In learning Nahwu and Sharf in specialization Arabic subjects, as well as learning *Qawa'id* in Arabic which is mandatory at Al-Falah Senior High School, the method used is *Qawa'id wa Tarjamah*. Meanwhile, in learning *maharah qira'ah*, the method applied is the *qira'ah* method. According to this method, the focus is on developing reading skills as the main goal in accordance with the needs of foreign language learners, as well as to facilitate the acquisition of these skills (Masuram & Sripada, 2020). Reading proficiency is considered an important foundation for students, providing the provisions to develop knowledge independently (Hasibuan, Fitriani, et al., 2023).

Judging from the learning methods applied by educators at Al-Falah Senior High School, it seems to be in accordance with the material being taught. However, it would be more optimal if the Mubasyarah method was also used in teaching *maharah kalam*. The results

of interviews with class X Arabic teachers indicated that the reason for not using the Mubasyarah method was because of the situation and conditions of the students. The majority of students in class X are junior high school graduates, thus presenting several difficulties in achieving learning objectives by applying this method.

d. Media Learning

In the context of learning Arabic, various learning media used include LCD projectors, computers/laptops, loudspeakers/active speakers, and whiteboards. This learning media is specifically applied in maharah kalam learning. For example, in class X, apart from utilizing material from books/teaching modules, educators also utilize resources from platforms such as YouTube. Material taken from YouTube is then projected onto the classroom screen using a laptop and LCD projector. The use of various learning media aims to enrich students' learning experiences and increase their ability to absorb information (Xuan et al., 2020). The existence of technology such as LCD projectors and laptops gives educators the flexibility to present material visually, creating a more dynamic and interactive learning atmosphere (Zhu et al., 2020). Apart from that, using learning resources from YouTube can provide additional variety and interest in learning Arabic (Maziriri et al., 2020).

e. Evaluation Learning

Evaluation of Arabic language learning at Al-Falah Senior High School is designed comprehensively, including attitude assessment, knowledge competency assessment, and skills competency assessment. Attitude assessment is carried out continuously during the learning process. This includes evaluating aspects of student attitudes such as participation, discipline and response to learning material. Meanwhile, knowledge competency assessment is carried out at several stages, namely after each lesson, mid-semester and end of semester. Thus, students have the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of the learning material at various evaluation points throughout the learning period (Sánchez-Santamaría et al., 2021).

Skills assessment, both verbally and in writing, is an integral part of every learning process. By involving these two aspects, the evaluation of students' Arabic language skills becomes more holistic. Oral assessments can cover speaking and listening skills, while written assessments can measure a student's writing skills. This approach provides a comprehensive picture of students' communicative abilities in Arabic (Rakhlin et al., 2021). With this comprehensive evaluation framework, Al-Falah Senior High School can measure and monitor student development in various dimensions, provide constructive feedback, and support the achievement of Arabic language learning goals holistically. Based on the results of interviews related to learning evaluations at MAS al-Falah, it can be concluded that the learning evaluations are good enough so that educators can see and measure students' abilities in mastering learning material and discover the difficulties students experience in learning Arabic. However, it would be even better if the evaluation process also contained questions containing HOTS and a good evaluation should also be able to measure high-level thinking abilities (HOTS) (Tyas & Naibaho, 2021).

This situation is caused by the view of Arabic language teachers that students' abilities are not sufficient to apply questions containing Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). Therefore, the form of evaluation questions is adjusted to the student's current level of ability. However, this should not be used as an excuse not to apply HOTS questions. In the author's opinion, students may still be less accustomed to answering questions that

require a high level of thinking because most of the questions they have faced so far have focused more on understanding and memorization. Even so, the author still emphasizes the importance of applying HOTS questions as a means of practice. These questions can help train students to develop critical and analytical thinking skills, an important aspect in developing their intellectual capacity (Setiawan et al., 2020). Thus, even though it may seem difficult at first, implementing HOTS questions can provide long-term benefits in developing students' cognitive abilities (Assaly & Jabarin, 2021; Sun et al., 2022).

### 3. Arabic Learning supporting strategy at Al Falah Senior High School Padang

Based on the results of interviews with Arabic language subject teachers at MAS al-Falah Padang, the learning strategies they use are not much different from those of state madrasah aliyah in general. Both in terms of methods, objectives and sources of teaching materials used. Meanwhile, supporting strategies to support students' Arabic language skills and create an Arabic language environment at MAS al-Falah include extracurricular activities such as takhasus kitab kuning, Arabic calligraphy, English and Arabic language programs. Although efforts have been made to improve Arabic language skills at MAS Al-Falah, the results of interviews with Arabic subject teachers indicate that this method has not been effective. The main obstacle lies in the lack of interest of students to take part in Arabic extracurricular activities (Bassiouney & Katz, 2012). Not all students show interest in these activities, and this can affect the effectiveness of learning (Hasibuan, 2022). Apart from that, in the dormitory environment, the use of Indonesian and Minang languages is dominant in daily interactions. Even though efforts have been made to implement language days and yellow book learning, the results are not satisfactory. One of the contributing factors is the lack of teaching staff who have the capacity to manage these activities in the dormitory. As a result, this activity was finally abolished. The importance of focusing on tahfidz activities in the dormitory is also an obstacle in achieving the goals of learning Arabic. With the main focus on tahfidz activities, efforts to improve Arabic language skills are neglected. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out an in-depth evaluation regarding Arabic language learning strategies in dormitories so that they can have a positive and more effective impact on students (Hasibuan & Jundi, 2023a).

### D. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion above, it can be concluded that Arabic learning at Al-Falah Senior High School Padang shows a comprehensive approach through combining the Merdeka and 2013 curriculum. Although various learning methods and media have been implemented, including *Sam'iyah Syafawiyah*, *Qawa'id wa Tarjamah*, and projectors LCD and computers, the main challenge lies in the lack of student interest. Learning evaluation includes assessment of attitudes, knowledge competencies, and skills, providing a holistic picture of student progress. Although efforts are made through extracurricular and special programs, in-depth evaluation of learning strategies in dormitories is crucial to increasing learning effectiveness. The implications of this research indicate the need for enhancing teaching strategies and student motivation to overcome the challenge of insufficient interest in learning Arabic at Al-Falah Senior High School Padang. Furthermore, there is a necessity for evaluating the effectiveness of extracurricular programs and initiatives to reinforce the Arabic language in the dormitory environment to enhance students' overall learning outcomes comprehensively....

Based on the conclusions and implications outlined, the author recommends several concrete steps that teachers and the school administration can take to enhance students' interest in

learning Arabic at SMA Al-Falah Padang. Firstly, the focus should be on developing innovative teaching strategies, utilizing interactive learning media, and incorporating activities relevant to students' daily lives. Furthermore, it is crucial to conduct a thorough evaluation of the teaching strategies employed, including optimizing the use of time and available facilities within the boarding school. Introducing engaging extracurricular programs such as language clubs, competitions, or cultural performances can also deepen students' understanding of the Arabic language. Additionally, a holistic approach to teaching should be adopted, considering assessments of students' attitudes, knowledge, and skills. Collaboration among Arabic language teachers, the school administration, and parents is vital in creating an environment supportive of Arabic language learning beyond the classroom. Finally, continuous monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of extracurricular programs and language strengthening initiatives within the school environment are necessary, with adjustments made accordingly based on evaluation results. By comprehensively implementing these measures, it is hoped that students' interest and learning outcomes in Arabic language education at SMA Al-Falah Padang will improve.

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