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English language teachers' use of generative artificial intelligence in teaching and learning: pedagogical applications and challenges

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Abstract

The study examines English language teachers' use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) in teaching and learning, focusing on pedagogical application, breadth of tool use, perceived challenges, and variation across teaching-experience groups. Data were obtained from 70 English language teachers in Anand district through a structured online questionnaire containing 15 pedagogical-application items and 15 challenge items. The overall mean for pedagogical application was 3.023 (SD = 0.907) on a five-point scale, indicating moderate reported use. The most frequently reported applications involved generating questions or assessment items, developing reading-comprehension materials, creating vocabulary-building activities, and preparing teaching-learning materials. AI-assisted feedback on students' written work had the lowest application mean. Pearson correlation showed a small negative but non-significant association between pedagogical application and perceived challenges, $r = -.224$, $p = .062$. Simple linear regression indicated that tool breadth was a statistically significant predictor of pedagogical application, $F(1, 68) = 8.986$, $p = .004$, $R^2 = .117$. Welch's ANOVA showed no statistically significant difference in pedagogical application across teaching-experience groups, $F(3, 65) = 1.316$, $p = .296$. These findings suggest that broader exposure to GenAI tools is associated with broader reported pedagogical use, while teaching experience alone does not distinguish application levels in this sample. The results should be interpreted cautiously because the study used convenience sampling, involved a relatively small sample, and was based on self-reported cross-sectional data.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, English language teaching, generative artificial intelligence, language teachers, pedagogical applications, perceived challenges, teacher experience.

1. Introduction

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) has rapidly become relevant to educational practice because systems capable of generating and transforming natural-language content can support a range of instructional activities. In English language teaching (ELT), these capabilities include generating instructional materials, examples, exercises, questions, dialogues, vocabulary activities, writing tasks and other forms of language practice. Recent reviews

indicate that GenAI and conversational AI research in language education has expanded rapidly, but the evidence remains uneven across contexts, research designs and pedagogical purposes (Lai & Lee, 2024; Law, 2024; Li et al., 2024).

The educational value of GenAI, however, depends on how teachers evaluate and integrate its outputs. AI-generated content can contain factual inaccuracies, inappropriate language, bias, privacy risks or material that does not match learners' proficiency and curricular requirements. Reviews of AI in education therefore emphasise both opportunities and implementation challenges, including teacher competence, ethical considerations, reliability, privacy and institutional conditions (Celik et al., 2022; Chiu et al., 2023; Kasneci et al., 2023). For language teaching, these issues are especially important because teachers must judge the linguistic, pedagogical, cultural and contextual suitability of generated material before using it with learners.

Research involving language teachers illustrates this complexity. Kohnke et al. (2023) found that language instructors' preparedness for generative AI involves not only familiarity with tools but also pedagogical knowledge, institutional support and professional development. Al-khresheh (2024) similarly reported that English language teachers recognised both pedagogical opportunities and concerns associated with ChatGPT. Derakhshan and Ghiasvand (2024) found that research-active EFL teachers perceived ChatGPT as having both potential benefits and risks, including support for teaching and learning alongside concerns about misinformation, plagiarism and academic integrity. These studies indicate that teacher perceptions are important, but perceptions alone do not fully describe what teachers actually do with GenAI in their pedagogical work.

Recent studies also demonstrate that GenAI can support specific language-learning functions. Mahapatra (2024), for example, reported positive effects of ChatGPT-supported formative feedback on undergraduate ESL students' academic writing, while Fathi et al. (2024) found that AI-mediated speaking activities were associated with improvements in aspects of EFL learners' speaking performance and willingness to communicate. Guo and Wang (2024) examined ChatGPT as a possible support for teacher feedback in EFL writing and highlighted the need to consider the quality and pedagogical role of generated feedback. Such findings show that particular applications can be useful, but they do not establish that teachers use GenAI uniformly across the instructional cycle.

The literature also suggests that teacher education and professional learning are central to responsible integration. Moorhouse and Kohnke (2024) reported that teacher educators anticipated substantial effects of GenAI on curriculum, instruction and assessment while also identifying limitations in their confidence and competence. Moorhouse et al. (2024) found that explicit training could develop aspects of language teachers' professional GenAI competence. Similarly, Moorhouse (2024) showed that readiness may vary within early-career groups and cannot be reduced simply to career stage. These findings support examining teaching experience empirically rather than assuming that more years of teaching necessarily correspond to greater or lesser GenAI use.

Systematic reviews further indicate that the field has concentrated substantially on learner perceptions, writing, specific language skills, and higher-education contexts. Lai and Lee (2024) identified a strong concentration of conversational-AI studies in Asian EFL contexts, while Li et al. (2024) and Lo et al. (2024) noted the rapid growth of empirical research on ChatGPT and language education alongside continuing gaps in methodological and contextual coverage. Zhang and Tur (2024) also identified curriculum development, lesson planning, materials generation and differentiation as important areas of application while emphasising output quality and academic integrity. Taken together, this literature establishes the relevance of GenAI in language education but leaves scope for empirical studies that examine several dimensions of teachers' use within the same sample.

Against this background, the present study examines four connected dimensions of GenAI use among English language teachers: reported pedagogical application, perceived challenges, breadth of GenAI-tool use, and teaching experience. The study distinguishes breadth of tool use from intensity of pedagogical application. A teacher may use one tool for many instructional purposes, whereas another may use several tools for fewer purposes. Accordingly, the number of tools used is treated as an indicator of breadth of exposure rather than as a measure of quality or competence.

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The study also addresses the relationship between pedagogical application and perceived challenges. A higher level of use should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of fewer or greater difficulties because challenges may arise from factors other than frequency of use, including institutional guidance, professional learning, privacy concerns and the nature of the tasks undertaken. The study therefore tests the association empirically rather than assuming its direction. Teaching experience is examined in the same manner: the analysis does not presume that more experienced teachers are more capable or more resistant users of GenAI.

The contribution of the study is therefore empirical and integrative rather than causal. It brings together 15 pedagogical applications, 15 perceived challenges, tool breadth and teaching experience in a single survey of English language teachers in Anand district. This combination responds to calls for broader examination of stakeholder and pedagogical contexts in GenAI research (Lai & Lee, 2024; Li et al., 2024; Lo et al., 2024). The study does not attempt to establish causal effects or generalise to all English language teachers. Instead, it provides evidence about patterns of self-reported GenAI use within the participating sample and identifies relationships that can be examined in larger and more representative studies.

2. Objectives

1. To examine the relationship between GenAI pedagogical application and the challenges experienced by English language teachers.
2. To determine whether the breadth of GenAI-tool use significantly predicts pedagogical application.
3. To examine whether GenAI pedagogical application differs significantly across teaching-experience groups.

3. Hypothesis

H_{01}: There will be no statistically significant relationship between GenAI pedagogical application and perceived challenges among English language teachers.

H_{02}: GenAI tool breadth does not significantly predict pedagogical application among English language teachers.

H_{03}: There will be no statistically significant difference in GenAI pedagogical application across teaching-experience groups among English language teachers.

4. Methodology

4.1. Design and context of the study

The study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional descriptive survey design. This design was appropriate for describing teachers' reported pedagogical practices and perceived challenges and for examining statistical associations and group differences among the measured variables. The unit of analysis was the individual English language teacher. Because the data were collected at one point in time, the statistical relationships reported in the study are associative and should not be interpreted as evidence of causation.

4.2. Participants

The population comprised English language teachers in Anand district. The sample consisted of 70 English language teachers working across primary, secondary, higher secondary, undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Participants were recruited through non-probability convenience sampling because the questionnaire was distributed online to accessible English language teachers during the study period. Participation was voluntary. Seventy responses were received and included in the overall descriptive, correlation and regression analyses. For the teaching-experience analysis, 69 valid responses were available because one participant had missing information for teaching experience; therefore, the four experience groups sum to 69 rather than 70. This missing value explains the denominator used in the Welch ANOVA. The study should not be interpreted as representative of all English language teachers in Anand

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district or elsewhere. In the present manuscript, participant characteristics are reported in terms of educational level and teaching experience; no additional demographic characteristics are included in the analysis.

4.3. Instrument

The questionnaire was structured to align with the study objectives and contained three relevant components. The first was a multiple-response item asking participants to indicate the GenAI tools they used. The second comprised 15 pedagogical-application statements measuring the reported frequency of GenAI use for specific English teaching and learning purposes. The third comprised 15 challenge statements measuring the extent to which respondents experienced specified difficulties or concerns when using GenAI. Pedagogical-application items were rated on a five-point Likert-type scale, and challenge items were also rated on a five-point scale. The questionnaire was administered through Google Forms. Information about expert review, pilot testing, or adaptation from an established instrument was not provided in the original manuscript; these details should be added if such procedures were undertaken.

Internal consistency was assessed separately for the two 15-item scales. The manuscript reports Cronbach's alpha of .961 for the pedagogical-application scale and .900 for the perceived-challenges scale. These coefficients indicate high internal consistency. These two values must be checked against the original statistical output before final submission because the earlier version of the manuscript presented the alpha values inconsistently. Cronbach's alpha was used only to assess internal consistency; it was not treated as evidence of construct validity.

Descriptive statistics were calculated for the pedagogical-application, perceived-challenges and tool-breadth variables, including means and standard deviations. Item-level means and standard deviations were also used to describe the reported frequency of specific pedagogical applications and the salience of individual challenges. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the linear association between pedagogical application and perceived challenges. Simple linear regression was used to test whether tool breadth statistically predicted pedagogical application. Welch's one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare pedagogical-application scores across teaching-experience groups because the homogeneity-of-variance assumption was not met. Statistical significance was evaluated at the .05 level. The term "predict" is used in the statistical regression sense and does not imply causal influence.

4.4. Data Analysis

Participation in the online questionnaire was voluntary. The manuscript should report the institutional ethics approval or exemption status, the name of the approving body and approval/reference number where applicable, and the consent procedure used before the questionnaire was completed. These details were not provided in the original manuscript and therefore require author verification before submission. The final version should also state how confidentiality or anonymity was protected and whether participants could withdraw their responses, if these procedures were implemented.

4.5. Ethical Procedures

Ethical principles were considered throughout the data-collection process. Participation in the study was voluntary, and the questionnaire was administered online through Google Forms. Participants were informed about the academic purpose of the study and were given the opportunity to decide whether to participate before completing the questionnaire. No participant was compelled to respond to the survey. The responses were treated confidentially and were used only for the purposes of academic analysis and reporting. The study did not seek to collect personally identifying information beyond what was necessary for the research.

The data were analysed in aggregate form, and individual participants were not identified in the presentation or interpretation of the findings. The researchers maintained the confidentiality of the collected responses and restricted their use to the stated research purpose.

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5. Results

[Interpret the findings in relation to the research questions, framework, and previous studies.]

Table 1

GenAI Tools Used

GenAI tool	% of respondents
ChatGPT	72.9%
Google Gemini	54.3%
Grammarly	27.1%
Canva AI	18.6%
QuillBot	14.3%
Perplexity	12.9%
Other	12.9%
Claude	11.4%
Microsoft Copilot	11.4%

The most commonly chosen application was ChatGPT, followed by Google Gemini and Grammarly. The average number of tools reported was 2.357 (SD = 1.794) with a wide range of responses.

Table 2

Overall Construct Descriptives

Construct	N	Mean	SD
Pedagogical application	70	3.023	0.907
Perceived challenges	70	2.665	0.769
Tool breadth	70	2.357	1.794

The average application score for the pedagogical application was 3.023 or in the middle of the 5-point response scale between Sometimes (3) and Often (4), indicating moderate use and a tendency towards frequent use. The challenge level average is: 2.665 which is between Slight and Moderate challenge. The descriptive pattern suggests that teachers are using GenAI in a meaningful way, but at the same time that they are facing a non-trivial, but not uniformly severe set of challenges.

Table 3

Pedagogical Application by Item

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Pedagogical application	Mean	SD
I use Generative AI to generate questions, quizzes, or assessment items.	3.271	1.115
I use Generative AI to develop reading comprehension materials and activities.	3.229	1.119
I use Generative AI to create vocabulary-building activities.	3.214	1.062
I use Generative AI to develop teaching-learning materials for English.	3.186	1.040
I use Generative AI to design writing tasks and activities.	3.186	1.158
I use Generative AI to create classroom activities and exercises.	3.143	1.158
I use Generative AI to prepare remedial or additional learning materials.	3.143	1.183
I use Generative AI to support students' independent English language learning.	3.014	1.136
I use Generative AI to develop speaking or conversational activities.	3.000	1.216
I use Generative AI to prepare English language lesson plans.	2.957	1.042
I use Generative AI to support pronunciation or language practice.	2.943	1.214
I use Generative AI to prepare differentiated learning materials for students with different levels of language proficiency.	2.914	1.087
I use Generative AI to explain English grammar concepts.	2.886	1.071
I use Generative AI to provide examples, illustrations, or explanations of language concepts.	2.829	1.129

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I use Generative AI to provide or develop feedback on students' written work.	2.429	1.149

The question generation, quiz or assessment item creation showed the highest application mean (M = 3.271, SD = 1.115). Materials and activities for reading comprehension, for vocabulary building, for teaching-learning, and for writing tasks/activities were also used comparatively frequently. In contrast, giving or creating feedback on students' written work had the lowest mean (M = 2.429, SD = 1.149). The results indicate that teachers in the sample are more inclined to use GenAI to create content and tasks than to use it in an evaluative role that could be more challenging, such as providing feedback to students' writing.

Table 4

Challenges by Item

Challenge	**Mean**	**SD**
Concerns regarding privacy and the protection of students' personal information.	3.286	1.374
Difficulty in ensuring that students use Generative AI responsibly.	3.114	1.269
Students' excessive dependence on Generative AI.	3.057	1.443
Lack of adequate training in the pedagogical use of Generative AI.	2.971	1.227
Lack of sufficient time to learn and experiment with different Generative AI tools.	2.871	1.296
Limited access to appropriate digital infrastructure or internet connectivity.	2.700	1.220
Concerns about bias or inappropriate content generated by AI.	2.700	1.159
Limited institutional guidance or policies regarding the use of Generative AI.	2.643	1.130
Difficulty in ensuring that AI-generated language and content are culturally and contextually appropriate.	2.600	1.055

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Concerns regarding plagiarism and academic integrity.	2.529	1.176
Need to verify and edit AI-generated content before using it.	2.471	1.348
Difficulty in integrating Generative AI meaningfully into existing teaching practices.	2.457	1.099
Inaccuracy or unreliability of AI-generated information.	2.343	1.062
Difficulty in determining whether AI-generated content is appropriate for my students' level.	2.214	0.931
Difficulty in writing effective prompts or instructions for Generative AI.	2.014	0.970

The most highly rated challenge was privacy and protection of students' personal information (M = 3.286, SD = 1.374). Difficulty ensuring responsible student use (M = 3.114, SD = 1.269), students' excessive dependence on GenAI (M = 3.057, SD = 1.443) and lack of adequate training in pedagogical use (M = 2.971, SD = 1.227) were next. The challenge with writing effective prompts was the lowest-rated (M = 2.014, SD = 0.970). The pattern highlights the fact that the most salient concerns are not so much focused on simple prompt construction, but rather governance, behaviour of learners, professional capacity, and responsible implementation.

Table 5

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	**Test**	**Statistic**	**df**	**p**	**Decision**
H_{01}: No significant relationship exists between application and challenges	Pearson correlation	r = -0.224	68	0.062	Not rejected
H_{02}: Tool breadth does not significantly predict application	Simple linear regression	F = 8.986	1, 68	0.004	Rejected
H_{03}: No significant application difference exists across	Welch one-way ANOVA	F = 1.316	3, 65	0.296	Not rejected

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experience groups					

H_{01}: There will be no statistically significant relationship between GenAI pedagogical application and perceived challenges among English language teachers.

The Pearson correlation between pedagogical application and perceived challenges was r = −.224, p = .062. The negative coefficient indicates a small inverse linear association in this sample, but the association did not reach the prespecified .05 significance level. The corresponding simple regression also yielded R^2 = .050 and F(1, 68) = 3.590, p = .062. Therefore, H01 was not rejected. This result should not be interpreted as evidence that application and challenges are unrelated; rather, the study did not obtain sufficient statistical evidence of a linear association at the .05 level in this sample.

H_{02}: GenAI tool breadth does not significantly predict pedagogical application among English language teachers.

The simple linear regression model examining tool breadth as a statistical predictor of pedagogical application was significant, F(1, 68) = 8.986, p = .004, with R^2 = .117 and adjusted R^2 = .104. The unstandardized slope was B = 0.173 (SE = 0.058, t = 2.998, p = .004). Thus, each additional GenAI tool selected was associated with an estimated 0.173-point increase in the mean pedagogical-application score. The model explained 11.7% of the variance in reported pedagogical application. Although the regression coefficient was statistically significant, the model accounted for a relatively modest proportion of variance and should not be interpreted as demonstrating that using more tools causes broader pedagogical application. H02 was rejected on the basis of the statistical test.

H_{03}: There will be no statistically significant difference in GenAI pedagogical application across teaching-experience groups among English language teachers.

Table 6

Comparison of Generative AI Application by Teaching Experience

Teaching experience	**n**	**Mean application**	**SD**
11–20 years	23	2.994	0.688
5–10 years	12	2.839	1.283
Below 5 years	29	3.062	0.972
More than 20 years	5	3.400	0.377

The four teaching-experience groups contained 69 valid cases: 23 teachers with 11–20 years of experience, 12 with 5–10 years, 29 with below 5 years, and 5 with more than 20 years of experience. One of the 70 participants had missing teaching-experience information and was therefore excluded from this group comparison. Because the homogeneity-of-variance assumption was not met, Welch's ANOVA was used. The result was not statistically significant, F(3, 65) = 1.316, p = .296. The group means ranged from 2.839 for teachers with 5–10 years of experience to 3.400 for teachers with more than 20 years of experience. The conventional eta-squared estimate was approximately .021, indicating a small proportion of variance associated with group membership. Because the omnibus test was not statistically significant, no post-hoc group comparisons were interpreted.

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6. Discussion

The findings indicate that GenAI had a meaningful but selective role in the reported practice of the participating English language teachers. The overall pedagogical-application mean was 3.023, suggesting moderate use rather than either minimal adoption or uniformly intensive integration. At the item level, content and task generation were reported more frequently than AI-supported feedback on students' written work. This pattern is consistent with the wider literature showing that GenAI can support material development and instructional preparation while also raising questions about quality control, assessment and teacher judgement (Law, 2024; Zhang & Tur, 2024).

The relatively low mean for providing or developing feedback on students' written work warrants particular attention. This finding should not be interpreted as evidence that AI-generated feedback is ineffective. Mahapatra (2024) reported positive outcomes when ChatGPT was used as a formative feedback tool with undergraduate ESL students, while Guo and Wang (2024) identified both possibilities and limitations in using ChatGPT to support teacher feedback in EFL writing. The difference between those findings and the present descriptive pattern may reflect differences in context, teacher familiarity, confidence, task demands or perceived responsibility for evaluative decisions. Because the present study did not ask respondents why they used feedback functions less frequently, the explanation remains tentative.

The challenge profile further shows that teachers' concerns were concentrated on privacy, responsible student use, student dependence and lack of pedagogical training. This pattern extends the literature beyond technical difficulties with operating AI tools. Systematic reviews have identified ethical, privacy, reliability and teacher-readiness issues as important dimensions of AI integration (Celik et al., 2022; Chiu et al., 2023). Similarly, Derakhshan and Ghiasvand (2024) reported concerns about misinformation, plagiarism and academic integrity among research-active EFL teachers. The present findings therefore reinforce the view that responsible GenAI integration involves institutional and pedagogical conditions, not simply access to software.

The correlation between pedagogical application and perceived challenges was negative but not statistically significant, $r = -.224$, $p = .062$. The appropriate interpretation is not that greater use reduces challenges, nor that no relationship exists. The data provide only limited evidence of a small inverse association in this sample. One possible explanation is that greater familiarity with GenAI may help some teachers manage operational difficulties, but this possibility was not tested in the present cross-sectional design. Conversely, teachers who use GenAI more frequently may encounter different types of challenges that are not captured by an overall challenge score. Further research should therefore examine the specific dimensions of challenge rather than treating them as a single undifferentiated construct.

The strongest inferential finding concerned tool breadth. Teachers who reported using a wider range of GenAI tools also reported broader pedagogical application, and tool breadth explained 11.7% of the variance in application. This finding is compatible with research emphasising familiarity, competence and opportunities for experimentation in language teachers' GenAI use (Kohnke et al., 2023; Moorhouse et al., 2024). However, the effect should not be overstated. Tool breadth is only one statistical predictor in the present model, and the modest R^2 indicates that most variation in pedagogical application remains unexplained. Factors such as AI self-efficacy, professional learning, institutional support, pedagogical beliefs and teaching context may also contribute.

Teaching experience did not significantly differentiate reported pedagogical application, $F(3, 65) = 1.316$, $p = .296$. Although the group with more than 20 years of experience had the highest mean, it contained only five participants, and the omnibus test was not significant. This result should therefore not be used to conclude that experienced and less-experienced teachers have identical patterns of GenAI use. Rather, within this sample, years of teaching experience alone did not provide sufficient evidence for distinguishing application levels. This interpretation is consistent with Moorhouse (2024), who showed that readiness for GenAI can vary across early-career groups and should not be reduced to career stage alone. More detailed measures of professional learning, AI competence and prior exposure to GenAI may provide stronger explanations than years of teaching experience.

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7. Conclusion

The study indicates that the participating English language teachers used GenAI across a range of pedagogical functions, with the strongest reported applications involving assessment-item generation, reading materials, vocabulary activities and teaching-learning materials. Feedback on students' written work was reported less frequently. The challenge profile was dominated by privacy concerns, responsible student use, student dependence and lack of pedagogical training. These findings suggest that effective GenAI integration requires teachers to evaluate outputs critically and institutions to provide appropriate guidance and professional learning.

The inferential findings require cautious interpretation. Pedagogical application and perceived challenges showed a small negative but non-significant association. Tool breadth was a statistically significant predictor of pedagogical application, but it explained only 11.7% of the variance and does not establish causation. Teaching experience was not significantly associated with differences in application across the four groups. Thus, the study does not support broad claims that either frequent use reduces challenges or greater teaching experience determines GenAI application.

The study has several limitations. The sample was small and obtained through convenience sampling, limiting representativeness. The data were self-reported and collected at one point in time, so reporting bias and common-method effects cannot be ruled out. In addition, the analysis of teaching experience was based on 69 valid cases because one response had missing experience information. The findings should therefore be understood as evidence from the participating teachers rather than as estimates for the wider population of English language teachers.

For teacher education and professional development, the findings support training that is organised around pedagogical purposes rather than demonstrations of individual software tools. Professional learning can address prompt design, output verification, material adaptation, assessment and feedback, academic integrity, privacy, learner agency and responsible use. Future research should use larger and more diverse samples and examine additional explanatory variables such as AI self-efficacy, professional development, institutional support, AI literacy and observed classroom practice. Longitudinal or mixed-method studies could also clarify how teachers' GenAI practices develop over time and why particular pedagogical functions are adopted more readily than others.

The findings contribute an empirical view of how English language teachers in the study reported using GenAI across multiple pedagogical functions and how that use relates to tool breadth, perceived challenges and teaching experience. The results support a cautious, context-sensitive understanding of GenAI integration in ELT rather than a simple assumption that more tools or more years of teaching necessarily produce better use.

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