Teachers' Language Awareness in Indonesian EFL Context: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract: This systematic literature review explores studies on teacher language awareness (TLA) within the Indonesian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. TLA is defined as the knowledge and metacognitive awareness that language teachers have of language, language use, and language teaching and learning. The reviewed literature consists of peer-reviewed articles and conference proceedings that were extracted from databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, ERIC, and SAGE Journals. The review synthesises empirical research on TLA, and closely related constructs such as language awareness, teacher awareness, multilingual beliefs in Indonesia, identifies gaps, and provides recommendations for teacher education and further research. Key findings reveal the key dimensions of TLA research In Indonesian EFL context, several mediating factors of TLA development, and several gaps in the literature as well as future directions of TLA research in Indonesia. These findings suggest that teacher language awareness notion is increasingly recognised and Indonesian EFL teachers exhibit growing awareness of their language practices. Implications for in-service professional development, pre-service teacher training, and policy are discussed. These recommendations are aimed at fostering more profound language awareness in Indonesian EFL teaching

Keywords: Teacher language awareness, Language awareness, Indonesian EFL, Teacher education, Multilingualism, English as a foreign language

INTRODUCTION

In the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching, the concept of teacher language awareness (TLA) has gained increasing attention. As defined by Andrews and Svalberg (2017), TLA refers to teachers' cognitions which include knowledge and beliefs about language in general and the language they teach and how these cognitions are developed and bring impact on teaching and learning. Lindahl (2019) also adds that TLA encompasses language teachers' competencies as language users, language analyst, and language teachers. Language teachers' conscious knowledge about how language works facilitates students' language development, either the mother tongue or additional languages (Andrews & Svalberg, 2017). The importance of TLA lies in its potential to mediate teacher beliefs, instructional practices and choices, and ultimately student learning outcomes (Wang & Yan, 2024). In the Indonesian context, a multilingual, multicultural environment where English is taught as a foreign language, the role of teachers' awareness about language and language use is particularly salient (Andrews, 2007; Breidbach, 2011).

Teachers' decisions about language choice, L1 use, translanguaging, classroom talk, and awareness of learners' language difficulties are all influenced by their language awareness (Andrews, 2007; Komorowska, 2022; Gustiani & Irwandi, 2024). Andrews (2001, 2007) comprehensively put together how TLA operates in the classroom and how it potentially improves students' learning outcome as laid out in the following table.

TABLE 1. *The impact of TLA in the classroom (adapted from Andrews, 2007, p. 45)*

Impact of TLA in the classroom	
Positive	**Negative**
Teacher acts as a bridge between the language content of the materials and the learners, making salient the key features of the grammar area.	Teacher does little or nothing to act as a bridge/make salient the key features of the grammar area (e.g. doesn't go beyond the language content as presented in the materials).
Teacher 'filters' the content of published materials, and notices/avoids potential pitfalls.	Teacher is unwilling/unable to 'filter' content. As a result, teacher may overlook or accept misconceptions and/or inaccuracies in materials.
Teacher 'filters' own classroom output (spoken and written) to ensure that it is • structurally accurate • functionally appropriate • clearly expressed • pitched at the learners' level • an adequate basis for learner generalisations	Teacher does not appear to 'filter' own classroom output (spoken and/or written). As a result, teacher's output may be • structurally inaccurate • functionally inappropriate • confusingly expressed • pitched at an inappropriate level for the learners • an inadequate basis for learner generalisations
Teacher 'filters' learner output (as appropriate in the context of form-focused activity). Mediation takes the learners' perspective into account, and is • correct, precise and intelligible • structurally accurate • functionally appropriate • pitched at the learners' level • an adequate basis for learner generalisations	Teacher's mediation of learner output in form-focused activity is inadequate. As a result, incorrect learner output may be ignored, the learners' perspective may not be taken into account, and teacher mediation may be • incorrect, imprecise and/or unintelligible • structurally inaccurate • functionally inappropriate • pitched at an inappropriate level for the learners • an inadequate basis for learner generalisations
Teacher is able to operate 'filter' in 'real time', reacting spontaneously and constructively to issues of language content as they arise in class.	Teacher has difficulty in operating 'filter' in 'real time', and in reacting spontaneously and constructively to issues of language content as they arise in class.
Teacher is able to employ metalanguage to support learning • correctly • appropriately	Teacher's use of metalanguage to support learning is incorrect and/or inappropriate (e.g. excessive, or at a level beyond the learners' comprehension)

Table 1 above elaborates how TLA brings impact, positive and negative, upon teachers' classroom instructions or pedagogical practices. The descriptors indicate the opposite extremes of the continuum, given each potential impact is in fact a matter of degree. The table shows that TLA significantly influences teachers' pedagogical practices by filtering the input and output provided to learners, developing decisive decision-making skills, and operating metalinguistic awareness to support students' learning. As a result, the enhanced level of TLA correlates with improved teaching efficacy and students' learning outcomes.

A very recent systematic literature review of existing research on TLA in a broader global context conducted by Wang and Yan (2024) yields several key findings including the effects of TLA on teachers' beliefs and pedagogical practices, its current state, its mediating factors, and its cultivation. Among all these key discoveries, the review highlights the importance of including a critical dimension that emphasise the relevance of the social and

power dynamic, into the TLA framework of language teachers. Despite the growing interest on researching TLA in global context as indicated by the findings of Wang and Yan's (2024) SLR, there has been no comprehensive review synthesising TLA research in Indonesia. Wang and Yan (2024) only reviewed or referred to few empirical studies drawn from Indonesian context, while researching TLA and its related constructs in more diverse context is considered crucial. Therefore, this SLR aims to fill that gap by systematically reviewing the literature on TLA in the Indonesian EFL context, mapping key themes and current state of TLA, identifying gaps, as well as offering suggestions for practice and future research. Thus, this review attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the key dimensions of teacher language awareness in Indonesian EFL classrooms?
2. What factors contribute to the development of TLA among Indonesian EFL teachers?
3. What gaps does the current literature suggest, and what future research directions are recommended?

METHODS

This method section presents detailed information as well as steps of how this systematic literature review was conducted, which includes research design, data collection, and data analysis.

Research Design

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, guided by the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework (Page et al., 2021). The review process involved four stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion.

Data Collection

A comprehensive search of peer-reviewed articles and conference proceedings published between 2019 and 2025 was conducted using databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, ERIC, SAGE Journals, and national repositories such as Garuda and DOAJ Indonesia. The keywords used included *teacher language awareness*, *language awareness*, *teacher awareness*, *critical language awareness*, *Indonesian EFL teachers*, *multilingualism belief*, *translanguaging in Indonesian EFL context*.

The studies included in this review met the following inclusion criteria: (a) focus on TLA in the Indonesian EFL context; (b) empirical research addressing teacher language awareness or its relevant constructs and components and; (c) publication in peer-reviewed journals or academic proceedings. After screening for relevance and removing duplicates and non-relevant sources, 11 studies were included for detailed analysis and synthesis.

Data Analysis

The main data analysis began after the data from the selected studies had been extracted using a predefined framework capturing study context, conceptualization of teacher language awareness, and key findings. A thematic synthesis approach was applied following Thomas and Harden (2008). Extracted findings were coded line-by-line and inductively to develop descriptive themes that reflect reported evidence. The themes were then interpreted through established teacher language awareness frameworks (Andrews, 2007).

RESULTS

This section begins with the presentation of the overview of reviewed studies as described in **Table 2**. It is then followed by presenting the key thematic findings corresponding to each proposed research question including key dimensions of TLA in Indonesian EFL context, teacher awareness of language use, key factors contributing to the development of TLA, and gaps in the current literature and future research directions.

Overview of Reviewed Empirical Studies

Data extraction records authors and year, title, publishing journals, context and participant, focus/dimension of awareness, key findings, and mediating factors. The following table summarises the key studies.

TABLE 2. *Summary of Selected Key Studies*

No	Author (s) & year	Title	Journal/ source	Context & participant	Focus/ dimension of awareness	Key findings	Mediating factors
1	Gustiani, T., & Irwandi, I. (2024)	Teacher and students' awareness of language use	English Journal Literacy Utama, 8(1), 1-14.	Senior high school teachers & students	General language awareness; classroom language use	Teachers show moderate awareness of their language use; limited reflection on metalinguistic aspects.	Teacher knowledge, teacher proficiency
2	Nugraheni, A. D., Nurkamto, J., & Putra, K. A. (2024)	Teachers' multilingualism beliefs and practice in Indonesian EFL classroom	AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan, 16(2).	Public junior high school EFL teachers	Multilingual beliefs; language awareness	Teachers view multilingualism positively; translanguaging used strategically though not systematically	Students' proficiency, school policy
3	Purba, L. N., & Dewanti, R. (2025)	Comparative analysis of morphological awareness between EFL teachers of formal and non-formal education: A case study	Premise: Journal of English Education and Applied Linguistics, 13(1).	24 EFL teachers (formal vs non-formal institutions)	Morphological awareness	Non-formal teachers scored higher on morphological awareness; training background crucial	Teacher training background, institution type

No	Author (Year)	Title	Source	Sample	Focus	Findings	Factors
4	Sorohiti, M., Nugraha, H. N. R., & Rahmawati, F. (2024)	Teacher awareness, identification of learning difficulties, and effective teaching strategies for English grammar mastery	Indonesian EFL Journal, 10(1).	Grade 10 EFL teachers	Awareness of student grammar difficulties	Teachers could identify grammar difficulties but lacked metalinguistic depth.	Exposure to English, teacher awareness, motivation
5	Setyaningsih, B. (2024)	Unveiling linguistic awareness: A narrative inquiry into a teacher's experiences in EFL classroom	International Journal of Educational Research & Social Sciences, 5(3).	One university EFL teacher	Linguistic awareness in classroom interaction	Teacher's reflection reveals the importance of teachers' linguistic knowledge and awareness on properly addressing students' errors related to phonological, syntax, and semantic issues in English listening skill.	Teacher linguistic knowledge
6	Liando, N., Dallyono, R., Tatipang, D., & Lengkoan, F. (2023)	Among English, Indonesian and local language: Translanguaging practices in an Indonesian EFL classroom	Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 13(1), 204-216	Two Indonesian female English teachers teaching at a junior high school in North Sulawesi	Translanguaging practice in Indonesian EFL classroom	Types of translanguaging used, their purposes and strategies	Multilingual classroom context, teacher beliefs and awareness about language flexibility, absence of formal translanguaging policy, and instructional goals and student comprehension

7	Khairunnisa, K., & Lukmana, I. (2020)	Teachers' attitudes towards translanguaging in Indonesian EFL classroom	Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan, 20(2).	50 Indonesian EFL teachers	Translanguaging awareness / language choice	Teachers support translanguaging but hesitate to apply it consistently.	Teacher familiarity, institutional readiness
8	Ramadhani, S. A. F., & Muslim, A. B. (2021)	Investigating teachers' attitudes towards teaching and learning of English as a lingua franca (ELF) in Indonesian EFL context	Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan, 20(1).	50 EFL teachers, Jakarta	Awareness of global English varieties (ELF)	Teachers aware of ELF concept but rely heavily on native-like models.	Teacher preparation, material availability
9	Yusuf, F. N., & Novita, O. E. (2020)	EFL teachers' perceived language proficiency and teaching effectiveness	Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 9(3).	78 Indonesian EFL teachers	Teacher language proficiency; awareness	Strong correlation between teacher proficiency and classroom language awareness.	Teacher language proficiency
10	Apriyani, R. N., (2022)	Investigating Teachers Beliefs about Language Awareness in EFL Context in Indonesia	ISLLAC: Journal of Intensive Studies on Language, Literature, Art, and Culture, 6(1).	2 Secondary School EFL teachers	Teachers' beliefs about language awareness	Teachers show different understanding about the notion of language awareness; Integrating language awareness into curriculum needs consideration about connections with other languages, teacher cooperation, curricula, and student skills.	Teachers' conscious knowledge of the language; Integrating language awareness into the curriculum

| 11 | Marzulina, L., et al. (2019) | The grammatical awareness of student teachers: The case of an English education study program in Indonesia | Universal Journal of Educational Research, 7(9), 1847-1859 | 129 student teachers in the English Education Study Program (quantitative part) and 12 of them selected for interviews (qualitative part) | Teachers' grammatical awareness -a component of TLA on language system | Overall, student teachers lacked sufficient grammatical awareness, especially in explaining rules and dealing with complex grammar (not simply recognising grammar) | Explicit training on grammar awareness task |

Key Thematic Findings

The extracted information from the selected studies in Table 2 above allows us to synthesize several key themes that are relevant to each research question. For the first research question which seeks to identify the key dimensions of TLA in Indonesian EFL context, the key themes include multilingualism and translanguaging, teachers' awareness of linguistic features, and teachers' awareness of classroom language use. The striking themes relevant to the second research question, factors contributing to the development of TLA in Indonesian EFL context, are teacher education programs, professional development trainings, teacher language proficiency, teacher beliefs and attitudes, and learner profiles and multilingual environment.

With regards to the third research question, there are several gaps in the Indonesian TLA literature and future research directions that can be drawn from the reviewed studies. There are limited studies that adopt the full TLA framework (use + analyse + teach), The quantitative measurement of TLA (e.g., validated instruments) in the Indonesian EFL context is also limited. There is a scarcity of longitudinal or intervention studies examining how TLA develops over time among Indonesian EFL teachers. The scarcity is also found in the number of studies that link TLA explicitly to student learning outcomes in Indonesia. More attention needed to critical language awareness (CLA) within TLA, focusing on how teachers are aware of power, identity, language choice issues in multilingual/multicultural classrooms. There is a tendency to focus more on secondary/tertiary contexts; primary and informal EFL contexts less explored. The presented findings are discussed further in the discussion section.

DISCUSSION

The thematic findings related key dimensions of TLA, the mediating factors of TLA development, and the gaps in the literature and potential future directions of TLA research in Indonesian EFL context are further discussed in this section.

Key Dimensions of Teacher Language Awareness in Indonesian EFL Context

Theoretically, the key dimensions of TLA have been conceptualised by prominent experts around two influential frameworks namely Edge's (1988) three roles for a language teacher and Andrews' (2001, 2007) multi-component model. One of the foundational models, first

proposed by Edge (1988) and later adopted and expanded by others like Lindahl (2019), categorizes TLA into three interconnected domains or roles: language user, language analyst, and language teacher. As a user of a language, teachers are expected to have both language proficiency and communicative ability in the target language which enable them to use the language fluently and appropriately in various contexts, including natural classroom interaction. As a language analyst, teachers are required to have explicit knowledge about the underlying systems of the language (grammar, phonology, lexis, etc.). which allow them to deconstruct the language, understand how it works, and make informed judgments about its structure and use. The last role of this TLA frameworks, language teacher domain, deals with the pedagogical dimension, focusing teachers' ability to support students' learning by being aware of the language system and learning from the learner's perspective, anticipating difficulties, understanding learner interlanguage development, and employing effective scaffolding strategies and language-focused practices in the classroom.

On the other hand, Andrews' multi-component frameworks is built upon Thornbury's (1997, 2017) definition of TLA as "the knowledge that teachers have of the underlying systems of the language that enables them to teach effectively" (Thornbury, 1997, p. x). This proposes a more complex framework that emphasizes the relationship between different knowledge types including subject-matter knowledge, communicative language ability and reflection which all account the learners' perspective.

In the Indonesian context, based on the reviewed studies, most studies have focused on particular dimensions of TLA, such as multilingualism and translanguaging, teachers' awareness of linguistic features, and classroom language use.

Multilingualism and translanguaging
With regard to TLA dimensions of multilingualism and translanguaging, several studies (e.g., Nugraheni, Nurkamto, & Putra, 2024; Khairunnisa & Lukmana, 2020) emphasize the role of multilingualism in shaping teachers' language awareness. Teachers in Indonesia often draw on students' first languages (L1) to facilitate English learning, creating a dynamic space for translanguaging. However, while teachers recognize the value of translanguaging, they often struggle to systematically incorporate it into their teaching practices. This is also supported by the findings of a study by Liando et al. (2023) on translanguaging practice in the EFL classroom. The findings suggest that teachers recognize the diversity of students' linguistic backgrounds, but indicate lack strategies for multilingual pedagogy. This suggest that EFL teachers in Indonesia need to move from recognition awareness level to more practical one if they want their learners to engage in multilingual worlds with profound multilingual skills. Young (2017) argues that teacher and learners collaborate in developing their language awareness. In other words, learners' language awareness starts with teachers' language awareness. So, to support students' multilingualism, teachers need to plan their pedagogical instruction that allow flexible translanguaging,

Teachers' awareness of linguistic features
The second dimension of TLA explored by the reviewed studies deals with teachers' awareness of linguistic features, such as semantic, phonological, grammatical, and morphological aspects of language they teach. A study by Purba and Dewanti (2024) highlights that grammatical awareness is an essential component of TLA. Teachers' understanding of English grammar significantly influences their ability to correct errors and provide effective feedback to their students. However, many teachers in the reviewed studies demonstrated limited metalinguistic reflection on the deeper structures of the language they teach. In line with this, a study by Sorohiti et. al. (2024) reveal that teachers could recognise and identify grammar difficulties, but they lacked metalinguistic depth. In line with this Marzulina et al. (2019) reported that the participating student teacher lacked sufficient grammatical awareness, especially in explaining rules and dealing with complex grammar (not simply recognising grammar).

In terms of teachers' awareness of phonological and semantic features of language, Setyaningsih (2024) conducted a narrative inquiry into a university EFL teacher. The analysis of the participating teacher's narratives indicates the importance of teachers' linguistic knowledge and awareness on properly addressing students' errors related to phonological, syntax, and semantic issues in English listening skill. Since the study applied a narrative inquiry through reflective practice, it shows that teacher's reflection on linguistic knowledge and awareness can influence how they teach listening, address students' errors, and improve students' understanding of the tasks, and eventually students' communicative competence.

Teachers' awareness of the classroom language use

Teachers' awareness of language use in the classroom is integral to fostering effective language instruction. Yusuf and Novita (2020) examine how teachers' language proficiency affects their instructional choices. Findings indicate that teachers with higher proficiency in English tend to demonstrate better awareness of their language use, leading to more precise and effective communication with students. However, despite this awareness, many teachers in the Indonesian context tend to rely on native-like models of English, which may not always align with the linguistic realities of their students (Ramadhani & Muslim, 2021). This suggests a gap between theoretical knowledge of language awareness and its practical application in the classroom.

Furthermore, a study by Gustiani and Irwandi (2024) identify three types of language use, including communicative language practice, structured communication practice, and authentic communication practice. These domains of language use are influenced by teachers' language awareness, which in this study deals with teachers' metacognitive knowledge about language and their own language proficiency. Teachers should develop their language awareness so they can make pedagogically informed choices about language use (e.g., when to emphasise authenticity vs structured practice) and guide students accordingly (Andrews, 2007). The findings of the study suggest that the participating teachers show moderate TLA. Thus, raising TLA is needed for teachers to optimize the classroom language use to support student learning.

Factors Influencing the Development of TLA in Indonesian Context

The development of TLA among Indonesian EFL teachers is influenced by multiple factors, including teacher education programs, professional development trainings, teacher language proficiency, teacher beliefs and attitudes, and learner profiles and multilingual environment. All these factors are argued not to work separately, rather they tend to interact with each other to yield a substantial effect upon teachers' willingness and capacity to engage with language-related issues and be reflective on and in their pedagogical practice (Andrews, 2007; Thornbury, 2017). The identified factors correspond to the framework of interrelated influences of TLA proposed by Andrews (2001, 2007) which include three main influences, contextual factors, attitudinal factors, and professional factors. The first three identified factors, teacher education programs, professional development trainings, and teacher language proficiency, are related to professional factors, while teacher beliefs and attitudes are associated with attitudinal factors. The last identified factor, learner profiles and multilingual environment, can be associated with contextual factors in terms of being aware that the Indonesian students are multilingual.

With regards to the role of teacher education as a mediating factor of TLA development is also concurred by Xerri (2015) who argued that since its significant contribution to effective teaching, TLA needs to be one of the knowledge base strands of teacher education at both pre- and in-service trainings. Mok's (2013) study on TLA's role in pre-service teachers' practicum sessions also corroborates this idea. She claims that the pre-service teachers' struggles in dealing with their students' questioning about the language and other personal queries during the practicum indeed indicate the important role that explicit knowledge about language holds in English teacher education. In addition, Bonness

et al. (2022) who explored the TLA policy at initial teacher education in Norway and New Zealand also support the significant role of teacher education in developing TLA of future teachers. However, they specifically highlight the capacity of teacher education to train teachers to be plurilingual-aware and to have knowledge about flexible languaging practice in order to be equipped for 21st century classrooms.

In terms of teacher beliefs and attitude as a mediating factor is suggested by a study conducted by Apriyani (2022) regarding teachers' beliefs about language awareness. Her study found that teachers show different understanding of beliefs about TLA and she argued that this was because TLA has not been completely integrated into the curriculum. If teacher belief about TLA can be enhanced, it is likely that teachers develop stronger TLA which eventually improves students' learning (Andrews, 2007).

Gaps in Indonesian TLA literature and Future Directions

As presented earlier, there are several gaps in the Indonesian TLA literature and future research directions that can be derived from the reviewed studies. The systematic synthesis indicates that few studies adopt the full TLA framework which combine the three core domains, language user, analyst, and teacher as conceptualised internationally (Wang & Yan, 2024). As highlighted by Wang and Yan (2024), TLA research in the global context is now calling for more attention to the critical dimension of TLA. This is not without reasons since the current reality of multilingual and plurilingual learners and users of English has made this call highly relevant. The findings also indicate limited quantitative measurement of TLA (e.g., validated instruments) in the Indonesian EFL context. Such lack of validated TLA instrument may affect the reliability of the research findings. Another gap deals with the scarcity of longitudinal or intervention studies examining how TLA develops over time among Indonesian EFL teachers. This nature of research may contribute to more comprehensive findings. The last gap identified is related to little research linking TLA explicitly to student learning outcomes in Indonesia.

To address the identified gaps in Indonesian TLA literature, there are two main directions for future TLA studies. The first suggestion is that more attention is needed to critical language awareness (CLA) within TLA. This dimension of TLA deals with how teachers are aware of power, identity, language choice issues in multilingual/multicultural classrooms. Another direction to pursue is that TLA research in Indonesia tends to focus on secondary/tertiary contexts; primary and informal EFL contexts are less explored.

CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review reveals that teacher language awareness is an emerging field as well as a promising lens for understanding Indonesian EFL teachers' abilities to reflect on language, make informed language-use decisions, and adapt instruction to multilingual learner profiles. However, empirical evidence in the Indonesian context remains nascent. There is a pressing need for more systematic investigation of TLA, its measurement, development, and impact. By integrating TLA into teacher education and continuing professional development, stakeholders may enhance teacher capacity and thereby improve EFL instruction in Indonesia's multilingual classrooms. In this case, teacher education and professional development programs need to place greater emphasis on fostering reflective practice, multilingual pedagogy, and translanguaging strategies.

Given the findings of this SLR and the relevant suggestions provided earlier, several practical implications can be drawn for Indonesian EFL teacher education and professional development. The first one is that pre-service teacher training needs to embed modules on language awareness (linguistic knowledge, metalinguistic awareness, language variation, translanguaging) aligned with TLA frameworks. For the in-service professional development, it is necessary to include workshops on teacher language awareness, reflective practice on classroom language use, language choice, and student inter-language

development. The reflective practice can also be enhanced through some modifications to materials and curriculum design which focus more on encouraging teacher reflection about language (e.g., teacher talk time, translanguaging moments, morphological awareness tasks) to develop TLA. The schools or institutions should provide institutional support, such as providing linguistic and pedagogical training opportunities and enabling teachers to reflect on their own language use and decisions. Last but not least, all these efforts should be supported by the language education policy that recognise the multilingual context of Indonesia and promote teacher awareness of multilingualism, translanguaging, and language variation rather than a one-size-fits-all English-only stance.

Although this systematic literature review on teacher language awareness in Indonesian EFL context has explored quite recent relevant studies in Indonesia, it only focused on limited aspects of TLA. Thus, future SLR should seek to explore a wider scope of TLA.

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