

A SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN SELENA GOMEZ'S ALBUM RARE

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Abstract : The purpose of this study is to analyze the types and the meaning of figurative language in the song lyrics of Selena Gomez in her album, Rare. The basis of this research is the theory proposed by Kennedy who divided figurative language in three parts, namely comparative, contradictive and correlative figurative language. In analyzing the data, the researcher used steps by Miles and Huberman: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing and verification. The result of this research showed that there are 31 expressions of figurative language in six song lyrics of Selena's "Rare" album. There are 22 expressions of metaphor, 6 expressions of hyperbole and 3 expressions of symbol. Metaphor is the most dominant figurative language in Selena's song lyric; for example, in the lyric of Lose You to Love Me, we can found some expressions of metaphor, such as: set fire to my purpose and every single words builds up to this moment. From the explanation above, the researcher can suggest for future researcher to analyze and discuss other types of figurative language in Selena's other album.

Keywords : *Figurative language, song lyric, Selena Gomez, Kennedy, Miles and Huberman*

1. INTRODUCTION

Human beings always live side by side. They have to interact with each other to fulfill their needs. To achieve that, we use a means called language. Language is very important in people's lives. Maru (2016:58) stated that people use language to express inner thoughts and emotions, to understand complex and abstract thoughts, to learn to communicate with others to meet our wants or needs, and to set rules and maintain our culture. Liando (2017:21) claims that without language, people would find problems in sharing information, interacting with others, showing sympathies and clarifying important cases. (Hampp, 2019: 15) also state that through language, humans can think and develop their knowledge. People need language to communicate with each other, to interact and also to show and share knowledge,

information, idea, emotion, feelings and experience.

People can communicate with each other by using media such as letter, radio, television, social media, video and song. As stated by Tuerah (2019:107) One of the media for communication is a song. Through song someone could convey his voice to many people, so that people can know his feelings. Currently a lot of songs could express our feelings, such as songs with the theme of love, social, political, and others. Song as piece of music with words that are sung has a function to express personal thoughts and feeling. Song has some elements, such as lyrics and melody. Listening to a song is an interesting activity, but sometimes the listeners do not understand the figurative language that commonly found in a song lyric.

Basically, figurative language is part of the semantic. Semantic is the study of the meaning of words, phrases and sentences. Meaning in semantic can be divided into two parts, they are literal meaning and nonliteral meaning. The literal meaning is based on the actual word while non literal meaning is otherwise. When a person speaks non literally or means something different from what the words mean, it is called non literal meaning. Knowing the meaning of a lyric is really important because we will know the purpose of the song. Maru (2016:7) claims that in social process, there are people who communicate more than they say, they use language that indicate meanings more than the language does. This term is called figurative language. Tuerah (2019:107) stated figurative language as a language expression, whose meaning is different from its literal one. Figurative language is a kind of language that departs from the language employed the traditional literal ways of describing persons of object. It is a language that uses words or expressions with a meaning that is different with the literal interpretation. It is used to express something in an unusual way. The use of figurative language can give an additional sense for the reader or the listener to build their imagination. In addition, it is a way which is used by an author to convey a meaning of his literary work. Kennedy (1983:481, as cited in Arifah, 2016) has classified the figurative language into three parts, which are comparative, contradictive and correlative. Comparative figurative language consists of metaphor, personification and simile. Contradictive figurative language consists of hyperbole, litotes, paradox, and irony. Correlative figurative language consists of metonymy, synecdoche, symbol, allusion, and ellipsis. Sharndama (2013:169) states that a Metaphor is a figurative language which compares two different things directly. Dennis (1996:65, as cited in Arifah, 2016) stated that hyperbole is a figure of speech that has statement containing exaggeration. Richardson (2006: 165, as cited in Raisa, 2017) explains symbol as a person, object, image, word, or event that evokes a range of additional meaning beyond and usually more abstract than its literal significance. Siallagan (2017:55) says that in a song, we can find lyrics which complete and

beautify the song and makes the hearer more interested in hearing it. Song lyric is a short poem in a number of verses set to music to be sung. In its writing, the songwriters or composers usually beautify the language they use by any figurative language, so that the listeners will be more attracted in listening the songs. There are so many figurative languages that can be used by the author for examples metaphor, simile, personification, symbol and others.

Further, there are so many song writers or composers, singers and poets which have their own characteristics in their language. One of the famous singer is Selena Gomez. She likes to use her thoughts, feelings and experience as inspiration when writing songs. She is able to tell topics that many people can relate to their life, such as being young, teenage, family, growing up and love relationships.

In this research the researcher analyzed figurative language especially metaphor, hyperbole and symbol in six song lyrics of Selena Gomez's latest album, Rare. From that explanation above the researchers decide to create a research entitled "A Semantic Analysis of Figurative Language in Selena Gomez's Album, Rare". The researcher hopes that it can help for the readers easily to understand the meaning of figurative language expressions in Selena's Song lyrics.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research, the researcher analyzed the data using qualitative research methods. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1992:30, as cited in Wowor, 2020), qualitative research is a descriptive which the data is collected in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. The writer took the 6 song lyrics from Selena's album "Rare" as the data source. The process of data collection itself was started by downloading the songs and the lyrics. After that, the researcher listened to the songs while reading the lyrics for several times. After that, she attempted to find the word, phrase, and sentence which contain figurative language by underlining them. After that, she made a note of those

figurative language. The researcher used technique of data analysis based on Miles and Huberman's theory. According to Miles and Huberman (1994:10) there are three steps used in analyzing data, they are: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing and verification. Data reduction is the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the data that appear in written up field notes or transcriptions. In this step, the figurative language expressions are collected and reduced. Data display is an organized, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action. In this step the researcher showed the data that contain figurative language, but not only generally but also specifically. In this step, the researcher showed which sentences or phrases contain figurative language, what kind of figurative those sentence are, why those sentences or phrase categorized as their category of figurative language and then extracted the meaning of those figurative language in the lyrics. The last step to analyze the data in this research is conclusion drawing and verification. In this step, the researcher rechecked the data, stepped back to consider what the analyzed data mean and to assess their implications for the research questions.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data Reduction

Metaphor in Selena Gomez's album, Rare.

No .	Figurative Expression	Song	Location
1	I'ma dance for therapy, all my babies and me.	Let me get me	Verse 1
2	Burn this camouflage	Let me get me	Verse 1

	I've been wearing for months		
3	Don't get me down, I won't let me get me down	Let me get me	Chorus
4	I'm so connected to me	Let me get me	Verse 2
5	If I open up my heart to you, I know that you could lock it	Vulnerabl e	Verse 1
6	If I give the opportunity to you, then would you blow it	Vulnerabl e	Verse 1
7	If I was the greatest thing to happen to you, would you know it?	Vulnerabl e	Verse 1
8	I would tell you all my secrets, wrap your arms around	Vulnerabl e	Pre-chorus

	my weakness		
9	If I hand you my emotion, would you even wanna take it?	Vulnerabl e	Verse 2
	If I give you all my trust, then would you fumble it and break it?	Vulnerabl e	Verse 2
	Set fires to my forest, and you let it burn	Lose you to love me	Verse 1
	Set fire to my purpose, and I let it burn	Lose you to love me	Verse 1
	You tore me down and now it's showing	Lose you to love me	Verse 2
	In two months you replaced 'us', like it was easy	Lose you to love me	Verse 2

	1 And now the chapter is closed and done	Lose you to love me	Outro
	1 And every time we talk, every single word builds up to this moment	Back to you	Verse 1
	1 Playing and re-playing old conversatio ns	Back to you	Verse 2
	1 You're stuck in my head and I can't get you out of it	Back to you	Chorus
	1 Ooh you're taking up a fraction of my mind	Bad liar	Pre-chorus
	2 If you're the art, I'll be the brush	Bad liar	Verse 2
	2 Nights with you, I still could taste it	People you know	Verse 2
	2 Now I'm breathing ashes and	People you know	Verse 2

	dust” is metaphor		
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Hyperbole in Selena Gomez’s album, Rare

No.	Figurative Expressions	Song	location
1	You could break my heart in two, but when it heals, it beats for you	Back to you	Pre-chorus
2	Everybody knows that we got unfinished business	Back to you	Verse 2
3	Playing and replaying old conversations, overthinking every word and I hate it	Back to you	Verse 2
4	You promised the world and I fell for it	Lose you to love me	Verse 1
5	I gave my all and they all know it		Verse 2

6	I’m a give you all my body, are you strong enough to hold it?	Vulnerable	Verse 1
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Symbol in Selena Gomez’s album, Rare.

No.	Figurative expression	Song	Location
1	When it was good, we were on fire.	People you know	Verse 2
2	No self-sabotage, no letting my thoughts run. Me and the spiral are done.	Let me get me	Verse 1
3	All of my feelings on fire.	Bad liar	Post-chorus

Data Display

Metaphor in Selena Gomez’s Album, Rare.

a. Metaphor in Vulnerable Lyric

1) If I open up my heart to you, know that you could lock it.

The lyric “if I open up my heart to you, I know that you could lock it” is an ontological metaphor. The word *heart* in

the lyric represents feeling, emotion and mind. While the word *open* is used to replace word trust. In this lyric, Selena seems to express her fear and worry of trusting someone or starting a new relationship.

2) If I give the opportunity to you, then would you blow it?

The lyric “if I give the opportunity to you, then would you blow it?” is an ontological metaphor. According to Cambridge Dictionary, opportunity is the possibility of doing something. The word *opportunity* in the lyric is described as a concrete thing that can be blown. So, in this lyric Selena seems to want to make sure if she gives someone a chance, whether that person would ruin the chance she gave or not.

3) If I was the greatest thing to happen to you, would you know it?

The lyric “if I was the greatest thing to happen to you, would you know it?” is a structural metaphor. The word *I* in the lyric might refers to the love someone’s feel for Selena. The experience of falling in love is described as the greatest thing. The meaning of the lyric is Selena wants to ensure if the person she loves will care if the love he feels for her is really an important thing.

4) I would tell you all my secrets, wrap your arms around my weakness.

The lyric “I would tell you all my secrets, wrap your arms around my weakness” is an ontological metaphor. According to Cambridge Dictionary, weakness is a particular part or quality of someone or something that is not good or effective. In this lyric, the word *weakness* is described as a concrete thing in which someone could wrap it with their arms. When she said that she would tell all her secrets, it means she trusts him and she will tell and show him all her strengths and even her weakness. In this lyric, Selena seems to want to tell her lover that she trusts him and ask him to accept herself, accept all her strengths and all her weakness.

5) If I hand you my emotion, would you even wanna take it?

The lyric “if I hand you my emotion, would you even wanna take it?” is an ontological metaphor. According to Cambridge Dictionary, emotion is a strong feeling such as love, anger, fear, etc. The lyric illustrates the concept of *emotion* is a concrete object. The meaning of this lyric is Selena wants to know if the person she loves can handle her emotions both good and bad.

6) If I give you all my trust, then would you fumble it and break it?

The lyric “if I give you all my trust, then would you fumble it and break it?” is an ontological metaphor. The lyric illustrates the concept of *trust* is a concrete object that can be fumbled and broke. Give you all my trust means trust someone seriously, trust what he says and what he does. The meaning of the lyric is Selena wants to ascertain if she really can trust the person and if he won’t betray her.

b. Metaphor in Let Me Get Me Lyric.

1) I'ma dance for therapy, all my babies and me.

The lyric “I'ma dance for therapy, all my babies and me” is a structural metaphor. In general, people dance just for fun, while therapy is a treatment of physical problem or illness. *Therapy* is also used for mental or emotional illness. The word *babies* illustrate her best friends. “I'ma dance for therapy, all my babies and me” here might means that she dances and have fun with the people closest to her to heal from her emotional pain to achieve her happiness.

2) Burn this camouflage I've been wearing for months.

The lyric “burn this camouflage I've been wearing for months” is a structural metaphor. In Cambridge Dictionary, *camouflage* is something that is meant to hide something or behavior that is intended to hide the truth. It’s something that cannot be burnt. The meaning of the lyric “burn

this camouflage I've been wearing for months” is that the writer decided to stop the pretense and falsehood she experienced in her past. She decides to be herself.

3) Don't get me down, I won't let me get me down.

The lyrics “don't get me down, I won't let me get me down” is an ontological metaphor. The second *me* in the lyrics refers to her feelings and emotions. Those feelings and emotions could be the feeling of never satisfied of herself, jealousy, the feeling of inferiority. The meaning of the lyric is that the writer won't let those feelings make her lack of self-love, disrespect herself, make her feeling unwanted, etc.

4) I'm so connected to me.

The lyric “I'm so connected to me” is an ontological metaphor. According to Cambridge Dictionary, connection is the state of being related to someone or something else. The word *me* in the lyric refers to feeling and emotion. The meaning of this lyric is that the writer knows what she really feels and what she really wants to do.

c. Metaphor in Back to You Lyric

1) And every time we talk, every single word builds up to this moment and I gotta convince myself I don't want it Even though I do.

The lyric “and every time we talk, every single word builds up to this moment” is an ontological metaphor. *This moment* in the lyric means the moment when she feels happy and sad in the same time when they talk. The lyrics explain about a girl who broke up with his boyfriend but she still loves him So that, she is happy every time they have a talk. But on the other hand, she knows should also be aware that he's not hers anymore.

2) Playing and replaying old conversations

The lyric “playing and re-playing old conversations” is structural a metaphor.

Because the word *replaying* illustrates how the girl tries to remember or rethought her conversations with the boy he loved.

3) You're stuck in my head and I can't get you out of it.

The lyric “you're stuck in my head and I can't get you out of it” is an ontological metaphor. The words *you* represents the writer thoughts about the man she loves as a concrete thing. The meaning of this expression is that she cannot forget him or her memories about him no matter how hard she tries.

d. Metaphor in Lose You to Me Lyric

1) Set fires to my forest, and you let it burn.

The lyric “set fires to my forest, and you let it burn” is an ontological metaphor. The word *fires* represent a passionate love, and the word forest represents the songwriter's life. In this lyric, she seems to express that she already has a very deep love to him. The love she feels is actually getting stronger but then it ruins her life. The love she has makes her feel the disappointment and heartache.

2) Set fire to my purpose, and I let it burn.

The lyric “set fire to my purpose, and I let it burn” is an ontological metaphor. The word *fire* in the lyric represents destruction, the pain she feels because of loving someone. While, the word *purpose* seems to indicate as the songwriter's future. In the Set fire to my purpose, and I let it burn, the songwriter seems to tell that the pain of love impacts her future. She feels that she had let her future be ruined or be destroyed by her broken heart towards his ex-boyfriend.

3) You tore me down and now it's showing.

The lyric “You tore me down and now it's showing” is an ontological metaphor. The lyric illustrates the concept of human's feeling is fragile with the concrete object of

me. The word *me* represents Selena's feelings she was trying to hide. In this lyric, human feeling is represented as thing that can be tore down. This lyric describes about her feeling that was hurt by the man she loved.

4) In two months you replaced 'us', like it was easy.

The lyric "in two months you replaced 'us', like it was easy" is a structural metaphor. The word *us* in the lyric represents memories and loves. In this lyric, the Selena tries to explain how the man she loved moves on so easily, and even finds a new love while it was hard for her to move on and forgets about their love and memories.

5) And now the chapter is closed and done.

The lyric "And now the chapter is closed and done" is an ontological metaphor. The lyric illustrates the concept life is book. The word *chapter* in the lyrics represents the love relationship. Selena uses this lyric to tell that she has moved one and ended the love she had for someone she ever loved.

e. Metaphor in People You Know Lyric.

1) Nights with you, I still could taste it.

The lyric "Nights with you, I still could taste it" is a structural metaphor. the word *night* in the lyric represents the times she spent with her ex-boyfriend. While, the word *taste* in this lyric replaces the word remember. So, the meaning of this lyric is that Selena wants to tell how she still can remember all the good and the bad times they spent together, all the good and the bad experiences.

2) Now I'm breathing ashes and dust.

The lyric "Now I'm breathing ashes and dust" is an ontological metaphor. The words *ash and dust* represent disappointment and sadness after her passionate love. While *breathe* as we know is an activity that we do to live. The

meaning of the lyric is that Selena want to tell the consequence she's facing because of loving someone and her sadness and disappointment of their break up. She's telling how hurt she is because of him.

f. Metaphor in Bad Liar Lyric.

1) Ooh you're taking up a fraction of my mind.

The lyric "Ooh you're taking up a fraction of my mind" is an ontological metaphor. The lyric illustrates the concept of *mind* is an object that has some fractions. The meaning of the lyric is that she keeps thinking about someone.

2) Paint my kiss across your chest. If you're the art, I'll be the brush.

The lyric "If you're the art, I'll be the brush" is an ontological metaphor. *You* (person) in the lyric is compared with art directly. While *I* is compared with brush, a tool used to paint. In this lyric, the Selena wants to express how two people needs each other. Because art won't exist without brush while the brush will be useless if it's not used to paint.

Hyperbole in Selena Gomez's Album, Rare

a. Hyperbole in Back to You Lyric.

1) You could break my heart in two, but when it heals, it beats for you.

The lyric "you could break my heart in two, but when it heals, it beats for you" is a clausal hyperbole since it is exaggerated. *You could break my heart in two* has another meaning which is the man she loves can hurt her so much and he can make her feel sad. *It beats for you* is also exaggerated since the heart beats only for its owner to keep her alive. So, this expression means that she really loves him and she wants to live her life just with him.

2) And everybody knows that we got unfinished business.

The lyric "And everybody knows that we got unfinished business" is single word

hyperbole since it is exaggerated. People around them may know about their relationship or know that have unfinished business. But, this expression uses word **everybody**, where it is impossible that people around the world know about it. The meaning of this expression is that many people know about their relationship and they know that they have unfinished business or unfinished love story.

3) Playing and replaying old conversations, overthinking every word and I hate it.

The lyric “Playing and replaying old conversations, overthinking every word and I hate it” is a single word hyperbole because it’s exaggerated. A person might overthink about something. This expression uses word **every word** and it is impossible that she can remember and overthink all the words in her all old conversations she had with someone. The meaning of this lyric is that she rethought their conversations and that still cannot forget about the man she loves or the memories she had with him.

b. Hyperbole in Lose You to Love Me Lyric.

1) You promised the world and I fell for it.

The lyric “you promised the world and I fell for it” is single word hyperbole since it’s exaggerated. The sentence you promised the world seems that someone who promised can give anything that exists in the world. The word **world** in the lyric refers to happiness and love. In this lyric, the Selena tries to express her regret and mistake for trusting to her lover’s sweet promises in the past.

2) I gave my all and they all know it.

The lyric “I gave my all and they all know it” is a single word hyperbole because it’s exaggerated. The phrase my all implies an exaggeration idea. The word **my all** in this sentence might refer to everything that she has, includes her dreams and her trust. Selena seems to express that she has already given all of her

life to her ex-boyfriend, she has sacrificed what she had just for their love or their relationship because their love has become her priority. And what she done is witnessed by other people and they all know it.

c. Hyperbole in Vulnerable Lyric.

1) I’m a give you all my body, are you strong enough to hold it?

The lyric “I’m a give you all my body, are you strong enough to hold it?” is a single word hyperbole since it is exaggerated. The sentence I’m a give you **all** my body is exaggeration. When someone’s falling in love, she might give everything like wealth, attention and love for the person she loved to make him happy. But, giving him all her body is exaggerated. The meaning of the lyric is she is going to give him all her attention, love, and her trust and she wants to know if he can accept them all.

Symbol in Selena Gomez’s Album, Rare.

a. Symbol in People You Know Lyric

1). When it was good, we were on fire.

In the lyric “When it was good, we were on fire”, there is a symbol. The symbol used in this lyric is an object which is **fire**. As we know, the word fire symbolizes many things including destruction, passion, desire, etc. In this lyric, fire symbolizes passion or desire. In the lyric, Selena seems to want to tell about her past relationship with her ex. How passionate they were when their relationship was still fine.

b. Symbol in Let Me Get Me Lyric.

1) No self-sabotage, no letting my thoughts run. Me and the spiral are done.

In the lyric “No self-sabotage, no letting my thoughts run. Me and the spiral are done”, there is a symbol. The symbol used in this lyric is an object which is **spiral**. Spiral in Cambridge Dictionary means a shape of a continuous, curving line that

forms circles around a center point. Spiral symbolizes the journey and change of life. It can also symbolize a complicated situation. The word spiral in this expression illustrates the behavior or mindset that hold her back and prevents her from doing what she wants. The lyric “no self-sabotage, no letting my thoughts run. Me and the spiral are done” means that she is ready to move on, she is ready to leave all of the complicated situations she faced and the things that hold her. She is ready to become a better person.

c. Symbol in Bad Liar Lyrics.

1). All of my feelings on fire.

In the lyric “All my feelings on fire”, there is a symbol. The symbol used in this lyric is an object which is *fire*. The word fire symbolizes desire and passion. According to Oxford Dictionary, feeling is something felt through the mind and or the senses, which means it’s an abstract thing that can be on the fire. The lyric describes the passion and desire someone’s feeling.

Conclusion and Drawing Verification

After finishing the data reduction and data display, the last step of analyzing data in this research is drawing verification. After evaluating the expressions in three types of figurative language, the researcher obtained the information of the result. The researcher found some kinds of figurative language in six song lyrics of Selena Gomez which are chosen by the researcher. The title of the songs are Lose You To Love Me, Bad Liar, Back To You, Vulnerable, People You Know and Let Me Get Me. The research findings in this research also proves that figurative language not only found in poem, it also can be found in song lyrics.

This research was conducted to find out the types of figurative language expressions used in Selena Gomez’s Rare album and to describe the meaning of those figurative language. So, in this research the researcher found 31 expressions of figurative language expressions. The figurative language that is most often used is metaphor. There are 22 expressions of

metaphor; 16 ontological metaphor, 6 structural metaphor, while the orientational metaphor cannot be found in the lyrics. There are also 6 expressions of hyperbole; 5 single word hyperbole and 1 clausal hyperbole, while numerical hyperbole, phrasal hyperbole, repetition, the role of superlative and comparison cannot be found in the lyrics. The researcher also found 3 expressions of symbol.

The meaning of those figurative language expressions are various. All of the findings have their own meanings. The meaning have been explained in the previous chapter. Finally, the researcher found out the answers, which expression refers to metaphor, hyperbole and symbol and the meaning of those expressions.

4. CONCLUSION

Conclusion

After analyzing and presenting the figurative language expressions found in Selena Gomez’s Rare album in the previous chapter, the conclusion of the result is presented. By analyzing the song lyrics in Selena’s “Rare” album, it could be found that there are 31 expressions of figurative language in three types, which are metaphor, hyperbole and symbol. The expressions of metaphor have the highest frequency of all the total expressions of figurative language, which is 22 expressions. Expressions of hyperbole get the second highest frequency, which is 6 expressions. And expressions of symbol get the least frequency which is only 3 expressions. Metaphor is the most dominant type of figurative language found in selected song lyrics of Selena Gomez’s album, Rare.

The meanings of the figurative language expressions were explained in the previous chapter. One of them was the lyric “set fire to my purpose, and I let it burn” in the Lose You to Love Me lyrics. It describes how the songwriter had let her future be ruined or be destroyed by her broken heart towards his ex-boyfriend. And its kind of figurative language is metaphor. By using figurative language, it makes the lyrics more interesting and beautiful. The lyrics of

Selena's selected songs tried to tell us about human life which contained about love, sadness, happiness, selflove, relationship and others.

In this research, the researcher chose 6 song lyrics in Selena's "Rare" album to be analyzed. Those six song lyrics contain many expressions of figurative language. This fact shows that the use of figurative language is important in song lyrics. The expressions of figurative language influence the song lyric to become more beautiful and interesting.

Suggestion

Based on research that has been done, it is known that there are many kinds of figurative language. But in this study, the researcher delimited the research only on metaphor, hyperbole and symbol. So, there are some types of figurative language that aren't be discussed in this research. From the explanation above, the researcher can suggest for future researcher to analyze and discuss other types of figurative language in Selena's other album. The researcher can also use other literary works, such as novel, advertisement, movie, etc. So, the readers can really understand the figurative language, the types, and the function of each figurative language.

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