

Chapter 5

Sweden and Germany: Top-Down and Bottom-Up Policy Making in the Re-professionalization of International Teachers



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Abstract Flight has developed into a new research focus worldwide, but, only a few projects are concerned with newly immigrated teachers. Meanwhile, increasing importance is politically assigned to them and their linguistic resources. Despite these expectations, there are hardly any studies that address language diversity in the professional training of immigrant teachers. As a reaction to this lacuna, we have conducted a qualitative study in two countries: Sweden and Germany. These cases are particularly interesting to compare as they approach the re-professionalization of immigrant teachers in very different ways. In Sweden the introductory programs are the result of a political measure (top-down-policy making) and hold no language requirement in Swedish, whereas in Germany these programs are the result of bottom-up initiatives on behalf of universities and academics, which consequently result in a varying dealing with linguistic diversity. The difference in approach is of extreme interest with regard to top-down- and bottom-up processes of language education policy making, as the chapter will explicate with a specific focus on research review thus far. It will then present a qualitative study that focuses on multilingual practices in teacher training. To access this level, interviews were conducted with the respective actors – programme coordinators and lecturers. The results allow deep insights into the process of language policy making and their implementation on the institutional level. Finally, we will discuss the potentials of top-down- and bottom-up approaches and formulate implications for international teacher education.

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Introduction

While expectations towards immigrant teachers as “role models” and “bridge-builders” have been broadly researched, little is known about their professional integration (Bräu et al., 2013, see also Goltsev et al. in Chap. 9, this volume), specifically, how languages are dealt with in professional training (Terhart et al., 2018). As a reaction to this lacuna, we conducted a qualitative study in two countries: Sweden and Germany. These contexts are interesting to compare as they approach the programmes for immigrant teachers in different ways (Bonoli, 2012; Terhart et al., 2020).

The contextual framework constitutes “re-professionalisation” programmes in Sweden and Germany. These programmes are of particular interest because they differ in their educational policy structure: while the Swedish programme is the result of political decisions and top-down policy-making, the German programme was developed through bottom-up initiatives by university actors.

In Sweden, the professional integration of immigrants can look back on a long experience in education policy (Bonoli, 2012; Ennerberg, 2017). In addition to an already existing programme, the Swedish government introduced a fast track procedure in 2016: The measure lasts 26 weeks and is currently offered at six Swedish universities. No knowledge of Swedish is required for participation. Translanguaging seminars allow for quick access to the course content. Participants as well as teachers use their different language resources in order to understand and discuss the content. The concept of translanguaging also suggests a positive attitude towards multilingualism. The existing linguistic basics of the (mainly Arabic-speaking) participants are the prerequisite for learning, while teaching the educational language Swedish in parallel. On 2 days a week they take part in university lectures on the Swedish school system, on two further days they gain practical experience at school and on 1 day they attend the Swedish language course. The successful completion of the course gives them access to regular teacher training or employment as assistants.

In Germany, due to institutional and structural requirements, only a few teachers with foreign qualifications are integrated into the regular school system (Krüger-Potratz, 2013). In the course of new immigration, qualification projects in educational fields emerged in recent years. In contrast to Sweden, all programmes were initiated by university actors and are not politically binding (Putjata 2018; Terhart et al., 2020). Upon successful completion of the programmes, participants receive a certificate that qualifies them to work as replacement teachers, heritage language teachers, in all-day care at German schools or to pursue a regular teacher training. The second difference is the language requirements: Most of the courses require knowledge of German at least at level B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. In addition to the language courses, the programme aims to prepare participants for the regular teacher training programme with methodological-didactic contents and information about the German education system.

Teachers with an Immigrant Background and Their Access to Educational Market

The professionalization programmes presented in the last section constitute a significant research context specifically with regard to language requirements. We will show this in the following, basing on the theoretical concepts of linguistic market and language policy making and including the literature review on the role of languages in teachers' access to labour and education markets.

Research on international teachers is extremely scarce, as teachers from other countries are rarely integrated into the national school system. Apart from speakers of prestigious languages like English from the UK, Canada and the United States (Collins & Reid, 2012), or French speakers from France (Liboy & Mulatris, 2016), teachers with an immigrant background often experience downward mobility, as shown in studies from Canada, Europe, the USA and Australia (Putjata, 2018; Remennick, 2002). Studies with refugee teachers analyse their access to the educational market and confirm numerous barriers on their way to professional integration (Putjata, 2018, 2019; Santoro, 2013) which results in 'brain waste' - a phenomenon widely criticized in migration studies (Bauder, 2003). A recent study on newly immigrated teachers in Germany analysis the mechanisms of this restriction. Framed by Bourdieu's capital theory, the results show the role of language as symbolic capital in this process: in migration, all three forms of capital (embodied in skills, objectified as in books and institutionalized in diplomas) undergo repositioning, since individuals lack the most relevant capital - the state language. The books are not in the legitimate language, the embodied skills cannot be presented, the diplomas are often not accepted, and access to formal education in order to adopt these diplomas is only possible when there is knowledge of the majority language (Putjata, 2018). Exceptions were shown in studies from Israel, where languages were included in the courses and thus positioned as an embodied and institutionalized capital (Putjata, 2018).

Following Bourdieu's model (Bourdieu, 1990), individuals are assigned a certain social position according to the value of their languages, whereby this value corresponds to the prevailing power relations. In everyday interaction, this positioning results in view of the role of certain languages. At the individual level of the speakers, these views are reflected in the so-called language beliefs. They include, for example, ideas about what role language skills play, how languages are learned and how useful they are. These language hierarchies are reproduced and circulated in educational institutions. Knowledge of certain linguistic forms (e.g. the state language, Swedish, or the family language¹ of the course participants, Arabic) is certified and institutionalised as capital. Documented in certificates, the linguistic capital

¹The terms "heritage language" or "mother tongue" are subject to controversial discussion in German pedagogical discourse as they bear an idea of a (foreign) heritage or one specific language with no actual relevance for the child's life. Hence, the present paper adopts the term "family languages" or "language practices" (for further discussion, see Fürstenau & Gomolla, 2011).

is a decisive criterion for educational success and access to work. What functions as relevant knowledge, whether English or Arabic, is defined by the groups with the largest volume of capital – policy makers, who are themselves mostly speakers of prestigious languages and act as ideology brokers (Blommaert, 1999). Hence, following this sociolinguistic perspective, educational institutions produce and reproduce the existing language hierarchies, which results in the social exclusion and educational underachievement of all those who do not speak the majority language.

Studies from different disciplines research how to overcome this reproduction of inequalities (Menken & Garcia, 2010) on a micro-, meso- and macrolevel. Language beliefs are shaped by the macro level of language policies. They determine and regulate the use of language at the meso level of educational institutions and affect the micro level of individual linguistic practices (Spolsky, 2004). According to the findings on Language Policy Making (Shohamy, 2010), language policy measures are important to initiate transformation processes on the educational language market. However, a number of open and covert top-down and bottom-up mechanisms become effective and can restrict or favour the implementation of the new language policies. Menken and García argue that “at each level of an educational system, from the national ministry or department of education to the classroom, language education policies are interpreted, negotiated, and ultimately (re)constructed in the process of implementation” (Menken & Garcia, 2010: 1). In this perspective, the course leaders of the presented professionalization programmes (section 2) play an important role: as actors at the interface between top-down policy making and language practices they act as *de facto policy makers* (Shohamy, 2010). They can function as ideology brokers who circulate new, multilingual language ideologies allowing for multilingual practices. One such practice could be, for example, translinguaging: This pedagogical concept suggests that teachers and students can use all available language resources to allow for language and cognitive transfer as well as social cohesion (García & Wei, 2014).

At the backdrop of the presented literature on international teachers’ access to education, the significance of language policies within this process, and the role of course leaders as *de facto policy makers*, the following questions arise: What are the language beliefs of the course leaders? How do they perceive the language resources of the international teachers, and what language policies and practices do they endorse?

Research Design and Methodology

The data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with course leaders in Sweden and in Germany. We chose the instrument because the guide ensures that all important aspects for answering the research question are mentioned. On the other hand, the wording and the order of the questions are not binding. This favours an open and natural situation and helps to assess participants’ language beliefs (Witzel & Reiter, 2012). Finally, additional open questions give interviewees the

opportunity to respond accordingly to their individual interests: First, the interviewees were asked what language requirements the course participants (international teachers) should meet in order to participate in the programme. If not mentioned, more concrete questions followed on which languages are relevant in the context of the project and professional practice. If the interviewees did not mention languages of the participants here either, the explicit question followed: *To what extent does multilingualism (foreign languages, family languages) of the participants play a role in the teacher training course and in everyday school life?* Interviews were conducted in a place chosen by the interviewees and lasted from 30 to 70 min.

The data corpus consisted of 13 interviews and is presented in Table 5.1. All of the participants were programme actors: university lecturers, project coordinators and supervisors at schools. The university lecturers were recruited in one Swedish and four German universities. School supervisors as well as project coordinators were contacted and asked if they could consider participating. All interviews took place in 2018 in the participants' work places. We recruited them because at the backdrop of the presented literature review these persons act as de facto policy makers – at the interface between language policy and actual practice.

The first step of the Swedish and German data analysis process was the transcribing of the interviews and the organizing of the different data according to central topics. In the second step, we applied comparative analysis to find repeating threads and patterns (Nohl, 2010). In the coding process, we made a list of topics, which were repeated in the interviews. In the third step, the topics were assembled into

Table 5.1 Overview of the participants in Sweden and Germany

Name of the interviewed person, pseudonymised ^a	Position within the programmes
Sweden	
Eva	Language lecturer
Riba	Language lecturer
Astrid	Subject lecturer
Vera	Subject lecturer
Helena	Subject lecturer
Karin	Project manager/coordinator
Anders	Supervisor at school
Inga	Supervisor at school
Germany	
Ms. Zielonka	Project coordinator and subject lecturer
Mr. Thiel	Language lecturer
Mr. Funke	Project coordinator
Ms. Lenz	Project coordinator
Mr. Peters	Project manager and subject lecturer

^aIn Germany, the program coordinators and course leaders were addressed as “Herr/Frau” following their surname, whereas in Swedish interviews, first names were used. This is reflected in the chosen pseudonyms

several themes (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011). This allowed us to reduce the scope, organize the data and finally, answer the research questions about language beliefs, multilingualism and language diversity management in the professional training of immigrant teachers. After establishing the respective findings of the Swedish and German data analysis, we compared them in terms of similarities and differences in the individual topics.

Findings and Discussion

The interview analysis revealed three major themes: official language requirements, monolingualism as a norm and multilingualism as a resource on different levels. In this section, we will present the findings following these themes and focus on similarities and differences between the Swedish and the German contexts. To allow insights into the data, the presentation will include direct quotes and paraphrases of the most concise examples from the interviews with course leaders. However, the qualitative data allows us to extend the analysis beyond the quoted examples.

Official Language Requirements

The most fundamental difference between the programmes in Germany and in Sweden are the language requirements at the national level. In Germany most course leaders consider the German language to be essential even within the programmes. This importance is often not argued for or explained, but stated as self-explanatory. In comparison, no such norm was stated by the interviewees in Sweden.

Following Shohamy, the official language policy on the macro-level of federal ministries frames beliefs and practices of individual actors. As in Sweden, the top-down-policy on teacher professionalization expects universities to open courses to all participants without specific language requirements, thus resulting in the use of several languages, Arabic, Swedish and English. Yet, a deeper insight into the data reveals that course leaders' perception of these practices differs, as we will show in the next section.

Monolingualism as a Norm

In the German programmes, three interviewees emphasise the importance of German language courses in the re-professionalization programmes. They consider a high level of language command as a premise for professional teaching and regard German as the predominant school language:

It makes sense for participants to take this test because, of course, it also provides information about whether they can keep up with the course that we will then take with them and then also acquire these degrees, these B2 and then also the C1 degree, from us in this period of time at all.

Mr. Funke, as well the other two interviewees, supports the language requirements. Only in the context of the training for heritage language courses, they perceive languages other than German as relevant, which can be interpreted as a monolingual belief. This belief is also reflected in the Swedish data. Although no language requirement is made on the level of policy making, and in spite of the resulting multilingual practices of everyday instruction, these practices are perceived as problematic. The course leaders consider the language issue as a great challenge for the participants. Even if the course is in Arabic and Swedish, the course leaders would like the participants to use Swedish predominantly:

Today when the participants presented their group assignment, four out of the five groups spoke Swedish. But, of course, it was not all of them [group members] that spoke or even understood Swedish. They had chosen the one [group member] who could speak in Swedish. And sometimes I can sense that there is too much focus on Arabic because there are only Arabic speaking participants. They need everyday Swedish language in order to communicate out in the schools.

Although four of the five groups chose the Swedish language to present the assignment, the line of argumentation reveals a deficit-oriented perspective on this practice. The achieved result of the group work – the successful presentation in Swedish relying on all the language resources of the participants – is restricted: “But of course, not all of them spoke”. The following intensification in Eva’s argument – through the statement “or even understood” – reinforces her perceived lack of the skills on the part of the course participants. The subsequent summary, “They had chosen the one”, underlines the primary focus on Swedish, on the one hand, and the denial of this skill in the majority of the course participants, on the other. The use of multilingual practice is not argued for learning purposes in terms of translanguaging (see García & Wei, 2014). Rather, it is perceived as the result of the varying levels of Swedish among the group: The “focus on Arabic” is argued and explained only in relation to the lack of knowledge in the majority language. Finally, this deficit-oriented perspective results in the perception of Arabic as a limitation and as “too much”. This limitation is stated not only with regard to participants’ Swedish language learning in the course but also as an obstacle for interaction with pupils or teachers “in the school”.

This deeper insight in the line of argumentation from the course leaders reveals the usefulness of qualitative data analysis. Monolingual practices – the choice of the majority language over the language resources of the course participants – come not from a negative attitude towards some languages or language speakers, but are the result of a genuine concern for the future well-being of the immigrant teachers outside of the professionalization programme. It can be interpreted not as an individual attitude but as an institutionally structured ideology about the role of certain languages in terms of Blommaert (1999), which the course leaders circulate as *ideology brokers*.

Further data from our corpus, in both the German and the Swedish context, support this finding. Concerning the weekly practice experience at schools, the course leaders emphasize how difficult it is for the participants to communicate with their teacher colleagues and the students. Anders, one of the supervisors, points out:

To send someone here who does not understand anything and only sits there is not good, as I see it. She cannot understand, cannot talk and cannot ask any questions. I cannot use her competence in class, and I wish it had been possible to do so. And the reason for this is that she doesn't speak a word of Swedish.

Anders's remark concerning the participant's deficiencies in the majority language is representative of many of the programme actors, especially in the schools. Most of the course leaders in the Swedish case highlighted that a certain level of Swedish is necessary. Their arguments vary between Swedish being "beneficial" and an "indispensable language in both the course and the school context". This line of reasoning can be interpreted as the result of monolingual ideology on the linguistic market of educational institutions (see Bourdieu, 1990). Speaking Arabic is perceived in contrast to, or even at the cost of, speaking Swedish and not as the starting point of cognitive or linguistic transfer within the language learning process following translanguaging (see García & Wei, 2014). And finally, Arabic is not perceived as a capital course participants can bring to the school as future teachers.

Multilingualism as a Resource

At the same time, data also reveal that some actors do perceive the family languages of the participants as a capital for the work at school, on a social level and in class.

For the Work at School

In Germany, three of the five interviewees emphasise the importance of the participants' family languages as a resource for the work in education. The project manager and subject teacher Mr. Peters points out:

It is [...] very interesting for the labour market to have people who speak the languages, people who are involved with social work, pedagogy, school. This is an important resource, but it is so much more. [...] It's also interesting for the labour market to have these languages, which unfortunately aren't trained here, but rather acquire them like that.

This statement reveals a perception of the participants' family languages as a resource for a professional activity in educational settings. The cue "unfortunately" underlines the positive perception of this resource and the need for it in Germany today. Further data support this finding. Mr. Thiel and Ms. Zielonka see the languages of the participating teachers as advantageous and necessary to recognise as a second teaching subject. At school, this would benefit not only the students, but also the immigrant teachers and allow to facilitate teachers' integration into the

labour market. In this context Ms. Zielonka, who is project coordinator and leader of one of the subject courses, pleads that the languages of the participating teachers should be offered to all pupils as regular school foreign language subjects:

So, here would be the possibility to say, Okay, then, let us try to support the people and develop a curriculum which will be valid for this generation or for the next one here. [...] But the debate is not open at all. [...] I was told that Polish and Russian would be available later, from the seventh grade onwards. Why not Arabic, too? At this level as a foreign language, which is offered...

This example can be interpreted as a perception of multilingualism as a capital (see Bourdieu, 1990), and not only for the immigrant teachers themselves. Some course leaders underline how important it is, to include migrant-related multilingualism in the school system, arguing that this would allow for a shift in the discourse on what is considered as relevant. We found similar patterns in further statements with a focus on languages hierarchies and the potential to fundamentally upgrade language hierarchies in society. In terms of the presented literature reviews, this line of argumentation is particularly important: Some course leaders not only have a positive attitude towards immigrant languages and multilingual practices for the individuals, their development, or their learning process, but they also criticise the existing language policy in today's Germany, which privileges some languages over the others.

In contrast, the languages of the immigrant teachers in Sweden are not perceived as a resource for access to the labour market. As compared to the German data, course participants do not encourage the use of Arabic, unless they have a specific background as Arabic teachers. This could be the result of the experienced top-down policy: The goal of the program and its official emphasis is on utilising the teachers' specific subject knowledge. Another tentative explanation of why course participants do not mention participants' skills in Arabic language teaching can be linked to the low status of heritage language teachers on the social level in Sweden, e. g. with lower salaries and no formal education requirements.

On a Social Level

However, on the social level in both Sweden and in Germany, the teachers' multilingualism is perceived as a resource, for example, in dealing with pupils and parents with a migration background, as stated by Helena:

And the third impulse is, of course, that there are also a lot of newly arrived students at the schools, and, of course, the teachers can communicate on equal terms with these students, if they have already had the same experience.

Helena sees the resource on the social level, as course participants have similar experiences of migration as the "newly arrived students". She expects that "these" students will be happy to have someone who understands their family language. Consequently, the linguistic and cultural background is seen as having the potential to generate intercultural competence and facilitating the role of mediators. This expectation can be often found in literature review on "role model" or "bridge

builders” (see Bräu et al., 2013; Goltsev et al. in this volume). In Germany, the interviewed course leaders were concerned that schools could reduce the teachers to the role of language mediators, thus overlooking and neglecting their professional competence. Therefore, Ms. Zielonka pleads for dealing with linguistic diversity as a cross-sectional task of the school.

In Class

As presented in the section “[Monolingualism as a norm](#)”, some course leaders in the Swedish Fast Track stated that although the concepts of translanguaging worked well during the theoretical courses, it collided with the monolingual norms at the workplace. Yet, the views differ. Inga, for example, stated:

In some learning contexts, it is very good that there will be many languages. The participant can help many students who speak many languages, sometimes more than two. We need more languages in school.

Inga points out the family language of the participant may become a resource for the newly arrived students in need of “help”. We also found this resource-oriented perspective in the interview with Vera. Like Helena, she attaches lower importance to the majority language, Swedish, in the training course. Instead, she sees the entire linguistic repertoire of the participants as helpful for communication purposes. In Germany, however, the use of languages beyond German in the program depends primarily on language beliefs of individual actors working as lecturers. As the language teacher Mr. Thiel explains, he selectively takes the more prestigious Romance languages and English as being an advantage for the acquisition of German in the context of language-contrastive work in the German lessons. However, he does not seem to consider the family languages as a resource in his language course. This may stem from the lack of appropriate methodological-didactic knowledge to include the languages, which he himself does not master. Conversely, Ms. Zielonka and Mr. Peters reveal a resource-oriented attitude towards multilingualism, which also refers to the family languages of the teachers. Ms. Zielonka emphasises the multilingual teachers’ potential to reflect on languages, which may result from multilingualism. According to her, their meta-linguistic-awareness can be a great asset as a language support for newly immigrated students in the schools. In general, she attaches great importance to family languages for further language acquisition:

[The] first language is very important, especially for pronunciation, when you know where the sounds in Arabic come from, while the German language is located a little bit more in the front.

She further explains that teachers should also consider the family languages of the students, as the languages would be “mostly linked together”. Because the family languages of the teachers have no place in the official concept of the programme, she herself initiates workshops (for instance, pronunciation) where the family languages of the participating teachers serve as a foundation in the acquisition of

German. Also Mr. Peters explicitly wants the participants to use their family languages for exercises in his own courses:

And in these international comparisons, we tell the students who you already speak Arabic, that we would like to learn something about the education system in Syria. They look for documents and introduce us to the texts and then we discuss with them and discuss the differences in the education and social system with them. So, where the language is also necessary for the study. And of course that would also be beneficial, if I could speak Arabic or Russian, but well, it's also an interesting situation that they explain it to me.

He adds that the entire linguistic repertoire of the participants is very helpful for communication purposes in class. This description can be interpreted as a translanguaging (see García & Wei, 2014). As mentioned above, this language practice reveals the perception of multilingualism as a capital, and serves to value the participants' language as an asset. Both Mr. Peters and Ms. Zielonka seem to attach lower importance to a high level of German as they do not perceive it as being the only legitimate language within the educational context (in the training programmes and at schools).

Conclusions and Implications

In times of increasing migration, teachers with international qualifications are in the focus of both political and scientific debate. Yet, their presence is extremely scarce, as teachers from other countries are rarely integrated into the national school systems. Professionalization programmes constitute an important move as they allow for integration and access to education. The professional integration of immigrant teachers helps, at the same time, to prevent the chronic underemployment of immigrants. However, this potential strongly depends on the language beliefs of those who initiate and implement these professionalization programmes, as we have shown in the literature review and theoretical framework. The qualitative analysis of data from thirteen interviews allowed us to reconstruct the line of argumentation, and thus the logic and the underlying perception of multilingualism, with a specific focus on language policies and language practices. The in-depth examination of the data from Sweden and Germany reveals both differences and similarities concerning: the official language requirement, multilingualism as a norm and multilingualism as a resource for access to a professional activity, on a social level and in the classroom. In Sweden, no specific knowledge of a language is required for participation in the course. However, the interviews with course leaders reveal a perception of this practice as a problematic issue. The predominance of Arabic is perceived as hindering for the learning progress and for Swedish language acquisition. Moreover, the course leaders perceive the lack of Swedish as an obstacle for interaction with pupils or teachers in the school. Furthermore, the workplace practice is perceived as a difficult period for the participants of the Fast Track course as the multilingual policy in the programme collides with the monolingual norm in schools.

Yet, the results also show that course leaders in both contexts emphasize the participants' family languages as an asset for the interaction in schools. The

qualitative data reveal a resource-oriented view towards multilingualism in both educational and social terms. In theoretical courses, the course leaders consider multilingual practices as important, and include them as a pedagogical method.

The two contexts – Sweden and Germany – represent two different approaches: top-down versus bottom-up language policy making. Yet, our analysis shows that monolingual practice can still prevail despite the official multilingual top-down-policy, as is the case in Sweden. Course leaders play an important role in this process. As has been shown, the actual language practices in both Sweden and Germany are negotiated in everyday teaching: While some course leaders include the languages of the participants, others take no account of them, independent of the official language policy. And even those course leaders who consider multilingualism as a resource on a social level still opt for monolingual practices in the course. On the other hand, even in those cases where multilingualism is not supported by official top-down policies, as has been shown for Germany, there are course leaders who reveal multilingual beliefs and integrate languages other than German into their teaching. By doing so, they act as de facto language policy makers (Menken & Garcia, 2010). Thus, our findings suggest that the two approaches – top-down and bottom-up – do not work when implemented separately. This, however, can change, when the course leaders are aware of the family language role for learning processes and the languages themselves are ascribed an important value in programs' structure through top-down policies. These findings suggest that processes on both levels are necessary to overcome the monolingual mindset. This, in turn, would require professionalization programs that acknowledge family languages, while including the course leaders in the process of policy making and simultaneously raising their language awareness.

These two cases are interesting as they approach the re-professionalization of immigrant teachers in different ways. In Sweden, the programs are the result of a political measure, whereas in Germany, they result from bottom-up initiatives. The findings suggest that top-down as well as bottom-up approaches are necessary to reconstruct monolingual beliefs. For the professionalization programs this includes that course leaders are aware of family language role for learning processes and the languages themselves are ascribed an important value. This, in turn, would require more research on multilingual practices in teacher training programs.

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