

DIRECT AND INDIRECT SPEECH IN TIKAR

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This paper examines Tikar evidence that calls into question the traditional dichotomy thought to exist between direct and indirect speech. Tikar direct speech appears to have features that are usually associated with indirect speech, and indirect speech has features usually associated with direct speech. Indirect speech is also divided into two types, reported and non-reported, distinguished by the use of certain third person pronouns. The mixing of formal features suggests that languages make use of them independently, and that the range of strategies for coding speech forms is wider than previously thought.

Cette communication porte sur la relation en tikar entre ce qu'on appelle dans le système traditionnel discours direct et discours indirect. Dans le discours direct en tikar on relève certaines caractéristiques généralement associées au discours indirect et vice versa. Le discours indirect se subdivise en deux catégories, à savoir le discours rapporté et le discours non-rapporté. Celles-ci se distinguent selon la forme du pronom.

Le chevauchement des caractéristiques du discours direct et indirect semble indiquer que ces caractéristiques sont indépendantes de la structure et que les possibilités de forme ouvertes au locuteur sont plus nombreuses que ce qu'on aurait pensé.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tikar¹ is one of a growing list of languages which have speech forms that do not display the usual dichotomy of features associated with traditional direct and indirect speech. In this paper I will describe the forms of Tikar speech and show how they involve a mixing of features thought previously to distinguish the two. I will argue that the Tikar evidence suggests that languages draw on a variety of feature options and are not necessarily limited to two discreet categories.

2. TRADITIONAL CRITERIA FOR DEFINING DIRECT AND INDIRECT SPEECH

Direct and indirect speech are said to have at least 6 formal or functional differences; including 1) pronoun reference system, 2) verb tense, 3) presence of a complementizer, 4) deictics, 5) dependency status, and 6) degree of reporter-speaker identity with reported speaker (compare, for example, Li, 1986).

The differences can be illustrated by the following examples in English:

- (1) He said, 'I will see him here this afternoon.'
- (2) He said that he would see him there that afternoon.

In sentence (1) the first person pronoun in the quoted clause is co-referential with the reported speaker in the speech introducing clause. This is said to be a universal characteristic of direct speech. In sentence (2) a third-person pronoun is found in place of the first person, but still co-referential with the reported speaker. This is said to be typical of indirect speech.²

The two sentences differ also with respect to verb tense and deictics. In sentence (1) the tense of the verb and the deictic words 'here' and 'this' reflect the time and spatial perspective of the reported speaker. In sentence (2) it is the real speaker's time and spatial orientation that is represented.

Another difference is the presence of the complementizer 'that' to introduce the indirect quote in (2). Only indirect speech is said to make use of a complementizer, although its use in many sentences is considered optional.

Still another difference is the ability of the direct quote to stand alone as an independent sentence, occurring without an introducing clause as in (3):

- (3) 'I will see him here this afternoon.'

The indirect quote cannot be detached in the same way from its speech introducing clause.

A final difference is seen in the manner of delivery of the two sentences. In sentence (1) the real speaker attempts to reproduce the emotional overtones and intonation of the reported speaker in the quoted clause. In sentence (2) he maintains his own emotional perspective and intonation.

Taken together these differences between direct and indirect speech are significant and seem to support a dichotomy of speech types. But other languages are now coming to light where the distinction is not so clear-cut, that is, one finds features of direct speech occurring with those of indirect speech in a single reported speech form. This mixing of features raises the question whether all these features are necessary for the definition of direct and indirect speech, or whether one or more features is more diagnostic than the others. The answer to this question would help with a further question: How should we categorize speech forms with mixed features? I will address these questions below, but first will describe the type of mixing that occurs in Tikar speech forms.

3. TIKAR SPEECH FORMS

3.1 DIRECT SPEECH

Tikar direct speech is illustrated by the following sentences:³

- (4) *Nzwòkim šɛ lɛ nũ lɛ mũ ni mwum ɣkimmɔa.*
 guenon_i say to him that I_i am person strong
 'The guenon said to him, "I'm a strong person."'
- (5) *À šɛ lɛ kpulu lɛ Kpulu wù yibâ mũ ndɛm.*
 He_i say to turtle_j that Turtle_j you_j stole me_i field
 'He said to the turtle, "Turtle, you stole my field."'

The pronominal reference system and other features of these sentences are those of direct speech with one important exception. Both of the quoted clauses are linked to the clause of saying by the complementizer *lɛ*. Examples of *lɛ* as complementizer also appear in the following non-speech sentences:

- (6) *Tši 6e kã limmì lɛ n̄jè ni ywimɛ mlɔ'.*
 poto PI NEG know that famine ANA FUT end
 'The poto didn't know that the famine would end.'
- (7) *Mũ yili lɛ à kī mlib šɛ kɛ 6e Kimmì.*
 I want that he come woman marry LOC back Bankim
 'I want him to come marry a woman back at Bankim.'

The presence of the complementizer in Tikar direct speech makes the obvious point that the complementizer is not solely a characteristic of indirect speech. It is apparent that direct quotes have the same potential for being joined to the clause of saying by a complementizer as indirect quotes. This observation says much for the argument that direct quotes are as much a part of the sentence that introduces them as indirect quotes. It has sometimes been claimed that they are not, that direct quotes function as independent clauses, while indirect quotes function as dependent clauses. Or that direct quotes are less 'fused'⁴ to the clause of saying than indirect quotes. But the Tikar data would argue that direct quotes also function as complements of the verb of saying in that they are fused to the speech introducing clause in the same way as indirect quotes.

Later on we will see that indirect speech in Tikar may occur without the complementizer, so that in terms of frequency the complementizer is found more often in direct quotes than indirect. If the presence of the complementizer signals greater fusion than its absence, we might well say that Tikar is an exception to the general observation that 'in most languages, the indirect quote has some feature which signals that it is more fused with the clause containing the verb of saying than the direct quote' (Li, 1986:37).

There are a few occurrences of direct speech in Tikar without the complementizer:

- (8) *Mvɛ Kimmì yili nũ ɛhɛ Nyenwu wù tšîâ l̄ɣkɛm.*
 chief_i Bankim respond he_j yes Nyenwu you did right
 'The chief of Bankim responded, he (said) 'Yes, Nyenwu. you did the right thing.'

- (9) **Mvɛ̃** **Kìmmì ka šě:** **A'a'**, **mbyi** **mũ** **lõ** **m̃wɔ̃ki**, **wũ** **ɔ̃** **kā**.
 chief_i Bankim then say (excl) before I_i call meeting you
 arrive NEG
 'The chief of Bankim then said, 'See here. Earlier I called
 meeting and you didn't come.'

What stands out in these sentences is the briefness of the speech introducing clause. Not only is the complementizer absent but other major parts of the clause, i.e. the verb of saying in (8) and the addressee in (9). Reductions of this kind are common in Tikar speech but are more often found in indirect speech than direct. Rather than look at the types of reductions possible here they will be taken up in the discussion below on indirect speech types.

3.2 INDIRECT SPEECH

Indirect speech in Tikar can be divided into two types: reported and non-reported. The distinction between the two is semantic and formal, marked by different pronominal sets. Reported speech, the more common of the two, will be described first.

3.2.1 Reported indirect speech

The sentences below illustrate reported indirect speech in Tikar.

- (10) **Tši** **šè** **lè** **myi** **nyõ** **lɛ** **nyĩ** **ni** **tši** **ḡkā**;
 poto_i say to wife_j his that she_j ANA make wine
 'The poto said to his wife that she should make wine;
nũ **ywime** **nwɔ̃'** **kæbi** **nũ**.
 he_i FUT meat hunt FOC
 he will hunt for meat.
- (11) **ɔ̃** **tšibi** **nũ** **lɛ** **nyĩ** **ni** **lisà'** **ɔ̃** **mbyi**.
 they_i ask him_j that he_j ANA show-IMP them_i way
 'They asked him to show them the way.'

The third person pronoun references in these two sentences follow the usual strategy of indirect speech. That is, third person pronouns in the quoted clause are coreferential with third person nouns and pronouns in the introductory clause. Thus in (10) the third person singular **nũ** 'he' is coreferenced to **tši** 'poto', and the subject pronoun **nyĩ** 'she' is coreferenced to **myi** 'wife'. In (11) **ɔ̃** 'them' is coreferenced to **ɔ̃** 'they', while **nyĩ** 'he' is coreferenced to **nũ** 'him'.

In addition to the coreferencing strategy Tikar indirect speech is distinctive from direct speech in that it uses a different set of pronouns. This is easiest to see in a comparative chart listing the forms and their coreferential possibilities. The sets are given below for class 1 and 2 nouns⁵.

- (12) 3rd person pronouns - Indirect quote
singular (class 1) plural (class 2)

subject or object
co-referential with
speaker

 $\tilde{n}$

65

subject or object
co-referential with
addressee or other

nyĩ

6yi

- 3rd person pronouns - Direct quote
singular (class 1) plural (class 2)

subject not co-
referential with
speaker or addressee

à

 $\delta \varepsilon$

object not co-
referential with
speaker or addressee

nũ

65

The third-person pronouns in (10) and (11), underlined for ease in identifying, are seen to belong to the indirect set of pronouns.

Moving on to another characteristic of indirect speech in these sentences, the presence of the complementizer can be noted. The complementizer *le* links the indirect quote to the verb of saying in the same way as described for direct quotes. The complementizer is, however, an optional element of the indirect quote and is not present in the following examples:

- (13) À tšibi lè tši-nsò nyi ni lɛmɛzi lɛ?
he ask to chief; he; ANA dream how-Q
'He asked the chief what he had dreamed.'

- (14) Dùrù nũ nũ ywâ nũ ǵă nyĩ yàwàrì tǵĩ.
 baboon_i he_i he_i has-understood he_i NEG he_j shame make
 'The baboon (said) he understood; he wouldn't embarrass him.

In (13) the only element of the speech introducing clause that is absent is the complementizer. In (14) several elements are absent, including the verb of saying, the preposition, the addressee, and the complementizer. Only the speaker subject and its pronoun are left to introduce the indirect quote.

Stanley (1982:35) has described the complete speech introducing clause as having the formula

+speaker +verb +lɛ 'to' +addressee +lɛ 'that'

The sentences in (4), (5) and (10) above have this form. But in typical narrative flow it is more usual to have a shorter form of the speech introducing clause with one or more of the elements left out, particularly before the indirect quote. It is even possible to say that all parts of the introductory clause are optional, with two qualifications: first, an explicit addressee requires the presence of the verb, and second, an explicit verb requires the presence of the speaker. Thus in (13) the presence

of the addressee (t̥si-nsō 'chief') requires a verb of saying (t̥sibi 'ask') which in turn requires an overt speaker (à 'he'). By contrast, the sentence in (14) has neither addressee nor verb, only a double reference (noun + pronoun) to the quoted speaker.

The most reduced forms of the speech introducing clause consist of speaker only, as in (15):

- (15) Nū nū tsiā ɓyɛbi; nyi ni yafi nū.
 he_i he_i did badly she_j ANA forgive-IMP him_j
 'He (said) he has acted badly; she must forgive him.'

or speaker and complementizer, as in (16):

- (16) ɓō lɛ nyi ni maki nū! Nyi ni limmi
 they_i that he_j ANA be-quiet FOC he_j ANA know
 'They said he should be quiet! Doesn't he know
 kã lɛ mō t̥si-nsō ni ywiâ?
 NEG that mother chief ANA has-died-Q
 that the chief's mother has died?'

In occasional texts reporting rapid oral exchanges it is possible to find indirect sentences without a speech introducing clause. The exchange in (17) below is an example:

- (17)a. T̥si-nsō nū lɛ shi⁶ si li?
 chief_i he_i that it is so-Q
 'The chief, he (asked) was it so?'
 b. Nū lɛ mɛ
 He_j that yes
 He (answered) yes
 c. Nyi ni yɛ mō nyō kwānzi ɓe?
 he_j ANA FUT mother_k his_i cause-to-go-out back-Q
 'Would he bring his mother back (to life)?'
 d. Nū lɛ nū ni yɛ nyi kwānzi ɓe
 he_j that he_j ANA FUT her_k cause-to-go-out back
 'He (said) that he would bring her back.'

The underlined pronouns indicate that the pronominalization strategy throughout the reported exchange is that of indirect speech (with perhaps the exception of b. where there is no pronoun to indicate speech type). The questions in a. and c. are those of one reported speaker (the village chief), b. and d. are the answers by another (the liar). Note that in c. there is no speech introducing clause whatever, though the context makes it clear that the questions comes from the chief.

The example in (17)c. is helpful in illustrating another characteristic of Tikar indirect speech, the fact that indirect quotes may take the form of an independent clause. This potential runs counter to the traditional notion that indirect speech is limited to dependent clauses.

The full extent of the potential for Tikar indirect quotes to appear as independent clauses is seen in the various sentence types in which they occur. They can occur in questions as in

(13), (16) and (17) above, in affirmations as seen in (14) and (17), and in imperatives as in (16) above and (18) below):

- (18) 6ō 6yi kî!
 they_i they_j come-IMP
 'They (said) they should come!'

The syntax of these sentences (except for pronouns) is identical to non-speech independent clauses. In addition, the intonation supports the independent status. The sentence in (18) is distinctly imperative, those in (17)a. and (17)c. distinctly questioning.

Another important difference of Tikar indirect speech illustrated by these sentences is that of the perspective adopted by the reporting speaker. It was stated at the beginning of this paper that one of the traditional differences between direct and indirect speech is that the reporting-speaker maintains his own perspective in indirect speech, and adopts the reported speaker's perspective in direct speech. But in Tikar the reporting speaker adopts the reported speaker's perspective in indirect speech. He refers to time and spatial elements not as they appear from his own time and spatial orientation, but as they appeared to the reported speaker. This is reflected formally in the verb tense and deictics of the indirect speech, as in the sentences below:

- (19) 6ε šε lē Judà lε 6ō 6i yε nyĩ lō fε.
 they_i say to Judas_j that they_i ANA FUT him_j money give
 'They said to Judas that they'd give him money.'
- (20) Nū lε nyĩ 6à fε tšē
 he that she NEG here this-place
 'He (said) she isn't here.'

The use of the pronouns 6ō and nyĩ (instead of 6wi' 'we' and wū 'you') in (19) and nyĩ (instead of à 'she' in (20) indicates that these sentences are indirect. But note that the verb tenses in the quotes are future in (19) and present (copula) in (20) reflecting the temporal conditions that existed at the time of original utterance. The deictic words fε 'here' and tšē 'this place' in (20) likewise reflect this orientation.

In addition to these formal characteristics, the intonation also represents the emotional disposition of the reported speaker rather than the reporting speaker himself.

3.2.2 Indirect non-reported speech

Not all indirect speech is reported. There exists a form of indirect speech that conveys a proposed or hypothetical message. The following sentences will illustrate this type in Tikar:

- (21) Šε nū lε à hwīnì 6wē kàyé.
 tell him_j that he_j buy-IMP children notebook
 'Tell him that he should buy the children notebooks.'
- (22) Mū yē šε lε 6a bε šε mē yib...
 I-CON FUT say that NEG-IMP they marry PL women
 'If I say that they shouldn't marry...'

The sentences in (21) and (22) do not contain quotes originating from a prior speaker, rather they are proposals of a future or hypothetical speech, a speech that is being originated at the present time of utterance.

Formally the difference between this type of speech and reported speech is marked by the use of different third person pronouns. In the sentences above the pronoun subjects à 'he' and 0ε 'they' in the proposed speeches are co-referential with the addressees of the speech introducing clauses (the addressee is not explicit in (22)). These pronouns are used instead of nyí and 0yi found in reported indirect speech. The third person pronominal system of indirect non-reported speech is presented below:

(23) 3rd person pronouns - Indirect non-reported speech
singular (class 1) plural (class 2)

subject or object
co-referential with
speaker

ṇi

6õ

subject or object
co-referential with
addressee

৬

6 ε

A comparison with the pronominal systems of indirect reported and direct speech can be made by referring back to (12). It can be seen that indirect reported and non-reported are identical in the pronouns used for referents that refer back to the subject. They differ, as pointed out in the examples above, with respect to the pronouns used for referents that refer back to the addressee or another person. These latter pronouns à and Ø_z are not coreferential with speaker or addressee.

4. THIRD PERSON PRONOUNS IN THE SPEECH INTRODUCING CLAUSE

In this section I want to look at two features of the reduced speech introducing clause that were not included in the discussion above. It was shown that the most reduced forms of the speech introducing clause consist of speaker only or speaker and complementizer. Examples were given in (15) and (16) and these are repeated in part below:

(15) Nū nū ṭʃiâ ɕyɛbi....
he_i he_i did badly
'He (said) he has acted badly....'

(16) ḡō lɛ nyɪ ni mɔki nũ!
they that he ANA be-quiet FOC
'They said he should be quiet!'

The underlined pronouns nũ and õ are not the usual pronouns found in full speech introducing clauses. Examples of the pronouns in full forms were seen in (5) and (11), also repeated below for convenience:

(5) À šè lè kpulu lè....
he say to turtle that
'He said to the turtle that....'

- (11) 6ε tšibi nū lε nyĩ ni lisà' 6ō mbyi.
 they ask him_j that he_j ANA show-IMP them way
 'They asked him to show them the way.'

I am unable so far to suggest an explanation for the different sets of pronouns in reduced and full speech introducing clauses. Nor has a satisfactory explanation been found for the redundancy of speaker reference (noun + pronoun) permitted when a full noun appears in the reduced speech introducing clause, as in the following sentences:

- (24) Tši nū nyĩ ni gwumni kε gba' nji
 poto_i he_j he_j ANA hide-IMP LOC chair under
 'The poto, he (said) he should hide under the chair.'
- (25) M' nji 6ō lε 6ō 6i limmi kã ñsã
 PL elder_i they_j that they_j ANA know NEG interpret
 'The elders, they (said) that they didn't know.'

These are problems that need to be followed up in further investigations.

5. A COMPARISON OF DIRECT AND INDIRECT FEATURES

From the description of direct and indirect speech in Tikar above we conclude that many of the features thought to characterize and differentiate direct and indirect speech are not essential to the definition of one or the other. Of the six formal or functional differences listed at the beginning of this paper only the pronoun strategy is a consistent indicator of direct or indirect speech in Tikar. The presence of a complementizer, verb tense, deictics, dependency versus independency status, and reporter-speaker perspective are often identical in the two forms of Tikar speech and cannot be said to be diagnostic of one form or the other. It seems then that these features can be freely associated to reported speech forms as a language chooses.

The suggestion that pronoun reference is the only consistent feature distinguishing direct and indirect speech is not a new one; Li says the referential strategy of pronouns in direct and indirect speech 'is often the only diagnostic criterion available in many languages for distinguishing a direct quote from an indirect quote out of discourse context.' (1986:32).

In Tikar the pronoun reference system was seen to be supplemented by the separate sets of pronouns for direct and indirect speech. Any given sentence involving third person referents can be immediately identified as direct or indirect by the form of the pronouns.

An interesting problem arises in sentences that do not have pronominal referents. If it is true that pronoun strategies are the only diagnostic criteria for distinguishing direct and indirect quotes then we would expect quotes that do not have any

referents to be truly ambiguous, that is, to be unidentifiable in terms of direct or indirect speech. This is in fact the case in Tikar where examples like (17b). above and (26) below have all the feel of direct speech (by traditional standards) but have no formal grounds by which we can identify any category of reported speech.

- (26) T̥si-mɛ ɓwɛ' ɓɛ, à hwasi t̥simi sɛbani!
 liar_i arrives he_i greets chief_i (polite SAL)
 'The liar arrives, he greets the chief 'Sɛbani!'
 T̥simi yili,...
 chief_i acknowledges
 'The chief acknowledges (the greeting),...'

The word sɛbani is a quoted greeting, but occurs without a pro-nominal element to indicate whether it is direct or indirect. The context that follows this speech continues in indirect speech, raising the possibility that if consistency of speech type is the norm in a given context the quote here could be taken as indirect. But consistency of context does not in fact serve as an argument for identifying speech types in Tikar because frequent switches are found between direct and indirect speech. These may occur in mid-exchange, or even in the middle of a single quoted speaker's speech. The following is an example:

- (27) T̥si-nsò ja šɛ lɛ ɛhe kɛ nyè nɛ yi
 chief then say that so LOC back REL ANA
 'The chief then said, 'So, because of that (I know)
 wù ni t̥si-l̥ɛŋkɛm. ŋkyĩ nɛ tò nɛ
 you_i are truthful-person. foreigner_i REL stay this
 you are a truthful person. This foreigner
 ɓa nyĩ kɛ ti.
 NEG-IMP he_i go again
 must not go elsewhere.'

In the above speech the reporting speaker began by directly quoting the chief's address to the truthful person, then changed to an indirect quote in continuing the speech. Wù 'you' and ŋkyĩ nɛ tò nɛ 'this foreigner' refer to the same person.

6. THE FUNCTION OF DIRECT AND INDIRECT SPEECH IN TIKAR

Wiesemann (1985) makes the point that different quote styles seem to be used for purposes that vary from language to language and that this can pose a problem for translators. When two languages share the same or similar formal traits of direct or indirect speech, translators may overlook the fact that these types may function differently in the two languages.

For a number of languages it has been suggested that the speaker perspective is the important functional difference between direct and indirect speech. But for Tikar this was shown to be inadequate as an explanation because direct and indirect usually have the same speaker perspective. On the other hand there does seem to be a difference between direct and indirect in Tikar in terms of the rate of information flow. Indirect speech appears in segments of narrative that might be termed 'concentrated informa-

tion flow' while direct speech occurs in 'fully delineated information' segments. By 'concentrated information flow' I mean that the introduction of new information is rapid and often in an abbreviated form (e.g. as evidenced by the reduced speech introductory clauses typical of indirect speech). Direct speech in contrast presents information in a fuller, more deliberate manner. I recognize that these are notions that are potentially measurable, but in the absence of formal means here there is some support that can be offered from observations made in preparing literacy materials for reading classes in Tikar.

One of the recent projects in the town of Bankim was to collect oral folktales for inclusion in a story booklet for new readers. With the help of Tikar colleagues we recorded texts, transcribed them and generally found that indirect speech was used significantly more than direct speech. We observed, however, that the new readers tended to have difficulty reading the exchanges in indirect speech, particularly those with abbreviated speech-introducing clauses. This, I believe, is because the slow pace of reading induces a fuller form of information flow, and the fuller form is more natural to the Tikar in direct speech than indirect. Thus there was a tendency in the reading classes to overlook the indirect markers and transform an indirect quote into direct speech. We found for the sake of new readers direct quotes were often more appropriate in written literature.

7. CONCLUSION

Two questions were raised in section 2 of this paper: (1) What features are necessary for the definition of direct and indirect speech? and (2) How should we categorize speech forms with mixed features? It was shown that the pronominal reference system in Tikar is the only feature consistent with the traditional definition of direct and indirect speech; and as such is the only feature on which a dichotomy of speech types can be based. But the notion of dichotomy obscures the fact that a number of feature variations are possible, and that different types may exist where there is no distinction in the pronominal reference system (e.g. Tikar reported versus non-reported indirect speech). In other Cameroonian languages it has been observed that direct and indirect pronominal strategies can even be combined in single sentences to produce a type of speech which Hedinger calls 'combined speech' (1984:92) and Wiesemann 'semi-direct speech' (1985:8). From these facts it seems impractical to try to maintain the idea of a strict dichotomy between speech types. Perhaps something more on the line of a multidimensional feature grid would be more appropriate to describe the combinations of features actually found in the world's languages.

NOTES

¹Tikar is a Benue-Congo language of central Cameroon. It is spoken by approximately 20,000 people in the Mayo-Banyo, Mbam and Noun divisions. Data for this paper is from the Bankim dialect, and was collected in the two of Bankim during 1985 and 1986. This article was presented at the 17th W.A.L.S. Congress at Ibadan, March, 1986.

²The reader may refer to Li (1986) or Hedinger (1984) for detailed descriptions of the pronominal reference strategies of direct and indirect speech.

³The following abbreviations are used in this paper:

ANA - anaphoric maker	NEG - negative particle
CON - conditional	PI - past imperfect
LOC - locative particle	PL - plural
FOC - assertive focus	Q - question marker
FUT - future tense-aspect	SAL - salutation
IMP - imperative	

Tones are indicated as follows: (') low, (ˇ) rising, (ˆ) falling, () high

⁴For an elaboration of the concept of fusion of clauses, see Givón (1980).

⁵These include most singular and plural human and animate nouns. Other third person pronouns are used to distinguish the four additional noun classes in Tikar.

⁶Shi is the 3rd person singular indirect pronoun for noun class 3. It contrasts with son, the noun class 3 direct pronoun.

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