

The Effect Of Traditional Engklek Games On The Socio-Emotional Development Of 5-6-Year-Old Children At Kemala Bhayangkari 03 Selong Kindergarten

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the effect of the traditional game of engklek on the social and emotional development of children aged 5-6 years at Kemala Bhayangkari 03 Selong Kindergarten. The research method used is a quasi-experimental design with a pre-test and post-test. The research subjects consisted of 20 children from group B (aged 5-6 years) who were divided into two groups: the experimental group (10 children) who were given engklek game treatment for 8 weeks, and the control group (10 children) who participated in regular activities. The data collection instrument used a social-emotional development observation sheet that refers to the following aspects: patience in queues or patiently waiting for one's turn, honesty, emotional control, competitiveness, and social relationships. The results of the statistical analysis used the test of t-test shows a significant difference between the experimental and control groups ($p < 0.001$) which means H_0 rejected and H_a accepted. There is a difference seen from the average percentage obtained by children in the experimental class and the control class at the time of pre-test and post-test. When pre-test in the experimental group obtained an average value of 35.7%, whereas at the time post-test obtained a score of 73.6%. In the control class, children obtained an average score of 28.6% at the pre-test, while at the post-test children obtained an average score of 53.6%.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Social-emotional development is a crucial aspect of early childhood development. At ages 5-6, children begin to develop the ability to interact with peers, understand others' feelings, regulate their emotions, and build healthy social relationships. However, current trends indicate that many children experience difficulties in social-emotional development due to a lack of direct interaction and the predominance of gadget use (Pratiwi & Setiawan, 2021).

Traditional games like engklek (Indonesian hopscotch) have great potential as learning tools that can stimulate various aspects of children's development, including social and emotional development (Kurniawati et al., 2022). Engklek is a jumping game using stones or gacuk (a flat throwing piece) on a checkered pattern drawn on the ground. This game not only trains gross motor skills but also teaches social values such as taking turns, sportsmanship, cooperation, and respect for rules (Putri & Febriani, 2020).

As an early childhood education institution, Kemala Bhayangkari 03 Selong Kindergarten needs to optimize the use of traditional games as a fun and meaningful learning alternative. Initial observations revealed that most children still exhibit uncooperative behavior, have difficulty sharing, and are easily angered when playing with friends. Therefore, intervention through the traditional game of engklek is needed to improve children's social and emotional

development.

Social-emotional development in early childhood is an integrated process that involves the child's ability to understand the feelings of themselves and others, build positive interpersonal relationships, and control behavior to conform to social norms that apply in their environment (Hurlock, 1978; Santrock, 2011). In the age range of 5-6 years, children are cognitively at the pre-operational stage according to Piaget's theory, where they begin to be able to think symbolically but socially still have egocentric tendencies (Santrock, 2011). Therefore, stimulation through group activities is very necessary to erode this egocentric nature. Based on the context of structured activities such as traditional games of engklek, aspects of social-emotional development in early childhood include the following concrete indicators:

Patently waiting in line/waiting for turn: Children demonstrate self-regulation skills by standing orderly while waiting for their turn to throw their *gacuk* and jump without cutting in on their friends. Honesty: Children demonstrate interpersonal integrity by being obedient and honest when their feet step on the line or when their *gacuk* is thrown out of the game box area. Emotional control (emotional regulation): Children are able to control their negative affective responses, such as not crying, getting angry, or being overly disappointed when they lose in a game or when their game box is taken over by their friends. Healthy competitiveness: Children demonstrate achievement motivation, enthusiasm, and hard work to complete engklek jumps according to the rules in order to achieve the goal of the game. Social Relationships (Prosocial): Children are able to build positive interactions and show empathy by not teasing friends who fall or make mistakes when stepping on the line.

Traditional games are a type of traditional Indonesian game played in groups by jumping over patterned squares drawn on the ground or a flat surface (Safitri & Montolalu, 2023; Priyambodo, 2015). According to Priyambodo (2015), the game of engklek has very high educational value and developmental stimulation for early childhood for the following reasons:

Trains body movement coordination and balance: The physical activity of jumping using one foot from one square to another in sequence directly stimulates the development of gross motor skills, agility, and dynamic stability in children. Teaches the concept of numbers and space: The structured checkerboard pattern helps children learn mapping space (spatial) and recognizing the sequence of basic mathematical numbers concretely through game media (ethnomathematics). Cultivating sportsmanship and fair play, children are trained to be open-minded in accepting the rules of healthy competition without physical punishment, learning to admit mistakes if they step on the line, and respecting their friends' wins. Accustoming children to waiting their turn and respecting friends: Queue conditioning in group games forces children to reduce their egocentric attitudes, trains self-regulation control, and triggers the emergence of prosocial behavior when interacting with peers. Developing strategies and problem-solving, children are challenged to think tactically, such as thinking about the accuracy of the *gacuk* throw so that it lands right on target in the box without touching the boundary line.

The Relationship Between Engklek and Social-Emotional Development: The traditional game of engklek involves a highly intensive social interaction pattern between players. During the game, children are actively required to communicate, negotiate the order of play, and are challenged to resolve minor conflicts independently on the field. This interactive adaptation process indirectly stimulates the maturity of their social-emotional skills. Previous relevant research shows that group play activities rooted in local wisdom are effective as a structured learning medium to erode individualistic behavior. Specifically, research findings by Sari et al. (2019) confirm that the implementation of traditional games in early childhood learning environments has been proven to significantly improve children's social behavioral competencies, particularly in aspects of group cooperation skills and the formation of empathetic responses among peers.

Research Gap and Novelty of the Study: Previous studies indicate that traditional games can support early childhood development, and engklek has been linked to social-emotional development (Kurniawati et al., 2022; Putri & Febriani, 2020). However, the evidence is still

fragmented. Engklek has frequently been examined in relation to gross motor skills (Safitri & Montolalu, 2023), while studies on social outcomes have tended to focus on general social behavior (Sari et al., 2019) or on a single value, such as cooperation (Wulandari, 2020), empathy (Rahmawati & Hidayat, 2021), or independence and responsibility (Suryani & Putra, 2022). To the authors' knowledge, evidence that compares engklek with regular activities through a control group, across several social-emotional indicators measured at the same time, and in a local early childhood setting such as Selong, East Lombok, remains limited. In addition, the social-emotional benefits of engklek are often attributed to the game as a whole, without discussing which components of the activity (taking turns, following rules, and guided reflection) may account for the change. This study offers three contributions to fill this gap. First, it uses a quasi-experimental pre-test and post-test control group design to estimate the effect of engklek relative to regular activities. Second, it measures five indicators of social-emotional development simultaneously (patience in waiting for a turn, honesty, emotional control, healthy competitiveness, and social relationships) with a structured observation instrument. Third, it delivers engklek as a structured eight-week program (three sessions per week) that includes a social reflection phase, and it discusses the mechanisms through which the game may shape social behavior and emotional regulation. The aim of this study is therefore to determine the effect of the traditional engklek game on the social and emotional development of children aged 5-6 years at Kemala Bhayangkari 03 Selong Kindergarten.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a *quasi-experimental* design, namely the *Pre-Test and Post-Test Control Group Design* (Sugiyono, 2019). This design was chosen because it allows researchers to measure changes in the dependent variable (social-emotional development) before and after treatment, and to compare those changes with a group that did not receive the treatment.

Table 1. Research design

Group	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
Experiment	O ₁	X	O ₂
Control	O ₃	-	O ₄

Information:

O₁ & O₃ = Initial measurement (*pre-test*) of children's social-emotional abilities. O₂ & O₄ = Final measurement (*post-test*) of children's social-emotional abilities.

X = Treatment (*treatment*) in the form of a traditional engklek game method.

- = Conventional/ordinary learning (without engklek media).

This study involved a population of all children in group B (aged 5-6 years) at Kemala Bhayangkari 03 Selong Kindergarten, totaling 40 children. The sample was determined using a purposive sampling technique to select 20 children based on specific inclusion criteria, namely:

Children aged 5-6 years, actively participating in school activities, and obtaining written permission from their parents to participate (Sugiyono, 2019). Purposive sampling was chosen for three reasons. First, the intervention required the same children to take part consistently in all 24 engklek sessions and in both the pre-test and the post-test, so only children who met the attendance and parental-consent criteria could be included. Second, restricting the sample to the 5-6 year age range made the participants homogeneous in age and developmental stage, which reduces variation that is unrelated to the treatment. Third, the observation procedure required each child to be observed repeatedly and reliably, which is more manageable with a small group selected on clear criteria than with a large random sample (Sugiyono, 2019). Because random assignment of individual children was not feasible in the school setting, which is characteristic of a quasi-experimental design, the selected children were allocated to the two groups non-randomly. Allocation was based on the pre-

test observation so that the groups were equal in size (10 children each) and started from a comparable initial level of social-emotional development (both in the MB category: 35.7% in the experimental group and 28.6% in the control group). The experimental group (10 children) was given the traditional engklek game treatment (independent variable), whereas the control group (10 children) followed regular activities, in order to measure the impact of the treatment on children's social and emotional development (dependent variable). The main instrument was a social and emotional development observation sheet. This observation sheet was developed based on indicators of achievement of the developmental level of children aged 5-6 years (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, 2014).

Table 2
Child Social Emotional Development Observation Instrument

No	Social Emotional Development Aspects	Indicator
1	Be patient while waiting in line & respect your turn (Self-Management)	The children stood orderly waiting for their turn. To throw the gacuk and jump without cutting into the line of friends.
2	Honesty & adherence to the rules of the game (Decision Making)	The child obeys when his footsteps on the line or this gacuk goes out of the box (willing to take turns honestly without doing anything cheating).
3	Stability emotion & sportsmanship (self-management)	Children do not cry, get angry, or get overly disappointed when they lose a game or when their gacuk has their "rice field" plot taken away. Friend.
4	Healthy competitive spirit (Self-Awareness)	The child shows enthusiasm and hard work to complete the engklek jump, but still respects another friend's victory.
5	Social relations & respect (Relationship Skills)	Children do not tease friends who fall/step on the wrong line, and are willing to give applause or praise when... friend succeeded.

This formula is used if each observation indicator is given a graded value of X% = $\frac{\text{Total score obtained by child X}}{\text{Total maximum score of the scoring instrument using a Likert scale of 1-4}} \times 100\%$

Total maximum score of the scoring instrument using a Likert scale of 1-4

Table 3 Percentage of assessment categories

No	Assessment Categories	Percentage Value
1	BB (Underdeveloped)	0%-25%
2	MB (Starting to Develop)	26%-50%
3	BSH (Developing According to Expectations)	51%-75%
4	BSB (Best Developing)	76%-100%

(Director General of Mandas DIKNAS in Dimiyati, 2013: 106)

This research procedure was carried out through three main stages, starting with the

preparation stage in the first week in the form of initial observations (*pre-test*) in both groups and the preparation of a Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) based on engklek. Next, the treatment stage was carried out in weeks 2 to 9, where the experimental group received an intervention of playing engklek three times a week for 30 minutes per session, including warming up (5 minutes), playing with variations (20 minutes), and social reflection (5 minutes), while the control group carried out free play activities as usual. After the evaluation stage in the form of final observations (*post-test*) was completed in the 10th week, the quantitative data obtained were analyzed using a comparative test, the *Independent Samples t-test*, to compare the significance of the differences in the average values of social-emotional development between the two groups (Sugiyono, 2019)

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. RESULTS

Table 4 Control Class Data Table (N=10)

No	Initials Child	Test Session	11	12	13	14	15	Total Score	Percentage of Children (%)
1	Child A	<i>Pre-test</i>	1	1	2	1	1	6	30,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	2	2	3	2	2	11	55,0%
2	Child B	<i>Pre-test</i>	1	2	1	1	1	6	30,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	2	3	2	2	2	11	55,0%
3	Child C	<i>Pre-test</i>	1	1	1	2	1	6	30,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	2	2	2	3	2	11	55,0%
4	Child D	<i>Pre-test</i>	2	1	1	1	1	6	30,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	3	2	2	2	2	11	55,0%
5	Child E	<i>Pre-test</i>	1	1	1	1	1	5	25,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	2	2	2	2	2	10	50,0%
6	Child F	<i>Pre-test</i>	1	1	1	1	1	5	25,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	2	2	2	2	2	10	50,0%
7	Child G	<i>Pre-test</i>	1	1	1	1	2	6	30,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	2	2	2	2	3	11	55,0%
8	Child H	<i>Pre-test</i>	1	2	1	1	1	6	30,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	2	3	2	2	2	11	55,0%
9	Child I	<i>Pre-test</i>	1	1	2	1	1	6	30,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	2	2	3	2	2	11	55,0%
10	Child J	<i>Pre-test</i>	1	1	1	1	1	5	25,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	2	2	2	2	2	10	50,0%
	Class Cumulative	<i>Pre-test</i>						57	Rate-rate: 28.6%
		<i>Post-test</i>						107	Rate-rate: 53.6%

Information:

11-15: indicator 1 to indicator 5

Total Score: sum of scores from 11 to 15 (Maximum = 20).

Child Percentage: calculated from the total score: $20 \times 100\%$

Class Cumulative Average: sum of all percentages of children divided by 10

Table 5 Experimental class data table (N=10)

No	India Child	Test Session	11	12	13	14	15	Shoes	Percentage of Children (%)
1	Child A	<i>Pre-test</i>	1	2	1	1	2	7	35,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	3	4	3	4	4	18	90,0%
2	Child B	<i>Pre-test</i>	2	1	1	2	1	7	35,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	4	3	3	4	3	17	85,0%
3	Child C	<i>Pre-test</i>	1	1	2	1	2	7	35,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	3	3	4	3	4	17	85,0%
4	Child D	<i>Pre-test</i>	1	2	1	2	1	7	35,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	3	4	3	4	3	17	85,0%
5	Child E	<i>Pre-test</i>	2	1	2	1	1	7	35,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	4	3	4	3	3	17	85,0%
6	Child F	<i>Pre-test</i>	1	2	2	1	1	7	35,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	3	4	4	3	3	17	85,0%
7	Child G	<i>Pre-test</i>	1	1	1	2	2	7	35,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	3	3	3	4	4	17	85,0%
8	Child H	<i>Pre-test</i>	2	1	1	1	2	7	35,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	4	3	3	3	4	17	85,0%
9	Child I	<i>Pre-test</i>	1	2	1	1	2	7	35,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	3	4	3	3	4	17	85,0%
10	Child J	<i>Pre-test</i>	2	2	1	1	2	8	40,0%
		<i>Post-test</i>	4	4	3	3	4	18	90,0%
	Class cumulative	<i>Pre-test</i>						71	Rate-rate: 35.7%
		<i>Post-test</i>						147	Rate-rate: 73.6%

Information

Pre-Test: The majority of children in the experimental class are still at scores 1 (BB) and 2 (MB), with a total score per child around 7 (35%).

Moment Post-Test: After regularly playing engklek, their scores jumped sharply to scores 3 (BSH) and 4 (BSB), with a total score per child reaching 17-18 (85% - 90%).

Final Result: The average cumulative class percentage calculated from the total of all children resulted in a figure of 35.7%, increasing to 73.6%. This drastic change resulted in an independent-samples t-test significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000 ($p < 0.001$, below 0.05; H_0 rejected).

Table 6 Recapitulation of Research Results (N=10)

Class Group	Number of Children (N)	Rate-rate <i>Pre-Test</i>	Rate-rate <i>Post-Test</i>	Difference in Improvement t Gain (%)	Hypothesis Test Description
Experiment (Engklek)	10	35,7%	73,6%	37,9%	H_0 rejected/ H_a accepted (effectively increasing ability)
Control (Conventional)	10	28,6%	53,6%	25,0%	Less Effective

Data interpretation for discussion on initial conditions: Before being given treatment, the social-emotional abilities of children in both classes were still in the low category (Experimental 35.7% and Control 28.6%). Then, after the experimental class was given treatment in the form of traditional engklek games, the average value shot up to 73.6% (an increase of 37.9%). So, the comparison of the increase in the experimental class was much higher than in the control class, which only increased by 25.0%. The difference in effectiveness between these two classes made the statistical test produce a decision to reject H_0 .

B. DISCUSSION

The research results show that the traditional game of engklek can stimulate the social and emotional development of children aged 5–6 years. Through play, children have the opportunity to interact with friends, follow rules, wait their turn, control their emotions, and learn to take responsibility for their activities. This aligns with Muslihan and Akbar (2021), who explain that educational games can be used in character development in early childhood, particularly in developing independence and discipline.

Games also provide learning experiences that actively engage children. Muslihan and Akbar (2021) showed that educational play tools can be used to encourage children's character development. This is related to the game of engklek, which provides opportunities for children to move, follow rules, and interact with peers.

Furthermore, Subuhayah and Akbar (2025) demonstrated that a role-play learning model that actively involves children can increase their learning motivation and participation. In the game of engklek, children's active involvement can be seen when they participate in the game, wait their turn, communicate with friends, and complete activities according to the agreed-upon rules.

From these results, it can be understood that traditional games not only function as fun activities, but can also be a medium of stimulation. Child development. Engklek games provide children with hands-on learning experiences through social interaction, game rules, and the experience of playing with friends. The Effect of Engklek on Cooperation: During the game, children learn to wait their turn, give opportunities to their friends, and support each other. Observations showed that children in the experimental group became more accustomed to saying "please go first" and "thank you" when taking turns playing. This is in line with Wulandari's (2020) findings that traditional games teach the value of cooperation from an early age.

The Effect of Engklek on Empathy: In the game of Engklek, situations often arise where a friend falls or fails to pass through the box. Children are taught not to tease, but to help and encourage. After the treatment, there was an increase in empathic responses, such as asking "Are you okay?" and offering assistance. This suggests that Engklek creates a space for children to practice empathy concretely. These findings support the argument of Rahmawati and Hidayat (2021), who stated that direct interaction in physical play triggers children's social sensitivity and empathic responses.

The Effect of Engklek on Emotional Control: One of the challenges in engklek is accepting defeat. Initially, some children exhibit emotional reactions such as crying or anger when they lose. However, through teacher guidance and post-game reflection, children learn that winning and losing are part of the game. They begin to say "congratulations" to the winner and are determined to try again. This ability to regulate emotions aligns with Santrock's (2019) theory of child emotional development, which asserts that guided reflection in group activities effectively fosters self-control.

The Influence of Engklek on Independence and Responsibility: Engklek requires children to understand and independently comply with the rules of the game. Children must remember the order of the squares, throw the gacuk correctly, and avoid stepping on the lines. This process fosters self-discipline and a sense of responsibility. The teacher acts as a

facilitator, providing positive feedback when children successfully follow the rules. This reinforces research by Suryani and Putra (2022), which found that adherence to the rules of traditional games significantly increases children's independence and sense of responsibility.

Mechanisms Underlying the Effect of Engklek on Social Behavior and Emotional Regulation: Beyond the descriptive gains, the pattern of results suggests several mechanisms through which engklek may shape social behavior and emotional regulation. First, engklek is a turn-based game in which a child can play only after the previous player has finished. Waiting for a turn requires the child to inhibit the impulse to jump in and to delay gratification, which is a core component of self-regulation. Repeated over 24 sessions, this structured delay gives children regular practice in self-management rather than only hearing about it. Second, the rules of engklek are visible and self-evident: a foot or a gacuk touching a line is immediately seen by every player. This transparent and immediate feedback makes rule violations hard to hide, so honesty and acceptance of consequences are practiced in front of peers. Interaction with peers who hold different viewpoints also encourages children to move away from egocentric thinking, which is consistent with Piaget's account of children at the pre-operational stage (Santrock, 2011). Third, every round produces a winner and a loser, which creates a safe, low-stakes situation in which children repeatedly experience frustration. With teacher guidance and the five-minute social reflection at the end of each session, they learn to name their feelings and to choose alternative responses, such as congratulating the winner. In this sense the reflection phase may have contributed as much as the game itself: play supplies the emotional experience, while reflection helps children make sense of it and regulate it. Finally, peers and the teacher act as models and scaffolds. Children observe how others handle waiting, losing, and helping, and imitate these behaviors, in line with social learning theory and Vygotsky's view that social interaction within a supportive group promotes development (Santrock, 2011).

These mechanisms should, however, be interpreted critically. The control class also improved, from 28.6% to 53.6% (25.0 percentage points), although it did not play engklek. This suggests that part of the improvement in the experimental class reflects factors common to both groups, such as maturation over the ten-week period, children's growing familiarity with the observation instrument (a testing effect), and the social experience of ordinary free play at school. The additional gain associated with engklek is therefore the difference between the two gains ($37.9 - 25.0 = 12.9$ percentage points), which is smaller than the raw gain in the experimental class suggests, although it is still substantial. The two groups also did not start from exactly the same level (35.7% and 28.6%), and the improvements were relatively uniform across the five indicators (Table 5), so the instrument cannot show which aspect (for example patience, honesty, or emotional control) responds most to engklek, or which element of the intervention (turn-taking, rule following, or reflection) was responsible. The mechanisms above are therefore plausible explanations that are consistent with the data and with previous studies (Sari et al., 2019; Rahmawati & Hidayat, 2021; Suryani & Putra, 2022), rather than processes demonstrated directly by this study. Future research could add component-level measures, such as observation of specific behaviors during play, or compare engklek with another group game, to separate the effect of engklek from that of group play in general.

Several factors that support the success of the intervention: **Play While Learning Approach (Play-Based Learning):** The intervention process is packaged in a fun way, making children feel happy so that they become more open to accepting and learning social values naturally (Wiguna, 2021). **Treatment consistency:** Conducted routinely 3 times a week for 8 weeks. **Structured reflection:** Post-game discussions help children internalize the values learned. **Environmental support:** Teachers and peers provide positive behavioral models. **Research limitations:** The research sample was relatively small (20 children), so generalization of the results requires caution. Then, the duration of the study was only 8 weeks; it did not cover long-term effects, and external variables such as parenting patterns at

home were not strictly controlled. In addition, as a quasi-experimental study without random assignment, the two groups were not entirely equivalent at baseline, and observation-based scoring may be affected by observer subjectivity, so the findings should be read as evidence of association and contribution rather than strict causation.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of descriptive data analysis and inferential statistics on the social-emotional development of children aged 5-6 years through the use of traditional engklek game media, it can be concluded that:

Real Effectiveness in Experimental Class: The implementation of the traditional was effective in improving children's social-emotional abilities. This is indicated by a jump in the class's cumulative raw score from 71 (an average of 35.7%) at the time of *pretest* to 147 (average 73.6%) at the time *posttest*. The child's abilities developed rapidly from the category Underdeveloped/Starting to Develop (BB/MB) to Developing According to Expectations (BSH).

Comparison with the Control Class: The increase in the experimental class (37.9%) was larger than in the control class, which followed regular activities and increased from a cumulative score of 57 (average 28.6%) to 107 (average 53.6%), a gain of 25.0%. The additional gain associated with engklek is therefore about 12.9 percentage points beyond the improvement seen in the control class.

Hypothesis Testing Decision: The independent-samples t-test produced a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000 ($p < 0.001$), which is smaller than 0.05, so H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. This indicates a significant difference in social-emotional development between the experimental and control classes after the treatment. Given the quasi-experimental design without random assignment and the small sample, this difference is best interpreted as evidence that engklek contributes to the improvement, not as proof that it is the only cause.

Overall Conclusion: The engklek game improved the five social-emotional aspects measured in this study, namely patience in waiting for a turn, honesty and adherence to rules, emotional control, healthy competitiveness, and social relationships (prosocial behavior), through social interaction, learning and following rules, and reflection on values. Future studies are recommended to use larger samples, random assignment, longer intervention periods, and component-level measures to strengthen these conclusions.

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