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Exploring Syntactic Ambiguity and Deep Structure Transformations in the translations Rumi's Mystical Poetry: A Generative Grammar Perspective

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Abstract

This paper aims at understanding how the element of mysticism in the selected work of Rumi can be explored via linguistic theory principles such as generative grammar and syntactic ambiguity. By deconstructing surface and deep structures, this study unveils the intricate interplay between language and meaning in six poems: "The Guest House", "The Marriage of True Minds", "Where There is Ruin", "Silence is the Language of God", "Only Breath" and "Out Beyond Ideas". These poems are analyzed to decode the mystical meanings hidden in linguistic ambivalences. In "The Guest House", the metaphor that applies to human life as a 'guest house' is studied under the view of syntactic doublet, which corresponds to Sufi conceptions of tenderness and receptiveness. In "The Marriage of True Minds", love and unity are aligned, which shows how conditional syntax accords with the Sufism perspective of love. This research demonstrates how Rumi's syntactical creativity supports the theoretical frameworks of multiple readings under the light of mystic wisdom. The insights established in this research yield the concept of analyzing the structure of Rumi's poem, as well as the relation between language and spirituality.

Keywords: Syntactic Ambiguity, Mystical Poetry, Literary Analysis, Philosophical Themes, Poetry Analysis, Mysticism.

Introduction

Rumi's poetry has captured people's imagination for centuries, mesmerizing them with his pure calligraphic songs across language barriers. Being a representative of Sufism, Rumi employs verse as a playscript to convey a message that is timeless. His poems, portraying rich imagery and metaphor, explores concerns of comprehensiveness such as unity of being, divine love, nature of being and the possibility of revelation. The themes that Rumi has adopted in his work as well as his use of language is rich and layered in a way that the reader is encouraged to experience layers of interpretation. Despite the richness of the interpretations of Rumi's works, there is less exploration about how the linguistic features contribute to the thematic and symbolic levels of the text. This study is designed to address that issue by employing the concept of generative grammar to assess the syntactic density of Rumi's verses. This research explores the idea of how syntax relates to meaning and demonstrates how Rumi's particular constructions contribute to the spiritual and philosophical dimensions of the poetry.

Chomsky has presented a detailed theory of generative grammar to give the general picture of the basic structures of language. Using the words of this theory, every sentence is thought to have its deep structure or meaning that undergoes transformations to form the surface structure. That is why in poetry this phenomenon is known as syntactic ambiguity: two or more different meanings associated with one surface structure. Rumi often employs syntactically transformed and semantically ambiguous phrases in his work. In addition, his choices of syntax are not only informative but also semantically engaging. The purpose of this research is to demonstrate how

Rumi employs deep and surface structures in relation to the mystical aspects in his work. By analyzing poems such as "The Guest House," "The Marriage of True Minds," and "Where There is Ruin" this research is going to prove that syntactic ambiguity enables Rumi to convey deep spiritual messages in relatively simple phrases. Additionally, this research claims that these features of language are necessary for conveying the underlying meaning behind the mysticism in Rumi's work. This paper aims at improving comprehension of Rumi's poetic genius and generative grammar by examining Rumi's poems. It will also create a productive cross-over between linguistics and literary criticism and demonstrate how linguistic conceptualized the subtleties of mystical concepts.

Literature Review

Rumi's Poetic Style and Mystical Themes

The work of Rumi has been studied in detail for the unique blend of spirituality and poetic imagination. Some of his works include the Masnavi, and the Divan-e Shams-e Tabrizi asking questions of love and yearning for the divine, as well as exploring the unity of creation. Lewis, an academic researcher noted that Rumi emphasized on using language to describe the mystical experience of the soul, which is illustrated with symbols and metaphors that are not easily expressed in ordinary language (Lewis, 2008; Schimmel, 2011). However, despite the fact that there has been significant study of his thematic elements, the syntactic structures that underpin these readings have been neglected.

Application of Generative Grammar to Literary Analysis:

The analysis of the deep structure and operations of the texts allows the identification of ways in which authors control language in order to employ techniques of vagueness, focus, and complexity analysis (Lakoff, 1969; Freeman, 2005). Despite the fact that generative grammar was applied to prose, the work done in poetry, and more importantly in non-Western poetic traditions, has not been explored extensively. This paper seeks to meet that need by using generative grammar to analyze Rumi's poetry and show how his syntactic decisions enhance the mystical aspects of his poems.

The Linguistic Perspective on Rumi:

Despite exhaustive scholarly studies of the themes and symbolism of Rumi's poetry there has been less investigation of the linguistic texture of the poetry. Freeman (2005) and Lakoff (1969) put forward procedures based on the generative grammar to analyze syntactic ambiguity and transformation in literary works. Freeman employs Chomsky's principles to demonstrate that deep structures contain metaphors and how Lakoff shows the possibility of the syntactic analysis to reveal such meanings.

Accessibility Through Translations and Commentaries:

Nicholson (1989) Arberry (2004) introduced the works of Rumi for the modern reader. Nicholson's notes explain the general and specific features of Rumi's poetry, its correspondence to the Sufi teachings; Arberry pays much attention to the translation and underscores the global message of Rumi's visions. These efforts have played a great part in establishing Rumi's international influence in literature and culture.

Syntax and Spiritual Themes:

The present work aims at filling the gap in the existing literature concerning the link between syntax and semantics in Rumi's works. Using generative grammar, it explores how different syntactic structures enhance the mystical and philosophical aspects of the Rumi's poems. This new way of examining Rumi's art connects linguistics and spirituality in a way that gives linguistics a new direction.

Theoretical Framework

Chomsky introduced generative grammar which serves as a strong background for analyzing the syntactical characteristics of language. Essentially, it posits two layers of representation: D-structure, that is the non-surface syntactic and semantic representation in terms of thematic roles; and S-structure, which is the final fully permutated syntactic form of a sentence. These transformations, which include movement (wh-movement in questions), deletion (elliptical constructions), and substitution (use of pronouns) are core to the understanding of how meaning is built and expressed.

In literary contexts, for instance, the changes lead to syntactic ambiguity because one surface structure will be the equivalent of many deep structures. This creates space for the reader to understand a text from multiple perspectives (Fatima, et al. 2024). In poetry, generative grammar unravels how poets always apply syntax as a device to create uncertainty, place emphasis on specific thoughts, and elicit various feelings.

Syntactic Features in Rumi's Poetry

We discuss how Rumi creatively advances mystical ideas through his syntax in poetry. Passive constructions, inversions, and ellipses occur often in his works. Each of these techniques serves specific purposes:

- **Passive Constructions:** Instead of making a subject or subjectivity the primary sign of meaning, Rumi often displaces subjectivity toward action or experience, toward processes of the worlds such as divine love or conversion, in order to emphasize the ego's removal.
- **Inversions:** The violation of traditional syntactic patterns coalesces into rhythms where possible, or else targets specific semantic fields to draw attention to cryptic sentiments hidden in his poetry.
- **Ellipses:** Such suppression of the words or phrases provides the readers with the extra responsibility and different choices to come up with the necessary words or phrases on their own.

Bridging Syntax and Mysticism

If we look more carefully through the lens of generative grammar, we can understand how the syntactic structures relate to Rumi's core mystical concerns. For instance:

- The Relationship Between the Self and the Divine: Syntactic changes even especially reflect a soul-making process that is also at work in Rumi. Suspended constructions as such are inversions and/or ellipses whereby the stasis of bound subjectivity is dismantled, and divinity is incorporated.
- The Merging of Dualities: Light and darkness, love and loss, self and other or the elements of duality are profound and recurring themes in Rumi's work each of which epitomizes Sufi thought. In the same way, syntax, ellipses, ambiguity speaks of merging, and, at the same time, it speaks of the possibility of two in one within a line of a poem.
- The Transformative Essence of Love: Through syntactic transformations Rumi introduced dynamics good and form and meaning by forever dancing relation of love and presenting love as a permanent flow. s He notes that there are active constructions active constructions do the same for divine love where the seeker abandons oneself and becomes the receptacle of the Beloved's affection.

Insights from Generative Grammar in Literary Analysis

Our approach utilizing generative grammar as a methodological tool contributes to the understanding of the poetic work of Rumi. The proximity of deep and surface patterns allows scholars to reveal hidden semiotic layers that cannot be discernible otherwise. This syntactic analysis not only amply enriches a linguistic understanding and appreciation of Rumi and his work, but also underlines and fortifies an understanding of the spiritual precepts which Rumi upheld in his work.

For instance, a line where Rumi has penned 'the heart does more talking then saying." Here, ellipse and the use of implicit constructions indicate presence and absence, for the divine dialogue is considered mysterious. Such lines can be analyzed with the help of generative grammar that shows how Rumi's syntactic choices enhance his primary topics of the thing beyond saying and the beyond.

The employment of generative grammar to Rumi enriches the method of the analysis of his poetry as it brings linguistic perspective close to spiritual depth. This is an enriching attempt to explain how Rumi remolds the syntactic patterns of Persian poetry in a way that makes the language indulge the readers to follow the journey of discovery. This way it not only underlines those intricate features of his written style, such as syntax, but also strengthens the opinion that his message is eternally relevant in terms of mysticism.

Research Methodology

This study takes a qualitative approach, using generative grammar as a framework to analyze the syntactic structures found in selected poems by Rumi. By delving into the complex syntactic choices made by Rumi, the research seeks to reveal how these choices enrich the spiritual and philosophical dimensions of his work. The methodology involves a close reading of each poem, concentrating on identifying syntactic ambiguities and the transformations that occur from deep structure to surface structure. All of this is done on the Persian language texts, with English translations provided to clarify the syntactic structures and their interpretations while analyzing the material. The above stated methodology consists of the following sub sections:

Syntactic Analysis

In this phase, attention is paid to the detailed definition of various syntactic factors that can be referred to as passive constructions, and relative constructions, ellipsis, and so on. All these elements are discussed to know how they help in the construction of the ambiguity in the poems. For example, the study will compare and contrast how voices of a passive construction change as well as the agency of the reader. Moreover, the function of relative clauses will be discussed concerning their capacity to provide more meanings and shades of meaning in the text.

Deep Structure Analysis

In this step of the research, the thematic roles and relations which form the poems hidden structure of selected sentences are revealed. This entails segmenting a sentence into its constituencies with a view of establishing the manner in which meaning is registered prior to transformational operations. The focus of the analysis will be on how these structures reveal the mystical aspects of Rumi's work and the topics of philosophy, which will explain the fact of the work's multilevel nature.

Transformation Analysis

It is in this segment that the changes from deep structure to surface structure are discussed with reference to the effect on meaning and interpretation. The work will also look at movement, deletion, or insertion in the syntactic structure to determine the influence it has on the reader's comprehension of the text. Through exploring as to how these changes produce multiple layers of signification, this study will underscore Rumi's technical textual competence and the capability of attaining higher states of spiritual understanding through basic rhetorical forms.

Poem Analysis

"The Guest House"

Syntactic Analysis and Generative Grammar Perspective

In Rumi's poem known as "The Guest House" the first line of the poem is, "This being human is a guest house." (Rumi, as cited in Barks, 1995, p. 54). From a generative grammar point of view,

this line has a major problem of distortion that comes from the various transformations between the deep structure and surface structure.

Deep Structure Interpretation 1: There are several reasons why this is so, but the most significant of all is that the basic framework of the poem implies a condition of constant preparedness; subject "Human Experience" resides and operates dynamically in relation to a set of related "Emotional Guests". In this case, human experience is illustrated as a container that is open and through which feelings come in and leave, teaching their lessons as they pass.

Deep Structure Interpretation 2: In this case, 'This being human' is an appositive, which shows that to be human is being like a 'guest house'. The subject is on how passive 'being human' is, which includes accepting all feelings without caring about when they come or go.

However, only when Rumi transcribes these profound structures into the mere surface line: "This being human is a guest house," does he recuperate syntactic ambiguity that allows for diverse readings. In transformational grammar this relation between deep and surface structures describes the openness of interpretation which is the key characteristic of mystical poetry. This linguistic double entendre is laid over the mystical note that holding oneself open to emotions is a form of soul-feeding which can occur even when life is difficult.

Symbolism and Interpretative Meaning

The analogy of the 'guest house' and the physical building also reflect Sufism; when the mind is open the soul learns. This duality is a manifestation of the mystic tradition in which the self must welcome transient phenomena as guests for the soul's development. The theory of generative grammar enlarges this view; explaining how syntactic changes that Rumi uses generate more than one sense within one context.

"The Marriage of True Minds"

Syntactic Analysis and Generative Grammar Perspective

In the poem entitled "The Marriage of True Minds" the phrase "When the soul and body work together, love is complete" (Rumi, as cited in Nicholson, 1989, p. 112). illustrates transformation of ambiguity between syntax. Generative grammar allows us to consider how particular transformations reveal further semantic ties between the idea of unity and the refinement of love. Deep Structure Interpretation 1: In other interpretation, it can be interpreted that "The soul and body must be in harmony for love to be perfected." Accordingly, "soul and body", are set up as the entities that have to be put in order to get to the ultimate goal of "perfected love". Here harmony is imperative, meaning that only after the body and soul are joined can true love be achieved.

Deep Structure Interpretation 2: On the other hand, it can be interpreted only that "Love itself makes the soul and the body to be matched." In this perspective, therefore, what we have is the "love" as the force of change, and the "soul" and the "body" remain distinct until love joins them. In this context, love plays a dual role: it requires unity and creates it as well, as is the case with love that is at the same time the cause and the effect of union.

When those deep structures go into the surface structure, "When the soul and body are in harmony, love is perfected," and the fact that Rumi uses conditional syntax means that people can read into love as the consequence of harmony or as the cause of it. This generative approach shows how linguistic transformations can explicate mystical themes by the use of the layered syntactic-semantic possibilities.

Mystical Themes and Interpretative Depth

In this sense, Rumi is perfectly correct in viewing love as a cause and an effect since Sufi focuses on the interconnectedness of people and things; the idea of love's perfection is beyond the material and spiritual world. This syntactic change is a mystical identity between the maker (love) and the creation (harmony). Therefore, transformational grammar enables a far more flexible

interpretation of the balance of the soul and the body and, therefore, their union is a divine act made possible by love.

"Where There Is Ruin"

Syntactic Analysis and Generative Grammar Perspective

Rumi's line "Where there is ruin, there is hope for a treasure" (Rumi, as cited in Chittick, 1983, p. 78). can be discussed as an example of transformational syntactic structure because ambiguity is chosen as a major feature of the work that focuses on the topic of spiritual regeneration. From a generative grammar point of view, this line illustrates a paradoxical relation between ruin and treasure that can be analyzed in terms of transformations between the deep and surface structures. Deep Structure Interpretation 1: According to this interpretation, ruin is optimism and prosperity in its embryonic form. Here ruin is the main object that has inside it the potential for new creation. Such structure suggests that hope and treasure are hidden in ruin and thus need to be recognized and developed.

Deep Structure Interpretation 2: On the other hand, viewing the structure, one cannot escape the conclusion that "There is hope and treasure and ruin too." This reading also proves that hope and treasures are not discovered from the state of ruin but to search for it. In this case, 'ruin' works as scenery, and though 'hope and treasure' are both logics, they are distinct objects that one has to work in order to find.

The shift from these deep structures to the surface phrase "Where there is ruin, there is hope for a treasure" highlights the ambiguity, resonating with Sufi beliefs about the importance of searching for deeper meaning beyond apparent loss. The syntactic structure, by not establishing a clear causal link between ruin and hope, reflects the Sufi notion of viewing hardship as a chance for personal transformation.

Mystical Themes and Interpretative Depth

Rumi's style of presenting concepts is thus unearthing the concept in the mystical tradition that suffering is not merely an outcome, but a process to enlightenment. The connection between the concepts and their signs helps to explain the subtleties of hopelessness and encourage readers to search for valuable things in destruction. The generative grammar enriches the readers with the understanding of the complexity of despair and rebirth in the Sufi tradition in which the poem is written.

"Silence Is The Language of God"

Syntactic Analysis and Generative Grammar Perspective

The line "Silence is the language of God" (Rumi, as cited in Arberry, 2004, p. 45).

For "Only Breath" also classify Rumi under syntactic transformations as he explores the theology of God's silent conversations. With help of the generative grammar approach, in syntax reader can see how the shifts between the deep and surface structures reveal a hidden, mystical meaning.

Deep Structure Interpretation 1: In this interpretation, 'God speaks in silence' means that, silence puts across meaning and therefore is not passive but dynamic. This transformation makes subject "God" an indirect speaker and His message comes through silence and redefine silence as an instrument.

Deep Structure Interpretation 2: According to another view, "The very silence is a pan of the deity." In this case the silence is not simply a way of speaking, it is one of the most important aspects of the divine. The deep structure changes to associate silence with divinity and thus the quietude as a sign of God and as signifying the divine.

Thus, by mapping of these deep structures onto the surface structure, the phrase "Silence is the language of God" Rumi creates an open syntax which can therefore encompass both meanings. Transformational grammar again proves how silence as absence contains within it divine language and actual divine presence, thereby enhancing the poem's mysticism.

Mystical Themes and Interpretative Depth

According to Sufi, the silence is seen as a state in which the Divine is felt. Rumi's language works well for this concept because it is ambiguous enough that one can say that silence is language and spiritual in the same breath. Generative grammar principles show that silence is not empty, but, rather, it hides the most important messages.

"Only Breath"

Syntactic Analysis and Generative Grammar Perspective

Rumi's poem "Only Breath" The line I am not Christian, Jew, Muslim, nor Hindu clearly demonstrate how syntactic shift dispels identity categorization which are superficial, revealing an essence. The generative grammar proves that in the deep structure, ambiguity is the source of multiple meanings of words related to identification and unity.

Deep Structure Interpretation 1: There is one way to understand it, and it is that Rumi avoids using certain labels for the sake of the universality: the structure reveals that the identity categories are ephemeral features of existence. This change enables each phrase to reject a form of identity, thus rejecting the predefined labels of the speaker.

Deep Structure Interpretation 2: Another view would be that they all are real and none; this is to mean that Rumi embraces all the identities yet at the same time he is above them. In this view the deep structure of each label as an identity is different but they all belong to a larger entity.

As in surface structure Rumi's syntax boosts the ambiguity, that provides a form by which identity can be not only inclusive but also all-embracing as Sufism believes in unity in diversity beyond the religious divides.

In Sufism, erasure of that one identity is in sync with the process of becoming one with God. From generative grammar we can note that the syntactic structure reflects an understanding of identity, that is more than the borders. In terms of syntactic change, Rumi's message is focused on the fact that only existence is present in the universe, and it is connected.

"Out Beyond Ideas"

Syntactic Analysis and Generative Grammar Perspective

In "Only Breath", Rumi describes the self by erasing its religious associations saying "I am not Christian, Jew, Muslim, nor Hindu..." (Rumi, as cited in Dashti, 2001, p. 63). One of the ways of using syntactic transformations to awaken the universal sense of self. Generative grammar also demonstrates that the option for the interpretations of identity and unity in deep structure is ambiguous.

Deep Structure Interpretation 1: One interpretation is that 'Rumi rejects specific labels to highlight universality' where the structure gives identity categories as mere externalities of human life. This transformation allows each phrase to reject a form of identity, thus rejecting the boxed in definitions of who the speaker is.

Deep Structure Interpretation 2: Another viewpoint is that 'All identities are both real and meaningless, As regards Rumi, he accepts all identities but does not submit to them. In this view, it can be observed that the deep structure of each label as an identity different from the others is a part of a grand concept.

When translated into surface structure, Rumi's syntax increases the level of vagueness and forms an identity that is not rigid and all-inclusive, as the Sufi culture believes in unity, regardless of color, cast or creed.

Mystical Themes and Interpretative Depth

In Sufism, the denial of an individual self is the strategy that corresponds to the search for the divine Self. As it has been demonstrated through generative grammar, the syntactic structure helps to describe identity as not only a boundary. Syntactic transformation of Rumi underlines the idea of Sufism stating that only existence is real and the same.

Comparative Analysis of Poem Structures and Interpretations

Poem Title	Deep Structure Interpretation 1	Deep Structure Interpretation 2	Surface Structure (Syntactic Transformation)
The Guest House (مهمانخانه)	Human experience (subject) as a guest house (object) that welcomes emotions as "guests," each teaching a lesson.	The phrase "This being human" as an appositive, equating human existence with a guest house, passively accepting emotions.	"This being human is a guest house." – Ambiguity suggests human nature as both active and passive in receiving emotions.
The Marriage of True Minds (پیوند جانها)	The soul and body must be in harmony for love to reach a perfected state, requiring unity of spiritual and physical elements.	Love itself as the harmonizing force that aligns the soul and body, implying love as both the cause and result of unity.	"When the soul and body are in harmony, love is perfected." – Conditional syntax shows love as either a result of harmony or its essential driver.
Where There is Ruin آنجا که ویرانی) (است	Ruin inherently contains the potential for hope and treasure, implying latent promise within despair.	Hope and treasure are external aspects that can be discovered within ruin, necessitating effort to unearth them.	"Where there is ruin, there is hope for a treasure." – Ruin is redefined as an environment for potential renewal.
Silence is the Language of God (خداست (خداست	God communicates through silence, presenting silence as a medium of divine expression.	Silence itself embodies the divine essence, making it synonymous with God's presence.	"Silence is the language of God." – Syntactic transformation allows silence to be an expression and embodiment of divinity.
Only Breath (تنها نفس)	Rumi rejects identity labels to convey a message of universality beyond societal constructs.	All identities simultaneously belong to Rumi, yet he transcends them, embodying a shared essence that is universal.	"I am not Christian, Jew, Muslim, nor Hindu" – Each identity rejected emphasizes unity beyond distinctions, aligning with the Sufi vision of oneness.
Out Beyond Ideas بیرون از نیک و) بد	A field exists that transcends notions of right and wrong, creating a neutral, judgment-free space.	Right doing and wrongdoing dissolve within the field, suggesting dualities lose significance there.	"Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and right doing, there is a field." — Syntax transforms dualistic morality into a realm of unity and acceptance.

Limitations of the Study and Future Research

This paper offers a close examination of syntactic ambiguity and deep structure transformations in some of the poems by Rumi, although it has certain limitations because of its application of the generative grammar to non-English texts. Since there appears to be a possibility that Rumi's original Persian language might sometimes have small details over and above what would be translated by technology into English language might affect the syntactic analysis of structures.

Thus, while generative grammar concentrates mainly on syntactics, it can sometimes leave aside other factors which are significant in comprehending poetry, such as semantics and phonematic. The current study could be advanced in the future by including other theories of linguistics that include semantic analysis and phonological patterns to come up with a detailed understanding of Rumi's poetic language. Similar works can be compared to other mystic poetries as Hafiz or Ibn Arabi: here is yet one more interesting question: is similar syntactic work used for mystical work here as well? Moreover, future investigations that could be developed on the basis of the presented results could be comparative and interdisciplinary analyses of the data obtained from the study of linguistic, cognitive, and religious phenomena, using methodological tools of linguistics, cognitive sciences, and religious studies

Conclusion

Conclusively, a mechanistic view of the structures and a study of the deeper structures in Rumi's work reveal a profound exposition of human life and human soul's search for meaning, spirituality and wisdom. All the poems bear Sufi stamp of Rumi and each poem contains the theme of emotional acceptance, love, identity and the mystical dimension of existence. This analysis demonstrates how Rumi constructs his text with such a selection of language, which is read on one level but has an underlying meaning that makes people open up the text and find the underlying message of his works. "The Guest House" symbolizes life, and all these emotions as guests which should be allowed in the house of life. When Rumi discusses deep structure, he means that even if a person is happy or sad there is a message to be learned. It changes how one perceives emotions as just responses, to valuable and enlightening events. In "The Marriage of True Minds" Rumi discusses the connection of the soul and body asserting that the soul can only be happy when the body is as well. The true meaning is not just emotion; it is an operation where power and love are united in a way that requires the cooperation of the soul and the body. In "Where There is Ruin," Rumi's message is profound that in every moment of despair there's an opportunity key and exploration key, thereby dismissing conventional approach to grieving. In "Silence is the Language of God," Rumi's understanding is that the actualization of knowledge occurs in stillness when the noise of the world recedes giving way for the divine.

In my opinion, these poems together demonstrate that Rumi is able to convey rather profound philosophical messages in the contexts that are realistic and lifelike. The semiotic work of structure and syntactic variation, thus, shows the density of Rumi's work and how his poetic decision create multiple layers of meaning and an active interpretation of his work. Ultimately it is due to Rumi's successful practice of linking the mundane world with spirituality and extending his invite to people of all classes and cultures to learn and grow in the trajectory of the life.

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