

Value orientations as predictors of expansion of Internet-Memes: Cross-cultural perception of video – A study of emotions

Orientaciones de valor como predictores de la expansión de Memes de Internet: Percepción intercultural del video - Un estudio de las emociones

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ABSTRACT:

The problem of regulation of social behaviour on the Internet has been studied of social representations of modern young people. The authors consider that the mechanism of understanding Internet-memes can be seen as the basic principle for constructing value orientations. One hundred eighty-three (183) people have become subjects of the study: 83 men and 100 women aged between 18 and 25 (the average age being 22.6). The study used the following tools: questionnaire and methods designed by the authors. Data processing included content analysis, correlation and factor analysis. The study should be continued in order to extrapolate its results to other nations and ethnic groups. The results enabled the authors to create a classification of people based on differences in perception of Internet memes

Keywords: Internet memes, values, Internet perception

RESUMEN:

El problema de la regulación del comportamiento social en Internet se ha estudiado sobre las representaciones sociales de los jóvenes modernos. Los autores consideran que el mecanismo de comprensión de los memes de Internet puede verse como el principio básico para construir orientaciones de valor. Ciento ochenta y tres (183) personas se han convertido en sujetos del estudio: 83 hombres y 100 mujeres de entre 18 y 25 años (la edad promedio es de 22,6). El estudio utilizó las siguientes herramientas: cuestionario y métodos diseñados por los autores. El procesamiento de datos incluyó análisis de contenido, correlación y análisis factorial. El estudio debe continuar para extrapolar sus resultados a otras naciones y grupos étnicos. Los resultados permitieron a los autores crear una clasificación de personas basada en las diferencias en la percepción de los memes de Internet.

Palabras clave: memes de Internet, valores, percepción de Internet

1. Introduction

Modern people lives in the era of globalization, developed transportation infrastructure, and high information technologies that enormously influence on the perspectives of business development and scientific progress. On the other hand, the modern world turns into a "global village", where a word spoken in one end of the world can be heard in the other. Two processes co-exist in the society: convergence expressing itself in the tendency towards preservation of traditional culture – and divergence oriented at inclusion into other cultures and nations. Every society balances between these two tendencies, trying to develop its own unique way, where the notorious conflict of cultures may occur frequently. In the very situation, identification of predictors of the expansion rate, criteria of success and intensity of imitation of new information becomes a topical issue for both the society in general and its individuals in particular. Information determines the total informational society. The one who manages information and its expansion flows manages the world. Against the background of high life tempo, development of high technologies and recent inventions, people tend to process and receive new information and at the same time to get rid of old and useless, often non-demanded information.

The Internet has become a serious scientific issue, nowadays considered as one of the most important global phenomena. Many researchers pay their attention to the Internet and its various aspects. For example, D. Miller and D. Slater (2001) tried to deeply describe it from the ethnographic position. A. Joinson (2007) and others combined a series of articles that contributed to psychological understanding of the Internet. (Ellerman, 2006) described the Internet with different implications. G. Soldatova and E. Zotova studied the problem of the Internet and its risks for children, and ways to cope with it (Soldatova, 2011; Soldatova & Zotova, 2013). Supporting the potential of the Internet used for social adaptation was considered by O. Boyko, S. Enikolopov, J. Kazmina, and O. Shchelokova (2013).

YouTube – one of the most popular social media – was also considered by a number of scientists. For example, Burgess J. and Green J. (2009) considered it as a part of participatory culture. Cheng X., Dale C., and Liu J. (2008) studied the statistics and YouTube as a social medium. V. Gueorguieva (2008) concluded that social media and YouTube have certain impact on election companies. P. Duffy (2008) looked into ways of using YouTube for educational purposes. Shifman L. (2012) described the most important characteristics of the most popular YouTube memes. F. Figueiredo, F. Benevenuto, and Almeida J. M. (2011) described some characteristics of the growing popularity of videos on YouTube.

At the same time, we can observe an interesting phenomenon of informational noise: information, which seems to be shallow and senseless – viral videos, Internet memes, Internet citations and other – becomes popular and topical (Rashkoff, 2013; Achkerov, 2012; Krongauz, 2012; Shchurina, 2012). Attractiveness of this information may sometimes appear in the most unexpected forms and manifestations: color, noise, light, sound etc. It is also remarkable that the same videos and memes become popular among representatives of different cultures, with different values and cultural norms. All differences seem to get smooth on YouTube or other video-hosting interfaces. However, is it really so? To answer this question, we shall start with the notion of “cultural values”.

2. Cultural values

There are numerous definitions of values. In social psychology, values can be defined as basic settings (McGuire, 1969), understanding of the desirable (Kluckhohn, 1951), conviction of preferred and non-preferred ways of behavior (Feather, 1995), predictors of environmental attitudes (Schultz, & Zelezny, 1999), preferences of specific results and final life targets (Staub, 1989). There are many more definitions.

For example, M. Rokeach defined value as a set conviction where certain way of behavior or final target of existence is the most preferable for an individual or society. This definition agrees with the definition by Schwartz, who determined value as a “preferred over situational goal that may be changed according to degree of importance and that is the leading life principle of a personality or other social creature” (Schwartz, 1992: 21). The key difference between these two definitions is that S. Schwartz determines values as final over situational goals, while M. Rokeach stresses motivational function of values based on a set conviction of correctness and preference (Rokeach, 1973). D. Matsumoto (Matsumoto & Juang, 2012), N. M. Lebedeva (2011) and many others reviewed cross-cultural peculiarities of perception of information in their works. Scientists introduce specific constructs and then, using questionnaires, check correctness of these structures. Finally, this leads to classification and typology of cultures. Still, there have been a few attempts to review how specific cultural characteristics are demonstrated in the process of selection of cultural objects, movies or other artworks. Will collective and individual cultures, open or closed ones show significant difference in evaluation of emotionality of a music video clip? Will cultural values of a spectator influence his or her evaluation of main character in a video clip or not?

The conducted research aimed at studying differences in evaluation of popular videos, which have become Internet-memes, among Internet users. Within this research, we considered video clips as stimulating material, presuming that evaluation of its parameters would reveal specific cultural characteristics.

3. Methods

3.1. Description of methods

The methods were developed based on cultural characteristics inspired by G. Hofstede (individualism-collectivism, Uncertainty avoidance index, and Masculinity- femininity), which were converted into the following scales:

- Activity
- Informativity
- Emotionality
- Image of the main character
- Group
- Sex and role differences.

Each of these scales includes four questions and, in our opinion, reflects demonstration of a specific aspect of culture.

3.2. Activity

The Activity scale includes the following four questions:

1. To what extent are the main characters of the clip in contact with the spectator? (Eye contact, winking, addressing the audience, open postures, gestures, communication with the spectator.)
2. How intensive is motion activity of the characters? (Number and intensity of dancing motions, sways of arms, jumps, runs etc.)
3. How expressive is the behavior of the characters? (Energy, activity, facial gestures, charisma, artistry.)

4. How spontaneous is the behavior of the main characters? (Extravagance, abruptness, originality.)

This scale, on our opinion, correlates with the open-closed parameters by G. Triandis or with uncertainty avoidance by G. Hofstede. The questions aim at revealing the behavioral characteristics that are different for representatives of cultures with high and low levels of [uncertainty avoidance](#).

3.3. Informativity

The Informativity scale includes the following questions:

1. How logical and consistent is the plot? (Presence of a single plotline, coherence of separate scenes).
2. How understandable are the actions of the main characters? (Is it clear, why they do what they do?).
3. How deep is the meaning of the video clip? (The clip makes you think, leaves grave impression and desire to stay alone with yourself, and touches upon deep and grave topics).
4. How plausible and realistic are the scenes, events, acts of main characters? (Do the main characters behave as normal people in everyday life?).

In our opinion, this scale also correlates with the openness-closeness parameter by G. Triandis or with [uncertainty avoidance](#) by G. Hofstede. The questions are based on the following description by N.M. Lebedeva: "Individuals of cultures with high uncertainty avoidance stronger oppose any changes, have higher degree of anxiety, are intolerant to ambiguity, worry more about the future, believe that faithfulness to their government (any governmental authorities) is the major virtue, have low motivation to achievements, and low proneness to risk" (Lebedeva, 2011: 58).

3.4. Emotionality

The **Emotionality** scale includes the following four questions:

1. How attractive are the events and scenes? (Do the spectators wish to appear in such a situation?)
2. How intensive are emotions triggered by this clip? (Intensity of emotional impact.)
3. How positive are emotions inspired by this clip? (The clip conveys nice and positive emotions.)
4. To what extent does the clip energize and arouse desire to move, repeat actions of the main character? (The clip and charisma of the main character energizes, arouses emotional lift, flush of activity, desire to move, repeat verses or moves in the clip.)

In our opinion, the questions of this scale correlate with [uncertainty avoidance](#) by G. Hofstede.

The next two scales correlate with the Individualism-collectivism characteristic, as they help evaluate relations between the main character (an individual) and the group he is related to. It is highly probable that representatives of different cultures will evaluate clips differently.

3.5. Image of the main character

This scale contains the following questions:

1. How do you like the main character/characters?
2. How positive is the main character/characters? (Positive or negative personage.)
3. To what extent does the main character resemble a normal person?
4. To what extent is the main character self-sufficient?

3.6. Group

The Group scale includes the following questions:

1. How easily and frequent does the main character start to communicate with other people?
2. How strong is the contact between the main character and other people?
3. How important is the presence of other people in the clip? (Is it important that there are secondary characters in the clip?)
4. To what extent do other people enhance the image of the main character? (Do they help him/her to express necessary emotions, sing a song etc.?)

3.7. Sex and role identity

The final scale includes the following questions:

1. To what extent do images of the main characters correspond to the traditional idea of beauty?
2. How sexually attractive are the main characters?
3. To what extent does the behavior of the main characters correspond to traditional ideas of masculine and feminine behaviors respectively?
4. How strong is the difference between the images of the man and woman in the clip?

This scale correlates with the Masculinity-femininity parameter, which is described as follows: "In masculine-type cultures difference in sex roles, diligence, ambitiousness and independence is emphasized. In feminine-type cultures sex roles are not usually fixed, and stress is laid on interdependence and service to one another" (Lebedeva, 2011: 60).

4. Participants and overview

One hundred eighty-three (183) people aged from 18 to 25 (MD = 22.6) took part in the research. The respondents belonged to the following three groups:

- Chinese – 60 people living in Sweden, Finland, Hong Kong, Russian and France, students at international high schools, in English;
- Americans – 60 people living in Sweden, Finland, France, Italy and USA, students of international programs;
- Russians – 63 people living in Sweden, Finland, Russia and France, students of international programs in English (Fig. 1).

Figure 1
Students of international programs in English

	Americans		Chinese		Russians		Total
Quantity	60		60		63		183
Average age	22,5		22,5		22,9		22.6
Sex	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Number of respondents	28	32	28	32	27	36	183
Average age	21,7	23,4	23,2	22,5	22,9	22,8	

5. Research

Besides, each question in the questionnaire contains a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 corresponds to complete absence of the attribute, and 7 – to its extreme intensity. The respondents were asked to evaluate each of the attributes according to this scale.

5.1. Procedure

The research consisted of three stages. The first stage was conducted in 2013. It included a pilot research, which was mainly aimed at creation and approbation of the new method.

The main part of the research was conducted in 2014. It included collection of data. The third stage included data processing and mathematical data analysis, which was performed using SPSS 20 software.

5.2. Stimulating material

As a stimulating material for evaluating the perception of Internet memes by representatives of different cultures, we selected two popular music video clips, which had become Internet memes: "Gangnam style" by Korean singer Psy and "What does the fox say?" by Norwegian group Ylvis. The stimulating material was showed to the respondents, and after that, the respondents were asked to evaluate the clip by criteria of the method.

6. Measurement and results

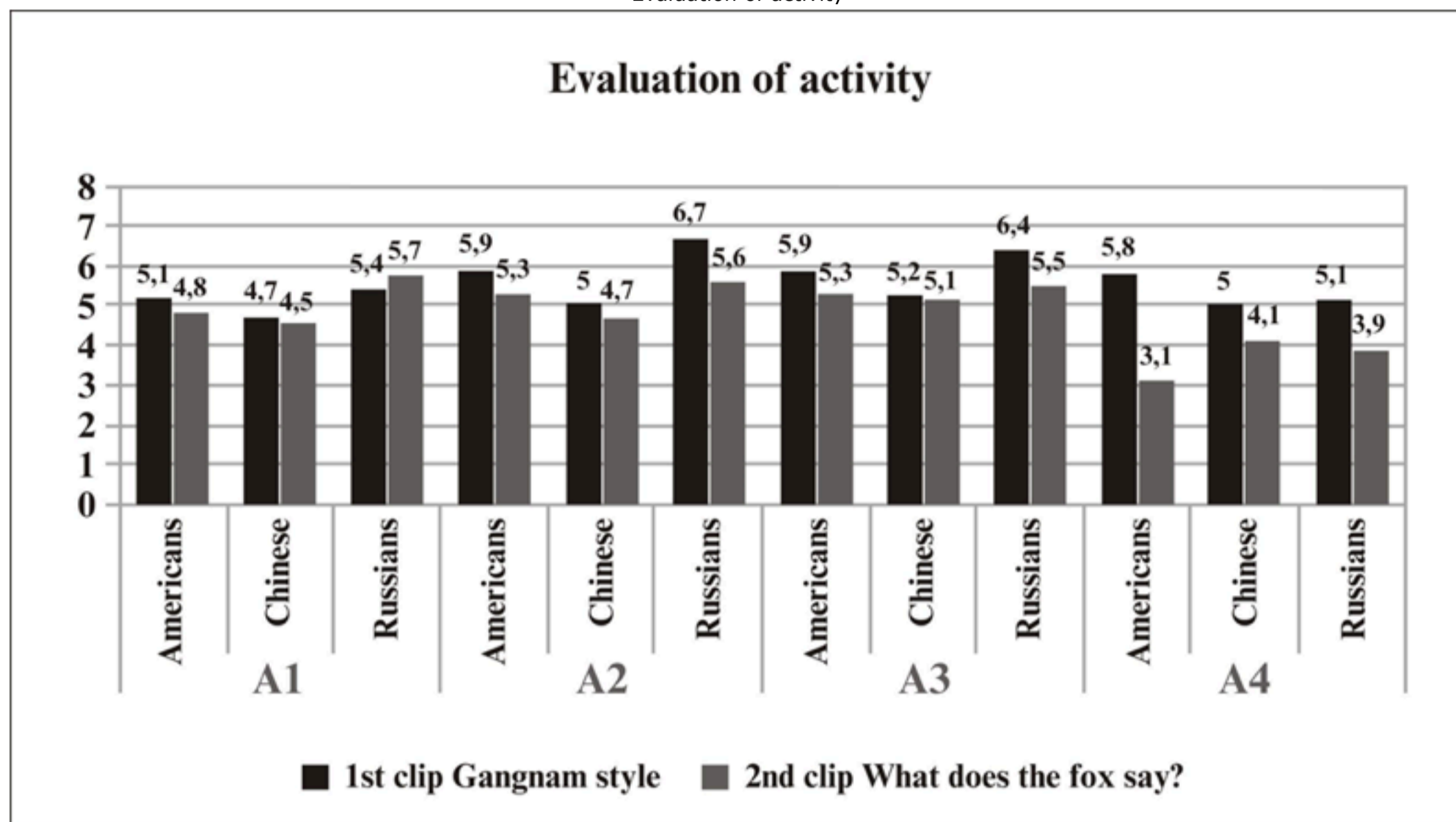
Activity

The diagram contains ranges and average values of activity levels by questions. It can be noted that, in the first three questions, respondents of all selections evaluated the activity of both clips as sufficiently high (max = 7 points). This fact may show that they evaluate contact of the main characters of both clips with the spectator as intimate, and behavior of main characters as active and expressive. In the fourth question, the respondents' opinions regarding originality of the first and the second clips divided. For example, for the first clip the evaluations remained relatively high: Ma4 = 5.82, Mc4 = 5, Mr4 = 5.07 (Fig. 2). However, the second clip received the lowest evaluations in the fourth question, i. e. at the level of spontaneity and originality of behavior of the main characters. Among Chinese it equals to Mc4 = 4.08 which corresponds to medium value (max = 7 points); among Russians it equals to Mr4 = 3.93, and among Americans Ma4 = 3.11. Therefore, we could assume that the respondents consider the behavior of the main characters of the second clip as less extravagant and original compared to that in the first clip.

At the same time, after viewing the first clip (max = 7 points) the respondents put higher points, according to the activity scale, in almost all the questions (except for the Russian selection in the first question), than after viewing the second clip. This fact may show that the behavior of the main heroes of the first clip is generally estimated as more active.

It is remarkable that, in the first three questions for both clips, the Russian selection demonstrated the highest average values. For the first clip they are $Mr1 = 5.07$, $Mr2 = 6.69$, $Mr3 = 6.38$, and for the second clip they are $Mr1 = 5.66$, $Mr2 = 5.62$, $Mr3 = 5.52$. At the same time, the Chinese selection demonstrated the lowest numbers in the three questions for the first clip: $Mc1 = 4.64$, $Mc2 = 4.96$, $Mc3 = 5.19$, while for the second clip the results were $Mc1 = 4.46$, $Mc2 = 4.73$, $Mc3 = 5.12$.

Figure 2
Evaluation of activity



With the fourth question the situation is completely different. For the first clip, the highest points belong to the American selection ($Ma4 = 5.82$), while for the second clip the same selection demonstrated the lowest number ($Ma4 = 3.11$). At the same time, the Russian and Chinese selections gave very similar points for the first and the second clips separately.

Multivariate analysis of variance revealed a significant connection between selections and points in the second question "A2: How intensive is motion activity of the characters? (Number and intensity of dancing motions, sways of arms, jumps, runs etc.)" for both clips ($F = 8.9$: $p < 0.05$ and $F = 5.1$: $p < 0.05$). This fact shows that cultural characteristics are related to evaluation of clips (Fig. 3, 4).

Figure 3
Evaluation of effects of intergroup factors ("Gangnam style" video clip)

Evaluation of effects of intergroup factors ("Gangnam style" video clip)					
Source		Sum of squares of type III	Mean square	F	Value
Selection	A1	8,826466159	4,41323308	1,932856	0,151692
	A2	28,43640063	14,21820031	8,923447	0,000327
	A3	13,45156241	6,725781207	3,6902	0,029484
	A4	9,40324659	4,701623295	2,338367	0,103301

Figure 4
Evaluation of effects of intergroup factors ("What does the fox say" video clip)

Evaluation of effects of intergroup factors ("What does the fox say" video clip)						
	Source		Sum of squares of type III	Mean square	F	Value
Selection		A1	2,642558	1,321279	0,550613	0,578849
		A2	18,61027	9,305134	5,146741	0,007982
		A3	11,71864	5,859318	2,846827	0,064153
		A4	2,013753	1,006876	0,449168	0,63982

The Russian selection demonstrated the highest scores for this question ($Mr_2 = 6.69$ and $Mr_2 = 5.62$), while the Chinese selection demonstrated the lowest scores for this question ($Mc_2 = 4.96$ and $Mc_2 = 4.73$), therefore we can assume that, evaluating the same stimulating material, the Russian selection tends to evaluate the intensity of motion activity higher than the American and Chinese selections, while the American selection tends to evaluate it higher than the Chinese selection.

Moreover, using Spearman rank correlation coefficient for the American selection revealed a significant correlation between A2 and "S3: To what extent does the behavior of the main characters correspond to traditional ideas of masculine and feminine behaviors respectively?": $r = 0.414$ ($p < 0.005$) and $r = 3.78$ ($p < 0.005$). This fact shows that, for this American selection, there is a connection between the evaluation of activity of the main characters and their correspondence to traditional ideas.

The Chinese selection demonstrated a significant correlation between A2 and the following questions:

1) E3: How positive are the emotions inspired by this clip? (The clip conveys nice and positive emotions): $r = 0.516$ ($p < 0.001$) for the first clip and $r = 0.435$ ($p < 0.005$) for the second clip.

2) E4: To what extent does the clip energize and arouse desire to move, repeat actions of the main character? (The clip and charisma of the main character energizes, arouses emotional lift, flush of activity, desire to move, repeat verses or moves in the clip) $r = 0.591$ ($p < 0.001$).

Therefore, we can conclude that, for this Chinese selection, the evaluation of intensity of motion is related to the level of positive emotions and degree of energy spreading.

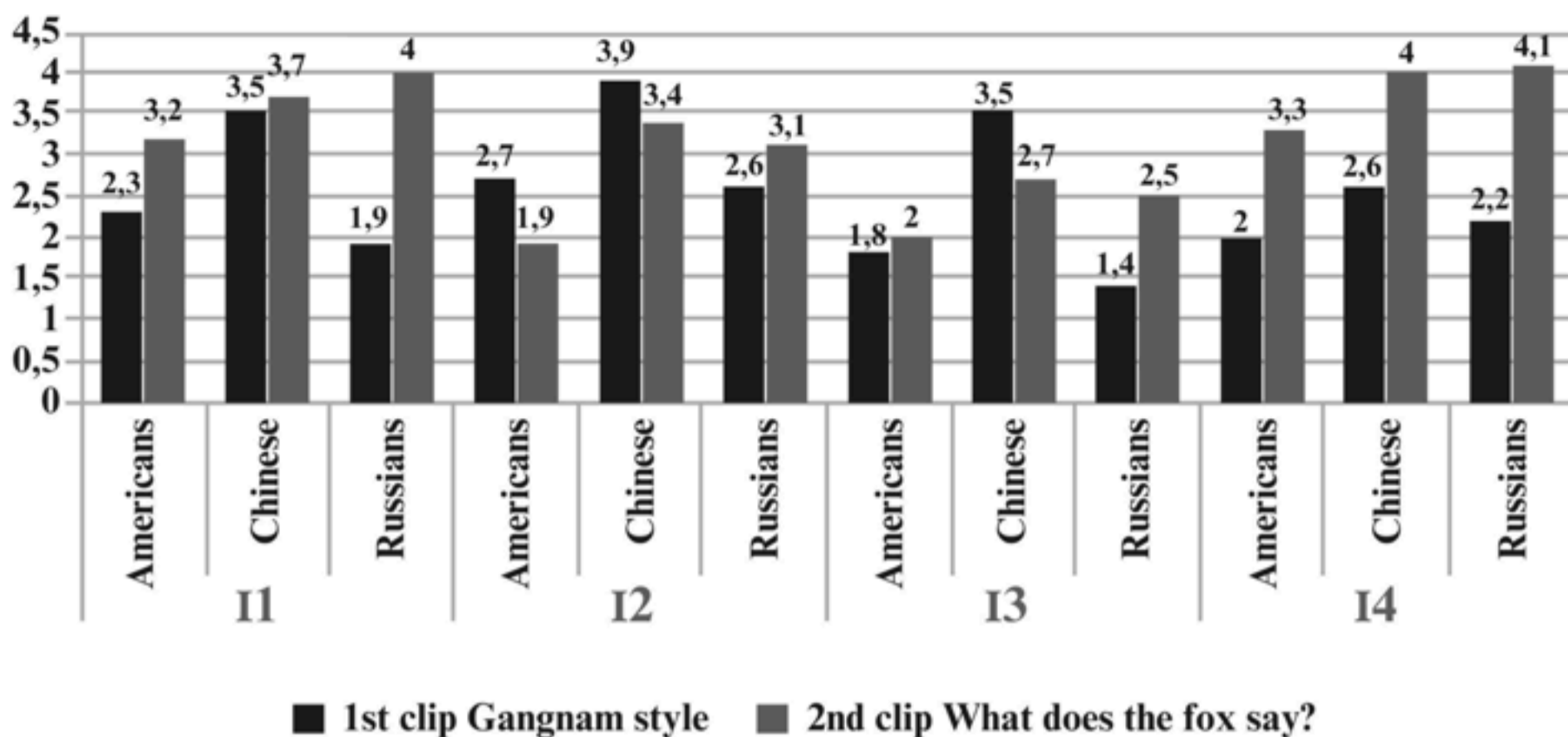
For the Russian selection, the following significant correlation was obtained between A2 and the question "G1: How easily and frequently does the main character start to communicate with other people?": $r = 0.431$ ($p < 0.005$) and $r = 0.473$ ($p < 0.05$). It is possible that, for the Russian selection, the evaluation of activity of the main characters and frequency and ease of communication of the main character with other people are interconnected.

Informativity

Figure 5 shows ranges and average values of informativity by questions. It can be noted that the respondents in all selections evaluated the informativity of the two clips as low and medium (max = 7 points).

Figure 5
Evaluation of informativity

Evaluation of informativity



For the third question I3, multivariate analysis of variance revealed significant connection between the selections and average values of answers to this question: ($F = 10$; $p < 0.05$) for the first clip and ($F = 5.5$; $p < 0.05$) for the second clip. This fact may lead to the conclusion that cultural differences are related to the depth of meaning of a video clip (Fig. 6, 7).

Figure 6
Evaluation of effects of intergroup factors

Source		Sum of squares of type III	Mean square	F	Value
Selection	I1	22,34013928	11,17006964	4,797315	0,010877
	I2	20,74312374	10,37156187	3,890047	0,024586
	I3	50,09101951	25,04550976	10,05791	0,000132
	I4	5,174620883	2,587310442	1,18352	0,311707

Figure 7
Evaluation of effects of intergroup factors

Source		Sum of squares of type III	Mean square	F	Value
Selection	I1	15,05564622	7,527823108	2,469686	0,091291
	I2	10,19930151	5,099650753	1,653892	0,198027
	I3	34,45355397	17,22677698	5,573718	0,005487
	I4	5,938030109	2,969015055	1,303107	0,27761

Significant and interesting (in terms of content) differences between the clips have been revealed. For example, in the first question that concerns logic and consistency of the plot, all the respondents in all the three selections evaluated the second clip higher than the first one. This shows that the second clip seems more consistent and logical to the respondents. It should be noted that the Russian selection demonstrated the lowest average value for the first clip ($Mr_1 = 1.86$), but it also

demonstrated the highest average value for the second clip ($M_r1 = 4$). This may be interpreted using results of mathematical analysis involving the Spearman rank correlation coefficient, which revealed, for both clips, a significant correlation between the questions "I1: How logical and consistent is the plot? (Presence of a single plotline, coherence of separate scenes)" and those of the Character scale: "C1: How do you like the main character/characters?" ($r = 0.487, p < 0.001$) and "C2: How positive is the main character/characters? (Positive or negative personage)" ($r = 0.412, p < 0.005$) for the first clip; I1 and C1 ($r = 0.433, p < 0.005$), I1 and C2 ($r = 0.501, p < 0.001$) for the second clip. It can be affirmed that, for the Russian selection, European style of information convey (clip 2) is more understandable and logical than the Asian clip. Still, it should be noted that logic and consistency of information convey can be traced neither in the first, nor in the second clip. For other selections, this connection has not been revealed.

In the second question I2, the Chinese selection gave the highest numbers for both clips: for the first clip $M_{c1} = 3.88$, and for the second clip $M_{c2} = 3.42$. Therefore, the Chinese selection probably tends to evaluate actions of the main characters in both clips as understandable and logical. Moreover, Spearman rank correlation coefficient was used reveal significant correlation in the Chinese group for both clips between questions "I2: How understandable are the actions of the main characters? (Is it clear, why they do what they do?)" and "C1: How do you like the main character/characters?" ($r = 0.393, p < 0.005$ for the first clip and $r = 0.505, p < 0.001$ for the second clip). Therefore, in the Chinese selection, there may exist a connection between how attractive they find the main character and how understandable they consider his acts. Consequently, positive image of the main character is important to the Chinese selection, which results in their interpretation of his behavior (understandable and positive).

In the third question I3 regarding depth of meaning, the Chinese selection gave the highest average values ($M_{c3} = 3.46$ for the first clip, $M_{c3} = 2.65$ for the second clip). A significant correlation was found in the Chinese selection between "I3: How deep is the meaning of the video clip? (The clip makes you think, leaves grave impression and desire to stay alone with yourself, touches upon deep grave topics)" and "E1: How attractive are the events and scenes? (Do the spectators wish to appear in such a situation?)" $r = 0.427$ ($p < 0.005$) for the first clip and $r = 0.559$ ($p < 0.001$) for the second clip. This means that, for the Chinese selection, evaluations of the depth of meaning and attractiveness of scenes are interconnected. Thus, the Chinese selection mostly connects orientation towards positive perception of a situation and/or characters with positive explanation of their actions (regardless the context).

The American selection showed significant correlation between I3 and "E3: How positive are the emotions inspired by this clip? (The clip conveys nice and positive emotions)" $r = 0.387$ ($p < 0.005$) for the first clip and $r = 0.626$ ($p < 0.005$) for the second clip. Therefore, it may be concluded that, for the American selection, the evaluation of depth of meaning is connected to the level of positive emotions caused by the situation and/or main character.

For the Russian selection, a significant correlation was revealed between I3 and "C1: How do you like the main character/characters?" ($r = 0.451, p < 0.005$) for the first clip and ($r = 0.585, p < 0.001$) for the second clip. Thus, for the Russian selection, the evaluation of depth of meaning may be connected to how they like the main character or characters of the clip.

Emotionality

Multivariate analysis of variance showed that there is a significant correlation between the selections and answers to the second question "E2: How intensive are the emotions triggered by this clip? (Intensity of emotional impact)" $F = 3.5$ ($p < 0.05$) for the first clip and $F = 4.3$ ($p < 0.05$) for the second clip. Therefore, it may be assumed that cultural peculiarities are connected to evaluations of intensity of emotions aroused by the clip (Fig. 8).

Figure 8
Evaluations of intensity of emotions aroused by the clip

Evaluation of emotionality

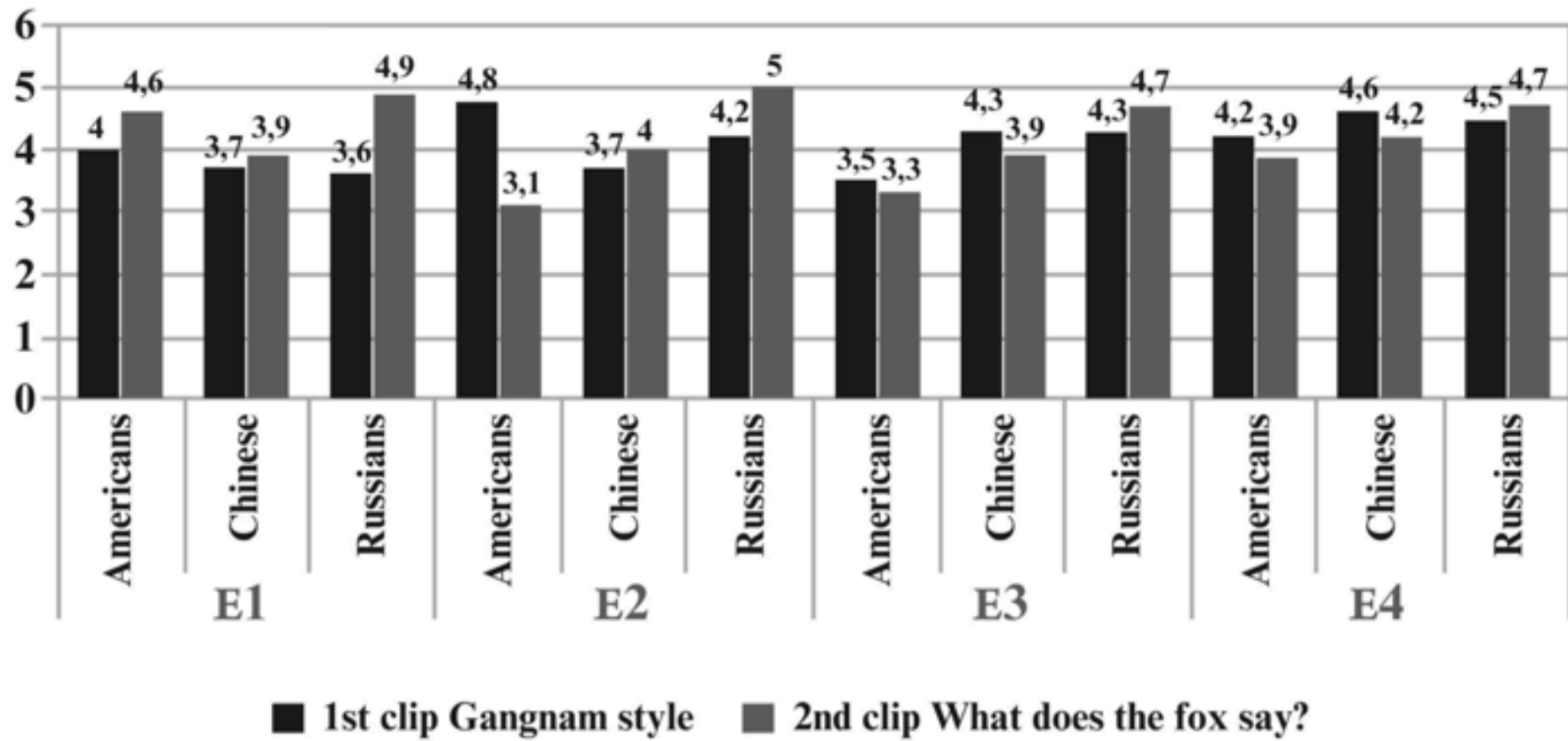


Figure 9

Evaluation of effects of intergroup factors ("Gangnam style" video clip)

Evaluation of effects of intergroup factors ("Gangnam style" video clip)					
Source		Sum of squares of type III	Mean square	F	Value
Selection	E1	2,260038092	1,130019046	0,417303	0,660302
	E2	21,38997765	10,69498882	3,51732	0,034534
	E3	14,77396726	7,386983629	2,993343	0,055985
	E4	1,772668901	0,886334451	0,23018	0,794935

Figure 10

Evaluation of effects of intergroup factors ("What does the fox say" video clip)

Evaluation of effects of intergroup factors ("What does the fox say" video clip)					
	Source	Sum of squares of type III	Mean square	F	Value
Selection	E1	9,710744662	4,855372331	1,90482	0,155798
	E2	17,88111637	8,940558186	4,32385	0,016609
	E3	42,39619148	21,19809574	6,850696	0,001827
	E4	15,3611233	7,68056165	2,270663	0,110116

For the American selection, Spearman rank correlation coefficient was used to reveal a significant correlation between E2 and the following evaluations:

1) "A1: To what extent are the main characters of the clip in contact with the spectator? (Eye contact, winking, addressing the audience, open postures, gestures, communication with the spectator)": $r = 0.549$ ($p < 0.001$) for the first clip and $r =$

0.6 ($p < 0.001$) for the second clip. Thus, in the American selection, there may be a connection between the intensity of emotions and contact between characters of the video clip and the audience.

2) "C1: How do you like the main character/characters?": $r = 0.717$ ($p < 0.005$) for the first clip and $r = 0.462$ ($p < 0.005$) for the second clip. Therefore, the evaluation of intensity of emotions may also be connected to how they like the main character.

3) "C2: How positive is the main character/characters? (Positive or negative personage)": $r = 0.781$ ($p < 0.001$) for the first clip and $r = 0.812$ ($p < 0.001$) for the second clip.

4) "S1: To what extent do images of the main characters correspond to the traditional idea of beauty?" $r = 0.582$ ($p < 0.01$) for the first clip and $r = 0.433$ ($p < 0.005$) for the second clip. This means that the evaluation of intensity of emotions may be connected to the evaluation of traditional ideas of beauty.

5) "S2: How sexually attractive are the main characters?" $r = 0.656$ ($p < 0.001$) for the first clip and $r = 0.396$ ($p < 0.005$) for the second clip. Therefore, it may be assumed that the American selection connects the evaluation of intensity of emotions with sexual attractiveness of characters.

For the Chinese selection, the Spearman rank correlation coefficient helped to reveal a significant correlation between E2 and the following evaluations:

1) "C2: How positive is the main character/characters? (Positive or negative personage)": $r = 0.468$ ($p < 0.005$) for the first clip and $r = 0.611$ ($p < 0.001$) for the second clip. Thus, a supposition may be made that, for the Chinese selection, the evaluation of intensity of emotions is connected to the evaluation of positive image of the main character.

For the Russian selection, we obtained, using Spearman rank correlation coefficient, a significant correlation between E2 and the following evaluations:

1) "C2: How positive is the main character/characters? (Positive or negative personage)": $r = 0.488$ ($p < 0.001$) for the first clip and $r = 0.452$ ($p < 0.005$) for the second clip.

2) "C4: To what extent is the main character self-sufficient?" $r = 0.574$ ($p < 0.001$) for the first clip and $r = 0.708$ ($p < 0.001$) for the second clip.

3) "S1: To what extent do the images of the main characters correspond to the traditional idea of beauty?" $r = 0.432$ ($p < 0.005$) for the first clip and $r = 0.542$ ($p < 0.005$) for the second clip. This means that the evaluation of intensity of emotions is possibly connected to the evaluation of traditional ideas of beauty.

4) "S2: How sexually attractive are the main characters?" $r = 0.579$ ($p < 0.001$) for the first clip and $r = 0.551$ ($p < 0.001$) for the second clip. Therefore, we can suppose that the Russian selection connects the evaluation of intensity of emotions with sexual attractiveness of characters.

Based on the obtained results, we can suppose that, for this Russian selection, the evaluation of intensity of emotions may be connected to the positive image of the main character, his self-sufficiency, and to correspondence of characters to traditional ideas of beauty and sexual attraction.

7. Discussion and limits

Therefore, we can say that the *main assumption* of a connection between cultural characteristics and evaluation of Internet memes has been partially confirmed for the following three questions only:

(A2): How intensive is motion activity of the characters? (Number and intensity of dancing motions, sways of arms, jumps, runs etc.).

The evaluation of intensity of motion activity given by the American selection is connected to their evaluation of correspondence of behavior of main characters to traditional ideas of male and female behavior. For the Chinese selection, it is connected to the positivity of emotions aroused by this clip, and to how much it energizes the spectators. For the Russian selection, it is connected to how frequently the main character interacts with other people.

(I3): How deep is the meaning of the video clip? (The clip makes you think, leaves grave impression and desire to stay alone with yourself, and touches upon deep grave topics)?

For the American selection, the evaluation of depth of meaning is connected to the positivity of emotions that aroused by the clip. For the Chinese selection, it is connected to how nice the scenes and events in the video clip are, while for the Russian selection – to how much the spectators like the main hero.

(E2): *How intensive are emotions, triggered by this clip?*

For the American selection, the evaluation of intensity of emotions is primarily connected to the main character of the video clip and to how much he is in contact with the audience, how positive and attractive the spectators find him, as well as to how much the characters correspond to the traditional ideas of beauty and how sexually attractive they are. For the Chinese selection, this evaluation is connected to positivity of the main character. For the Russian selection, it is connected to positivity and self-sufficiency of the main character, as well as to how much the characters correspond to the traditional ideas of beauty and sexuality.

The most interesting question in the Activity scale is (A2): "How intensive is the motion activity of the characters? (Number and intensity of dancing motions, sways of arms, jumps, runs etc.)". There is a significant correlation between the selections and evaluations of these parameters, which means that the selection influences the number of points given. However, for both questions, average values were high (above 4 points out of 7).

At the same time, in the Informativity scale, the question "(I3): How deep is the meaning of the video clip? (The clip makes you think, leaves grave impression and desire to stay alone with yourself, and touches upon deep grave topics)?"

also showed significant correlation with the selection. However, the average values for this question in all the selections turned out to be quite low (below 4 points out of 7).

This may be explained by the fact that, for Internet memes, high motion activity and expression of characters plays major role, together with low informativity, i. e. lack of deep content that may have grave impression on the spectator and make him think. However, it should be admitted, that, for the three selections, the evaluation of informativity and activity is connected to something personal, which may signify correlation between cultural peculiarities and evaluation of an Internet meme.

This is why the assumption that high activity of the characters combined with low informativity contributes to the expansion and popularity of memes in different cultures needs further consideration. The majority of researches mention these peculiarities of information conveyance in public and in masses. Various cultural groups mention high level of activity and expression in the two clips with relatively low informativity, while cultural peculiarities of a selection influence the level of these evaluations.

Besides, a connection was established between the selections and their evaluations for question "(E2): How intensive are emotions triggered by this clip?", where average values of evaluations by all the selections were medium (3,5 – 4,3 points).

Further study of the subject may be based on the study of mob and public. It is possible to use methods of mob study to determine the difference or similarity in processes of expansion of information in public and on the Internet.

8. Conclusion and future direction

The research has shown that the majority of respondents in all the selections tend to evaluate the activity of main characters of Internet memes as high, and informativity of the plot as very low. This may indicate that an Internet meme does not need to have deep meaning to become popular, but it is good if its main characters are active and spread positive emotions.

Further, it would be interesting to repeat the research with more respondents in order to check the key assumption and results obtained, as well as to make necessary corrections.

The research is of high practical importance for advertising and marketing. Besides, the authors' method absolutely matches the tasks of the research and can be further applied to studying and analyzing different sources of information. We face a complicated issue regarding the predictors of success and expansion of any information block or source, why Internet memes are so popular and how this influence and expansion in modern society can be explained.

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Svetlana Gurieva developed the conceptual idea and design of the research work, provided critical research reviewing for significant intellectual content.

Irina Zamotina carried out the study, data collection of the study sample and wrote the manuscript, participated in the results analysis, contributed to drafting the article, wrote discussion and conclusion sections, and described the further study perspectives.

Sergey Manichev developed the conceptual idea and design of the research work, carried out the study, drafting the article, writing the description of the future research direction.

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Ethics

This article is original and contains unpublished materials. The corresponding author confirms that all of the other authors have read and approved the manuscript and there are no ethical issues involved.

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