Realistic image synthesis of COVID-19 chest X-rays using depthwise boundary equilibrium generative adversarial networks

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ABSTRACT

Researchers in various related fields research preventing and controlling the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) virus. The spread of the COVID-19 is increasing exponentially and infecting humans massively. Preliminary detection can be observed by looking at abnormal conditions in the airways, thus allowing the entry of the virus into the patient's respiratory tract, which can be represented using computer tomography (CT) scan and chest X-ray (CXR) imaging. Particular deep learning approaches have been developed to classify COVID-19 CT or CXR images such as convolutional neural network (CNN), and deep convolutional neural network (DCNN). However, COVID-19 CXR dataset was measly opened and accessed. Particular deep learning method performance can be improved by augmenting the dataset amount. Therefore, the COVID-19 CXR dataset was possibly augmented by generating the synthetic image. This study discusses a fast and real-like image synthesis approach, namely depthwise boundary equilibrium generative adversarial network (DepthwiseBEGAN). DepthwiseBEGAN was reduced memory load 70.11% in training processes compared to the conventional BEGAN. DepthwiseBEGAN synthetic images were inspected by measuring the Fréchet inception distance (FID) score with the real-to-real score equal to 4.3866 and real-to-fake score equal to 4.4674. Moreover, generated DepthwiseBEGAN synthetic images improve 22.59% accuracy of conventional CNN models.

1. INTRODUCTION

SARS-Cov-2 or known as coronavirus disease (COVID-19) was first identified in Wuhan, China [1] and designated by World Health Organization (WHO) as a global epidemic [2] because it has infected all corners of the world. At the end of February 2021, there were 116,521,281 confirmed cases, with 116,521,281 active cases and 2,589,548 cases of death. Meanwhile, the spread of COVID-19 in Indonesia also continues to increase, with February 2021 confirmed 1,379,662 cases, with 14,518 active cases, and 37,266 death cases [3]. Therefore, steps are needed to prevent, detect, and control the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Early detection is one way to break the chain of the COVID-19 virus spread. When a patient is known to be positive for COVID-19, he will undergo a quarantine period so that the chain of spread can be broken by tracking the people who had interacted with the patient. One of the tests that can be done in early
detection of COVID-19 virus is by conducting a test called reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) to find out whether a patient is indicated as positive or negative from the COVID-19 virus infection. As time goes by, the pandemic condition continues even though the data on the spread is still high. Unfortunately, RT-PCR testing has less accurate results (40% to 60%) [4], [5] in determining positive or negative status of being infected with the COVID-19 virus [6], [7].

Alternative methods to detect the spread of the COVID-19 virus are through chest screening, namely computer tomography (CT) scan and chest X-ray (CXR) [8]. The resulting image of CT or X-ray has higher sensitivity than testing using RT-PCR. Thus, many automation systems have been developed in CT and X-rays image processing [6]. Displaying images via CT can detect COVID-19 virus infection. However, the procedure for testing via CT is costly, as well as age-restricted and forbidden for pregnant women because of the radiation. Therefore, studies in [9] use the CXR process that can be used for easy, fast, and inexpensive testing. Various deep learning methods are used as an automation system for CXR image processing to support the detection process for the COVID-19 virus infection. The convolutional neural network (CNN) method obtained accuracy in positive/negative CXR classification of 98.50% [10], while the deep neural network (DNN) method received accuracy in the positive/negative CXR classification of 98.08% [4]. CXR classification using deep CNN (DCNN) has an accuracy of 87.3% [11], while classification using generative adversarial networks (GANs) have an accuracy of 95% [12]. The depthwise separable convolution (DSC) network has an accuracy of 99.50% [13], and the COVIDX-Net has an accuracy of 91% [14]. On the other hand, public dataset images of CT or X-ray are limited. However, the classification method can be tuned by augmenting the dataset.

The deep learning approach is an interesting topic to develop an automation system to diagnose CXR images of the COVID-19 virus. LightCovidNet, which consists of a lightweight CNN (LW-CNN) and GANs with a frontal CXR dataset of 446 (resolution 1024X1024 pixels), with network filters to 841.771 parameters successfully trained the data with an accuracy of 96.97%. The separable convolution technique can reduce the memory load when processing training data (training data) 27 times more efficiently than conventional CNN, which consists of 23,567,299 parameters [15]. CovidGAN which consists of CNN and auxiliary classifier GANs (AC-GANs) methods using 403 CXR datasets (14,000,000 parameters) increases the accuracy of conventional GANs data augmentation 85% to 95% [12]. Covid-Net using the DCNN method using 13,975 CXR datasets (COVIDX dataset of 11,750,000 parameters) yields an accuracy of 93.3% [16]. Coro-Net using the DNN method using 125 CXR datasets (33,915,436 parameters) yields an accuracy of 95% [17]. RANDGAN (randomized GAN) is ANO-GANs, using 573 CXR datasets resulting in an accuracy of 71% [5]. GANs and ResNet18 used the 5863 CXR datasets resulting in an accuracy of 99% [18].

To improve the model performance of the classification methods, we proposed a new architecture called DepthwiseBEGAN in which combining depthwise separable convolution (DSC) and BEGAN. This approach proposes augmented synthetic images of COVID-19 CXR dataset using DCGAN, DepthwiseGAN, BEGAN, and DepthwiseBEGAN. To exhibit DepthwiseBEGAN reduces the training load while the synthetic images are generated. In this research, we also measured the quality of generated images using Fréchet inception distance (FID). Additionally, the improvement of the classification method using generated synthetic images as fake CXR datasets is presented in this paper. Several classification models are used, such as: ResNet18, ResNet34, ResNet50, and GoogleNet, such as ResNet18, ResNet34, ResNet50, and GoogleNet.

2. RESEARCH METHOD
2.1. Depthwise separable convolution

CNN is a subclass of DNNs that can solve vision problems, CNN consists of the primary process, namely features extraction and fully connected layer. The convolutional layer is the fundamental layer of CNN that determines the characteristics of the image pattern as an input matrix to traverse through filters. By assuming \((x_{i,j})\) as an input tensor which consist of triple index such as height \((h^l)\), width \((w^l)\), and depth \((d^l)\). Spatial location of \((h^l, w^l)\) utilized from bank filter of \(f\). \(d^l\) is a receptive field in \(x^l\). Therefore, the output of CNN layer can be denoted as [18], [19]:

\[
y_{w^{l+1},h^{l+1},d} = \sum_{w=0}^{W^l} \sum_{h=0}^{H^l} \sum_{d=0}^{D^l} f_{w,h,d} \times x_{h^l, w^l + 1, d} \]

(1)

where \(D^l \times D^l\) is an input matrix per \(M\) channels, therefore, total parameters in a kernel formulated as (2).

\[
D^2 \times D^2 \times M \times N
\]

(2)

CNN models with high-resolution images require more memory allocation due to the number of convolutional parameters in the kernel that must be calculated as vectors. Therefore, several CNN models...
can be simplified by reducing convolutional trainable parameters. DSC is a model that effectively reduces the number of convolutional parameters and matrix calculations with the limitations of precision. Conventional CNN utilized a convolutional kernel with the same input channel so that the matrix calculation is carried out by convolution channels per $N$ channel, with the total parameters shown in (4) [20]. DSC consists of 2 convolution processes, namely depthwise convolution and pointwise convolution. Based on (1), DSC to distribute feature learning, namely depthwise and pointwise [2], formulated as [18], [19], [21]:

$$y_{w+h1+d, l+1} = \sum_{d=0}^{D} f_d \times \sum_{h=0}^{H} \sum_{w=0}^{W} f_{w,h} \times x_{h+w, l+1}$$

(3)

where $f_d$ is a pointwise in which $1 \times 1$ convolution layer. Figure 1 represent DSCN parameters utilized for computing the parameter load for each training process.

![DSCN Parameters in CXR of COVID-19](image)

**Figure 1. DSCN parameters in CXR of COVID-19**

The number of parameters in the DSCN per 1 channel is denoted in (4). However, the total parameters in the DSCN are the total parameters in the depthwise convolution and pointwise convolution calculated as shown in (4). Compare to the (2), a comparison of the number of parameters on the CNN standard with the DSCN shown in (5) [22]. For example, if a convolution has $N = 1024$ and $D_k = 3$, there will be a reduction in the convolution parameters in the training process by 0.112 or 0.888 which mean DSC is able to reduce the training load than conventional CNN.

$$\frac{(D_d^2 \times M)(D_d^2 \times N)}{p_{CNN}} = \frac{(D_d^2 \times M)(D_d^2 \times N)}{(D_k^2 \times M \times N)}$$

(4)

$$\frac{p_{DSCN}}{p_{CNN}} = \frac{(D_d^2 \times M)(D_d^2 \times N)}{(D_k^2 \times M \times N)}$$

(5)

### 2.2. Deep convolution generative adversarial network

GANs were introduced in 2014 by Goodfellow which states that GANs consist of two networks namely generator network ($G$) and discriminator network ($D$). Both models are trained using the mini-max concept. Generator model $G(x; \theta_y)$, can train noise data label on $P_y(z)$ distribution data against $x$ label or real data label. Discriminator model $D(x; \theta_d)$, trains the $P_g$ distribution data be able to estimate the distribution data $P_{Data(x)}$ [23]. The data distribution $P_{Data(x)}$ is a positive image of CXR COVID-19 [24]. Generator model $G(z; \theta_g)$, minimizes the probability data distribution in the fake dataset $z \sim P_z$ that formulated as (6) [25]:

$$\min G \mathbb{E}_{x \sim P_z} \left[ \log \left( 1 - D (G(z)) \right) \right]$$

(6)

As shown in (6) shows the generator networks able randomized noise data distribution $P_z(z)$ to fool discriminator network which labelled in data distribution of $z \sim P_{Data(x)}$. Thus, Discriminator model $D(x; \theta_d)$ maximize the probability data distribution in $P_{Data(x)}$ formulated as (7) [25].

$$\max D \mathbb{E}_{x \sim P_{Data(x)}} \left[ \log \left( D(x) \right) \right]$$

(7)
Therefore, GANs mini-max term based on (6) and (7) can be formulated as (8) [25]:

$$\mathcal{L}_{ab} = \min_G \max_D \mathbb{E}_{x \sim p_{\text{data}}}[\log(D(x))] + \mathbb{E}_{z \sim p_z}[\log(1 - D(G(z)))]$$  \hspace{1cm} (8)

where $\mathbb{E}(\cdot)$ denotes as network expectation given by generator network and discriminator network, $V(G, D)$ is a training criterion of discriminator network given by generator network, where $D : x \rightarrow \{D_{src}(x), D_{cls}(x)\}$ denotes discriminator probability distributions over both source and its labels. Both discriminator network $D(\cdot)$ and generator network $G(\cdot)$ is able to be optimized using given objective functions formulated as [23]:

$$\mathcal{L}_{cls}^r = \mathbb{E}_{x \sim p_{\text{data}}}[\log D_{cls}(x)]$$  \hspace{1cm} (9)

$$\mathcal{L}_{cls}^f = \mathbb{E}_{z \sim p_z}[\log D_{cls}(G(z))]$$  \hspace{1cm} (10)

$$\mathcal{L}_{rec} = \mathbb{E}_{z \sim p_z}[\|x - G_z(G(z))\|_1]$$  \hspace{1cm} (11)

where $\lambda_{cls}$ denotes as hyperparameters that optimize domain classification loss of discriminator ($\mathcal{L}_{cls}^r$) and generator ($\mathcal{L}_{cls}^f$). $\lambda_{rec}$ denotes as hyperparameters that optimize reconstruction loss ($\mathcal{L}_{rec}$) that adopt $L_1$ normalization [23]. $\mathcal{L}_{rec}$ translated $G(z)$ into $x \sim p_z$ which mean that the generator $G_z(\cdot)$ tries to reconstruct fake labels into real labels.

2.3. Depthwise boundary equilibrium GAN

Figure 2 shows DepthwiseBEGAN architecture given an input image shape (32, 32, 3). DSConv is depthwise separable convolution layer which contains depthwise layer and pointwise layer. Down-sample size transformed from given input shape 32×32 into 4×4 and 8×8.

The term of equilibrium to balance auto-encode real dataset $(x; \theta_d)$ and discriminate $G(z; \theta_g)$ which equalized as (12) [26]:

$$\mathbb{E}[\mathcal{L}(G(z))] = \gamma \mathbb{E}(\mathcal{L}(x))$$  \hspace{1cm} (12)
where $\gamma$ denotes as diversity ratio, which maintains the equilibrium using proportional control theory ($k_\ell \in [0,1]$). Based on (12), boundary equilibrium GAN (BEGAN) represent as an objective function as (13)-(15) [27], [28]:

$$L_D = \mathcal{L}(x) - k_\ell \mathcal{L}(G(z_D))$$

(13)

$$L_G = \mathcal{L}(G(z_G))$$

(14)

$$k_{i+1} = k_\ell + \lambda_\ell (g\mathcal{L}(x) - \mathcal{L}(G(z_G)))$$

(15)

where $\lambda_\ell$ is a proportional gain for $k_\ell \mathcal{L}(x) = \mathbb{E}_{x \sim P_{data(x)}}[\|D_{cls}(x) - x\|_1]$ denotes as auto-encoder loss $L_1$ of data distribution $x \sim P_{data(x)}$, and $\mathcal{L}(G(z)) = \mathbb{E}_{x \sim P_z} \left[\|D_{cls}(G(z)) - G(z)\|_1\right]$ denotes as auto-encoder loss $L_1$ of data distribution $z \sim P_z$. Essentially, (16) shows a form of closed-loop feedback control, in which $k_\ell$ is adjusted at each step $t + 1$. The equilibrium constraint manages the training process to yielding to $\mathcal{L}(x) > \mathcal{L}(G(z))$. Therefore, convergence global measurement of the equilibrium which denotes as (16) [27], [28].

$$\mathcal{M}_{global} = \mathcal{L}(x) + |\gamma \mathcal{L}(x) - \mathcal{L}(G(z_G))|$$

(16)

2.4. Fréchet inception distance

Fréchet inception distance (FID) is utilized as a metric to assess image quality of GANs which approximates the distribution of fake generated images $D_{cls}(G(z_G))$ with the distribution of real images $D_{cls}(x)$ that were used to train the generator as multivariate Gaussians as (17) [29]:

$$\|\mu_\gamma - \mu_\mu\|^2 + \text{Tr}(\Sigma_\gamma + \Sigma_\mu - 2\sqrt{\Sigma_\gamma + \Sigma_\mu})$$

(17)

where $X_\gamma \sim (\mu_\gamma, \Sigma_\gamma)$ denotes as mean of 2048-dimensional activation and $X_\mu \sim (\mu_\mu, \Sigma_\mu)$ denotes the covariance of 2048-dimensional activation which extracted from pre-trained Inception-v3 model. Our model transforms data distribution of real $\mathbb{E}_{x \sim P_{data(x)}}$ and fake $\mathbb{E}_{x \sim P_z}$ into 32×32, 64×64, 128×128, and 256×256 image dimension.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The training process was performed using cloud instance Intel(R) Xeon(R) CPU @ 2.30 GHz, high-memory VMs, 2xvCPU, 25 GB RAM, and GPU using NVIDIA P100/T4, peripheral component interconnect express (PCI Express) 16 GB. The training process consists of three schemas. The first schema was trained a conventional DCGAN, BEGAN, and DepthwiseGANs using particular dataset distributions. This schema generates real-like fake images or generate synthetic CXR image. The second schema was calculated the quality of augmented images divides into several batches of random images. The third schema was utilized to test whether the augmented images can be classified using particular classification method such as CNN.

3.1. Data distributions and hyperparameters

This paper represents three kind of datasets such as MNIST dataset, CelebA dataset, and COVID-19 CXR dataset. GAN model trained on 60K MNIST images, 24K CelebA images, and 5.4K CXR images to generate realistic image synthesis. This proposed approach trained both generator and discriminator network using Adam with an initial learning rate $\alpha = 0.0001, \beta_1 = 0.5, \beta_2 = 0.999$, proportional gain ($\lambda_\ell = 0.7$) [30], varied image transformation 32 to 256. The hyperparameters in Table 1 show that DepthwiseGANs can propose data augmentation to generate synthetic CXR image using randomized noise inputs.

Based on Table 1, the hyperparameters engages performances among GAN types, especially in image-to-image translation containing DCGAN, DepthwiseGAN, BEGAN, and DepthwiseBEGAN. Figure 1 shows the generator and discriminator architecture as a convolutional feature extraction which down-sampled in 4×4 and 8×8. DCGAN has 7.12 million trainable parameters, DepthwiseDCGAN has 0.76 million trainable parameters, BEGAN has 8.44 million trainable parameters, and DepthwiseBEGAN has 2.23 million trainable parameters. Additionally, this research compares the hyperparameters combination shown in Table 1 to analyze the model performance based on generator loss ($\mathcal{L}_G$), discriminator loss ($\mathcal{L}_D$), and the execution time.
3.2. DepthwiseBEGAN training performance

Based on (11) until (15), generator loss (\(\mathcal{L}_G\)) and discriminator loss (\(\mathcal{L}_D\)) calculated in epoch=25, filters=64, image resolution 32x32, random noise=48, and down-sampled size 4x4. Then, Table 2 represent generator loss (\(\mathcal{L}_G\)) and discriminator loss (\(\mathcal{L}_D\)) of DCGAN and DepthwiseGAN, which consists of following datasets such as MNIST, CelebA, and CXR dataset. Table 2 represent DCGAN and DepthwiseGAN training metrics.

![Table 1. Hyperparameters](image)

Table 2 shows generator loss (\(\mathcal{L}_G\)), discriminator loss (\(\mathcal{L}_D\)), and execution time of both models DCGAN and DepthwiseGAN. Generator loss (\(\mathcal{L}_G\)) and discriminator loss (\(\mathcal{L}_D\)) of both models DCGAN and DepthwiseGAN closely fit, but the execution time of DepthwiseGAN is lower than DCGAN which follows the number reduction of trainable parameters. Table 3 shows generator loss (\(\mathcal{L}_G\)), discriminator loss (\(\mathcal{L}_D\)), and execution time of both models DCGAN, DepthwiseGAN, BEGAN, and DepthwiseBEGAN in epoch=25, filters=(4 and 32), image resolution=(64x64, 128x128, and 256x256), and random noise=48.

![Table 2. Loss of DCGAN and DepthwiseGAN using particular datasets](image)

Table 3. Loss of DCGAN, DepthwiseGAN, BEGAN, and DepthwiseBEGAN using CXR datasets

Based on Table 3 DepthwiseBEGAN execution time was faster than BEGAN execution time in particular filers and image resolution. Meanwhile, generator loss (\(\mathcal{L}_G\)) and discriminator loss (\(\mathcal{L}_D\)) closely fit in the training stage. DepthwiseBEGAN is able to augment synthetic images with 256x256 pixels. However, the number of filters was reduced because of GPU limitations.

DepthwiseBEGAN is shown in Figure 3. Generator loss (\(\mathcal{L}_G\)) and discriminator loss (\(\mathcal{L}_D\)) of DepthwiseBEGAN shown in Figure 3(a), proportional control (\(k_{t+1}\)), and convergence global (\(M_{global}\)) of DepthwiseBEGAN shown in Figure 3(b), and domain classification loss of discriminator (\(\mathcal{L}_{cls}^{f}\)), domain classification loss of generator (\(\mathcal{L}_{cls}^{g}\)), and reconstruction loss (\(\mathcal{L}_{res}\)) shown in Figure 3(c).

3.3. DepthwiseBEGAN performance measurement

Based on Figure 2 DepthwiseBEGAN performed in filter size=4, image resolution=256x256, epoch=25, and random noise=48. Image quality of GANs is able to be assessed by measuring FID, which approximates the distribution of real-to-real images (RR), the distribution of fake-to-real (FR) images, and the distribution of fake-to-fake (FF) images. Measurement of FID was captured in Table 4 for each 12K iteration steps in DepthwiseBEGAN training process.
Table 4 measures FID with several batches containing 1, 5, 20, and 50 images. GANs evaluate by propagating the distribution of RR or FR or FF using pre-trained Inception-v3. A proportional FID value while measuring the same image equal to zero. By calculating random image in batch size is 1, FID value of RR equal to 4.3866, FID value of FR equal to 4.4098 and FID value of FF equal to 4.6633. Synthetic images augmented by DepthwiseBEGAN is shown in Figure 4. Therefore, Figure 4(a) shows synthetic images of CXR with normal label which augmented by DepthwiseBEGAN. Figure 4(b) shows synthetic images of CXR with normal bacteria/virus label which augmented by DepthwiseBEGAN.

Synthetic images of fake generated images $D_{cls}(G(z))$ in CXR dataset has been augmented, which distributes normal label of train images equal to 12.49K images, the normal label of validation images equal to 3.75K images, the normal label of test images equal to 7.13K images, the virus label of train images equal to 12.98K images, the virus label of validation images equal to 3.49K images, the virus label of test images equal to 6.49K images, the bacteria label of train images equal to 20.01K images, the bacteria label of validation images equal to 4.99K images, and the bacteria label of test images equal to 4.99K images.

Augmented CXR images trained using several CNN models such as RestNet18 [27], ResNet-50 [16], and VGG19 [28]. The real and fake generated data distribution with input resolution 128x128 trained using Adam optimizer with an initial learning rate $\alpha = 0.0001, \beta_1 = 0.5, \beta_2 = 0.999$ [30] and 50 iterations. In order to represent the performance of particular CNN models, this paper assigned the accuracy, specificity, sensitivity, positive predictive value (PPV), and negative predictive value (NPV), can be formalized as [27]:
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\[ \text{Accuracy} = \frac{TP + TN}{TP + TN + FP + FN} \]  \hspace{1cm} (18)

\[ \text{Sensitivity} = \frac{TP}{TP + FN} \]  \hspace{1cm} (19)

\[ \text{Specificity} = \frac{TN}{TN + FP} \]  \hspace{1cm} (20)

\[ PPV = \frac{TP}{TP + FP} \]  \hspace{1cm} (21)

\[ NPV = \frac{TN}{TN + FN}. \]  \hspace{1cm} (22)

Based on (19) until (22), sensitivity and specificity are defined for a domain of binary classification. Sensitivity determines whether the 'virus' label meets the condition in TP divided by TP and FN. Specificity determines the virus label does not meet condition means FP divided by FP and TN. Positive predictive value (PPV) is determines the 'virus' label meets condition of positive direction means TP divided by TP and FP. Negative predictive value (NPV) is determines the 'virus' label meets condition of negative direction means TN divided by TN and FN. Figure 5 shows CNN models utilized to classify the CXR images based on the following labels, namely normal label, bacteria label, and virus label. Figure 5(a) represents CNN training accuracy using real CXR datasets and Figure 5(b) represents CNN training accuracy using generated or fake CXR datasets.

Figure 5 represent the CNN training accuracy using real and fake CXR dataset. Based on (18) until (22) the confusion matrix has calculated. The confusion matrix of the following CNN models was calculated using 100 images from particular sources which shown in Table 5.

![Figure 4. Synthetic images augmented by DepthwiseBEGAN](image)

(a) normal label and (b) bacteria/virus label

![Figure 5. CNN training accuracy using (a) real and (b) fake CXR images](image)
image synthesis method proposed to augment CXR images of COVID-19 patients from chest CT images using multi-dilation convolutional neural network for automatic COVID-19 diagnosis. The proposed method achieved 94.12% PPV and 93.75% NPV with execution time equal to 22.8859 minutes. DepthwiseBEGAN trained to augmented CXR image synthesis within generator loss equal to 0.0465, discriminator loss equal to 0.0451, and execution time equal to 20.2133 minutes. DepthwiseGANs have shortened execution time for a better-generated image by the discriminator. Quality of DepthwiseGANs improved by using the encoder-decoder model of GANs, namely BEGAN. BEGAN trained to augmented CXR image synthesis within generator loss equal to 0.0451, discriminator loss equal to 0.0885, and execution time equal to 76.5556 minutes. DepthwiseBEGAN trained to augmented CXR image synthesis within generator loss equal to 0.0465, discriminator loss equal to 0.0811, and execution time equal to 22.8859 minutes.

FID of DepthwiseBEGAN measured by comparing the number of image batches and the source of the image. Measurement of FID using one random image calculated fake-to-fake (FF) equal to 4.6633, real-to-real (RR) equal to 4.3866, and fake-to-real (FR) equal to 4.4674. Furthermore, generated DepthwiseBEGAN synthetic images improve 22.59% accuracy of conventional CNN models.

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