Designing and Validating the Sources of EFL Teacher Apprehension Scale (STAS)

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Designing and Validating the Sources of EFL Teacher Apprehension Scale (STAS)

Afsaneh Ghanizadeh[1] · Ghazaleh Goldast[1] · Behzad Ghonsooly[2]

Abstract The purpose of the present study was to design and validate a scale for measuring the sources of English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' apprehension (STAS). To design the scale, the data generated from a triangulated qualitative research (Goldast and Ghanizadeh forthcoming) was employed. The model incorporated four factors, including altitudinal, organizational, L2-related factors, and classroom management. A 35-item scale on a 5-point Likert scale was developed. The designed scale was distributed among 198 EFL teachers both from language institutes and schools. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using Lisrel 8.5 statistical package was run. Implementing the modifications resulted in a refined version of the scale comprising 33 items and four factors (L2-related problems, attitudinal factors, classroom management, and organizational factors). It exhibited acceptable reliability and validity indices. To further validate STAS, its association with a highly related construct, i.e., teacher burnout was probed. A model was proposed containing teacher apprehension and teacher burnout. The model was tested via structural equation modeling (SEM). The results demonstrated that the model had a good fit with the empirical data. It was also found that EFL teachers' apprehension positively and significantly influenced teacher burnout.

Introduction

Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978) viewed stress as a negative emotional experience being caused by the teacher's perception that their work situation formed a threat to their self-esteem or well-being. While teachers are always supposed to be theorists and practitioners simultaneously, they also need to be intrinsically motivated, cope with their stress, and face their apprehensions. In accordance with Kumaravadivelu (2001), language teachers should practice what they theorize and theorize their practices. To put it simply, they should see themselves burgeon on a daily basis in order to develop their confidence.

Notwithstanding the fact that this belief has found a good place among EFL teachers, closer examination reveals that in the contemporary world it is a common belief that English as an International language, EIL, has been replaced with the following term English as a native language, ENL, and English as a foreign language, EFL, has been also replaced with English as a lingua franca, ELF (Jenkins 2006); therefore, it would be to the teachers' advantage not to underestimate their abilities and skills, since EFL teachers should be well-adjusted and well-reliant so as to feel balanced to teach well. To put it simply, EFL teachers are expected to be well-educated because native teachers are always preferred to be hired and employed. In order to compete with native teachers, EFL teachers are supposed to possess a dynamic and resourceful identity to be able to share their knowledge of English.

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Norton (2001, p 5) defined identity as "how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future. " In other words, identity is constructed and reconstructed from time to time and situation to situation; hence, teachers need to raise their confidence and build a strong identity to teach more effectively and overcome their stress and fear while teaching. Once the teachers' confidence raises, their level of stress will reduce provided that the teachers reflect on what they teach and do during and after class.

Accordingly, it would be generally advisable for the government and for the supervisors, language institute owners and managers, and mentors in particular so as to find the sources of stress and apprehension and endeavor to inform the teachers how well they can teach and live such a stressful job. They can be considered as successful teachers if they come to the belief that they are not only supposed to teach the learners a new language, but also expected to prepare them for a novel, unknown life which one is absolutely interested in getting to know, since the learners are taught to use a new language in different situations, settings, and contexts which are involved with various types of situational, cultural, and psychological factors.

The present study aimed to design and validate a scale for assessing EFL teacher apprehension. On the basis of the above reasoning, this research was conducted so as to help teachers gain confidence and know themselves better. This for sure will broaden their horizons and help cultivate interest in their profession which is actually rewarding and intriguing. To raise teachers' confidence, providing teachers with the antecedents and ramifications of teachers' apprehension would be one step forward to guarantee their success.

There is no denying that there is plethora of studies (e.g., Conley and Glasman 2008; Ferdowsi and Ghanizadeh 2017; Kim and Kim 2004; Kyriacou 2010; Merç 2011) which exclusively studied teacher stress from different perspectives and can gain us a deeper viewpoint of what leads a teacher to feel apprehensive; nonetheless, less attention has been paid to design a standardized scale for measuring the sources of EFL teachers' apprehension. This dearth of research does imply a need to broaden the range of options for developing a scale to measure sources of teachers' apprehension.

To this end, the following research question was examined throughout the present study: Is the sources of EFL teachers' apprehension scale (STAS) a valid and reliable tool for measuring their teaching apprehension?

In this study, apprehension is considered as a subdivision of anxiety which applies more specifically to interactive professions such as teaching. Indeed, apprehension is defined as anxiety about the future, especially about dealing with something unpleasant or difficult. The distinguishing feature of apprehension lies in its anticipation of unpleasant or unfavorable events. Another distinctive attribute of apprehension is that it is highly associated with fear or anxiety about communicating with people, as it is interchangeably used with *communication apprehension*. Just as anxiety prevents some people from performing successfully in science or mathematics, many people find foreign language teaching, especially in classroom situations, mainly stressful; therefore, it is a general or umbrella term covering all domains and settings (Horwitz et al. 1986). Another distinctive characteristic of apprehension is that while anxiety is a feeling which should be taken seriously otherwise it may stop the person from living a balanced life, apprehension can be treated much more easily and needs to be given some thoughts so as to be coped with. Indeed, having a cognizant perception of the apprehension would make it much more malleable and controllable (Kyriacou 2010).

It is believed that EFL teachers should have dare to break their comfort zone so they ought not to be anxious in classroom interactions. Having difficulty speaking with people both in groups or individually or listening to or comprehending a spoken message are signs of communication apprehension (Horwitz 1996). Given that language classes are characterized by high proportion of interaction and communication, EFL teacher apprehension can deteriorate teacher functioning and effectiveness. Teachers who naturally have trouble in stimulating an interactive classroom environment and in establishing rapport are more likely to experience even greater hardship performing in a foreign language class where they should have high control of the communicative situation and act as a role model for their students in speaking and using foreign language.

Review of the Related Literature

Many attempts have been made (e.g., Conley and Glasman 2008; Merç 2011; Kyriacou 2010; Kim and Kim 2004) to find deeper truths about symptoms of teachers' apprehension, anxiety, and stress. More details on this will be given below in Table 1.

As can be seen, some stressors have got the most attention among the above-mentioned factors which can be categorized into two subdivisions: (a) Internal factors: (1) lack of communication skills, (2) lack of participation in decision-making, (3) teaching a difficult subject or a subject for the first time, (4) being left alone without getting care from staff, (5) difficult relations with students, (6) not being up-to-date with teaching-subject, (7) being observed by the supervisors or the mentors, (8) planning. (b) External factors: (1) Learners' individual differences, (2) too

Table 1 Sources of teachers' apprehension and anxiety

Source of stress	Mentioned by	Year
1. Difficult to complete work	Mykletun	1984
2. Difficulties in relaxing from work during spare time		
3. Not reaching own goals		
4. Learners disturbing lessons		
5. Conflicts between the learners		
6. Hectic work day		
7. Difficulties in conveying a fair and complete impression of a learner to her parents		
8. Lack of time for cooperation with colleagues	Mykletun	1984
9. Lack of time for planning		
10. Lack of time for studying new teaching aids		
11. Lack of possibilities of contact with pupils on the personal level		
12. Finding difficulties in presenting a meaningful lesson to all learners simultaneously		
13. Teaching does not match the abilities of the gifted learners in class		
14. Teaching does not match the abilities of the slow learners in class		
15. Lack of time to help each learner with her learning difficulties		
16. Not being up to expectations from the new teaching plan		
17. Time pressure while teaching		
18. Lack of support from principal		
19. Collegial cooperation difficulties		
20. In doubt when choosing topics and methods		
21. Finding some topics difficult to teach		
22. Not being up to date in teaching subjects		
23. Dissatisfied with organization of teaching aids		
24. Lack of teaching aids to some lessons		
25. Lack of professional support		
26. Teaching does not capture the interests of all learners		
27. Too many learners in the classrooms		
28. Parents are critical		
29. What will critic teacher will expect of me	Thompson	1963
30. What will these pupils will be like		
31. What should I do if my material has been covered and there is extra time?		
32. Will I be required to turn in my lesson plans, and who will evaluate them?		
33. Do I really know my subject matter?		
34. Will learners like me and respond to my guidance?		
35. Will I be able to maintain desired standards of behavior?		
36. Knowing enough to teach the units	Erickson and Rudd	1967
37. How will I be evaluated		
38. What will my supervising teacher be like		
39. Discipline	York	1968
40. Academic organization		
41. Individual differences		
42. Planning		
43. Disagreement about what and how to teach	Sorenson and Halpert	1968
44. Personality conflicts with supervising teachers		
45. Difficult relations with students		
46. Negative interactions between student, teacher, supervising teacher, and college supervisor	Yee	1968

Table 1 continued

Source of stress	Mentioned by	Year
47. How adequate am I (Concerns with self—)	Fuller	1969
48. Where do I stand (is this my class or the supervising teacher's class?)		
49. Method of providing feedback about teaching performance		
50. Trying to uphold/maintain values and standards	Kyriacou	2010
51. Poorly motivated pupils		
52. Covering lessons for absent learners		
53. Too much work to do		
54. Lack of time to spend with individual learners		
55. Individual learners who continually misbehave		
56. Learners who show a lack of interest		
57. Not enough time to do the work	Kyriacou and Sutcliffe	1978
58. Lack of time for marking attitudes and behavior of some other teachers		
59. Inadequate disciplinary policy of school		
60. Difficult classes		
61. Learners' non-acceptance of teacher's authority		
62. Constant monitoring of learners' behavior		
63. Generally high noise level		
64. Noisy learners		
65. large classes		
66. Learners' impolite behavior or cheek		
67. Inadequate disciplinary sanctions available		
68. Difficult behavior problems		
69. Learners' general misbehavior		
70. Too much paperwork		
71. Lack of time to prepare lessons		
72. Poor promotion opportunities		
73. Lack of recognition for extra work		
74. Attitudes and behavior of the headmaster		
75. Lack of consensus on minimum standards		
76. Demands on after school time		
77. Responsibility for learners (e.g. exam success)		
78. No time to relax between lessons		
79. Too many periods actually teaching		
80. Lack of time for further study		
81. Low status of the teaching profession		
82. Lack of participation in decision-making		
83. Learners' general low ability		
84. Maintaining class discipline		
85. Lack of recognition for good teaching		
86. Shortage of equipment		
87. Poor facilities		
88. Time management in class	Numrich	1996
89. Giving instructions for classroom activities		
90. Feeling insufficient for effective grammar teaching		
91. Assessing students learning		
92. Giving explanations in English	Kongchan and Wareesiri	2008
93. Teaching students with low level of proficiency		
94. Teachers' seeing that their students did not understand their English		

Table 1 continued

Source of stress	Mentioned by	Year
95. Lack of professional nursing skills	Limthongkul and Aree-Ue	2009
96. Lack of communication skills		
97. New environment		
98. Inadequate knowledge		
99. Role of clinical teachers		
100. Teaching–learning methods		
101. Health problems		
102. Dealing with students	Merç	2011
103. Maintaining classrooms		
104. Teaching a difficult subject or teaching a subject for the first time		
105. Being observed by cooperating teachers		
106. Being interrupted by mentors suggesting ways to teach students properly during students' teaching		
107. Lack of experience and training for teaching English	Tomohisa	2011
108. Lack of confidence in English communication		
109. The feeling of being evaluated	Paker	2011
110. The feeling of being observed by either the mentor or the supervisor		
111. Anticipating high expectations of mentors and university supervisors		
112. Lacking enough ideas about students and classroom management		
113. Not receiving feedback about their performance		
114. Teaching four language skills		
115. Not having enough knowledge and skill in using teaching devices in classroom		
116. Being left alone without getting care from staff		
117. Not knowing how to use materials effectively		
118. Preparing teaching plans		
119. Teachers' language proficiency	Klanrit and Sroinam	2012
120. Teacher expectations about students expectations about ons and low motivation		
121. Students'low motivat studying English		

many learners in the classrooms, (3) lack of facilities, (4) lack of time for covering the lessons, (5) lack of time for cooperating with colleagues, (6) too much work to do, (7) covering lessons for absent students, (8) learners' misbehaviors, (9) learners' non-acceptance of teacher's authority, and 10) poorly motivated learners.

Methodology

Participants

The participants of this research consisted of 198 teachers (110 = female, 85 = male, not mentioned = 3) teaching in English language institutions and secondary schools in Mashhad, Iran, who were selected randomly. Two hundred and fifty questionnaires were distributed (in print version or in electronic format) to teachers whose age ranged from 19 to 49 and the mean years of their teaching experience was about 5.2. Out of the distributed questionnaires, 204 were returned of which 198 were fully completed. The sample is

representative regarding demographic indices including age, gender, years of teaching experience, major, and their level of anxiety. The participants were sampled from BA and MA in teaching English as a foreign language, TEFL, English translation, and also some other irrelevant majors.

Instruments and Data Collection

Sources of Teacher Apprehension Scale (STAS)

Based on the definition presented in the introduction section as well as the information which were collected from diary, interviews, and class observations (Goldast and Ghanizadeh forthcoming) a questionnaire entitled the Sources of Teacher's Apprehension Scale (STAS) was developed. Goldast and Ghanizadeh (forthcoming) conducted a triangulated qualitative research aimed at exploring the antecedents and ramifications of EFL teachers' apprehension. In the aforementioned study, two models were proposed, one for the antecedents of teachers' apprehension and one for the ramifications of teachers' apprehension.

To ensure the content validity of the research, some other questionnaires and their items were studied and discussed, for instance, Foreign language teaching anxiety scale (FLTAS) by Kim and Kim (2004). Second, the items were discussed by the researchers and then administered to a sample of 2 teachers. The aim of this pilot study was to check the performance of the individual items so that the best items could be identified and replaced by others. Third, some modifications were made and some more items were added. Then, the items were tabulated and rated on a five-point Likert scale. To come up to a random order, the items then were mixed up.

Finally, a five-point Likert scale was developed with 35 items ranging from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5). These 35 items were then classified into 4 factors derived from Goldast and Ghanizadeh' s study:

1. L2-related problems: 1, 4, 5, 11, 21, 26, 28
1.a. Linguistic factors
2. Attitudinal factors: 2, 3, 7, 8, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 27, 29, 30
2.a. Teachers' lack of self-confidence
2.b. Students' perceptions
2.c. Students' demotivation
3. Classroom management: 9, 19, 20, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35
3.a. Students' disengagement
3.b. Time restriction
3.c. Syllabus coverage
4. Organizational factors: 6, 10, 14, 15, 25
4.a. Supervisor observation

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using Lisrel 8.5 statistical package was then run to substantiate the validity of the scale. Additionally, to determine the criterion validity, the association of the recently developed scale with a closely related construct, i.e., teacher burnout was examined.

Teacher Burnout Inventory

The *Maslach burnout inventory* is the most frequently used instrument for assessing burnout. The educator version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI-ES) developed by Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter, (1996) was utilized in the present study for measuring teacher burnout. The scale comprises 22 self-report items measuring three subscales as indicated in Tables 2 and 3.

The frequency of the burnout symptoms is measured on a seven-point rating scale, ranging from "never " (0) to "every day " (6). Via this inventory, burnout is defined as the presence of high scores on the emotional exhaustion and depersonalization components but as the presence of low scores on the personal accomplishment component. The inventory enjoys high reliability and validity indices (Hastings and Bham 2003). The reliability coefficients for emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment are 0.76, 0.63, and 0.73, respectively (Maslach et al. 1996). The following Table displays the items of each subscales.

Results

Validity of the Sources of Teacher Apprehension Scale (STAS) via CFA

As stated earlier, STAS was designed based on the ideas generated through a triangulated qualitative protocol analysis (the model of which is presented in Fig. 1, Goldast and Ghanizadeh forthc) as well as previous existing scales measuring teacher stress and anxiety. The model comprises four factors: *attitudinal, organizational, L2-related factors* and *classroom management.* For each factor, relevant items were written: 15 items for attitudinal, 8 items for classroom management, 7 items for L2-related factors, and 5 items for organizational. The designed scale comprising 35 items was administered to the participants. The proposed model was tested via confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using the LISREL 8.50 statistical package.

A number of fit indices were examined to evaluate the model fit: the Chi-square magnitude which should not be significant, the Normed Fit Index (NFI), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) with the cut value greater than 0.90, the

Table 3 Classification of different items of burnout scale

Sub-Scales	Item #
Emotional exhaustion	1, 4, 9, 10, 15, 16, 18, 20, 22
Personal accomplishment	3*, 6*, 7*, 12*, 13*, 17*, 19*, 21*
Depersonalization	2, 5, 8, 11, 14

*Scored in reverse order

Table 2 The subscales of the MBI-ES along with the corresponding descriptions

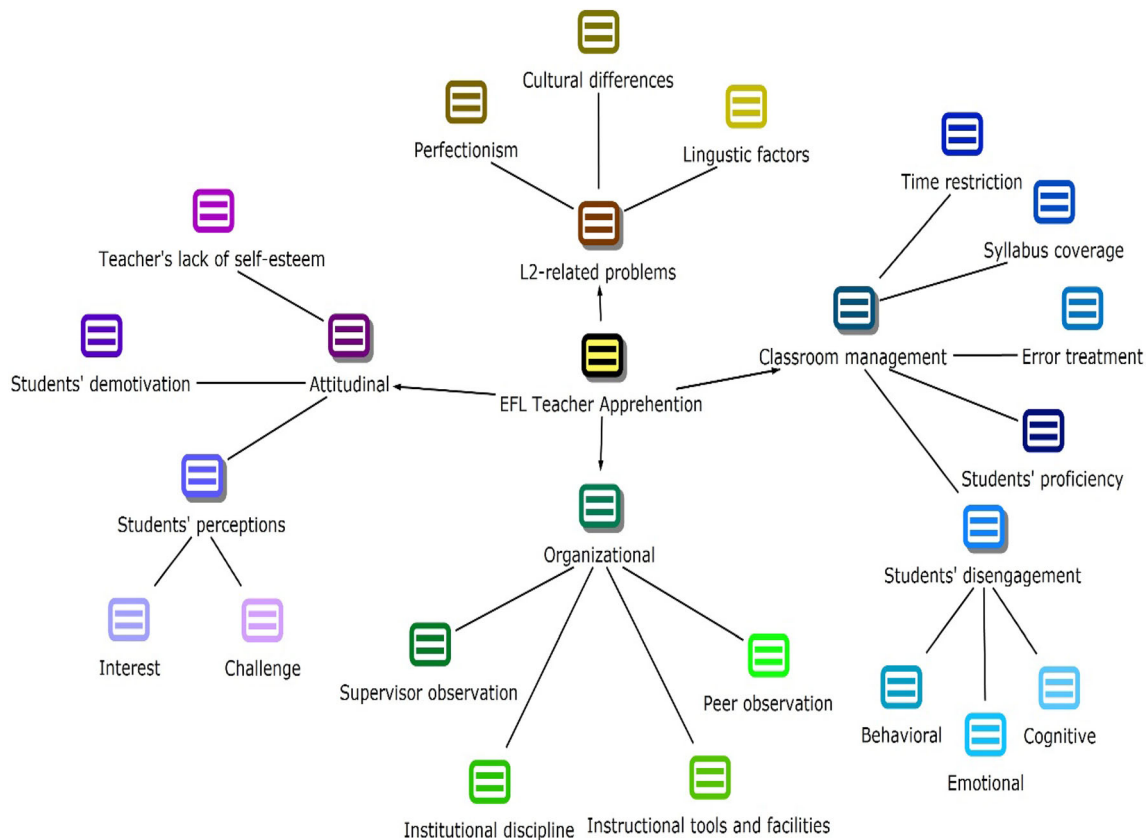| Subscale	Definition	Alpha
Emotional exhaustion	Teachers' feeling that they have little left to give, at a psychological level, to their work	.76
Depersonalization	Teachers' development of negative and cynical attitudes towards students	.63
Reduced personal accomplishment	Teachers' evaluation of themselves and their accomplishments negatively	.73

Fig. 1 The model of the antecedents of EFL teachers' apprehension (Adapted from Goldast and Ghanizadeh, forthcoming)

GFI (Good Fit Index), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) of about 0.06 or 0.08 (Schreiber et al. 2006, as cited in Ghanizadeh and Ghonsooly 2015). The initial structural model is presented in Fig. 2. The Chi-square statistic was significant ($\chi^2 = 703.22$, $p < 0.05$) and the ratio of χ^2/df was 3.38, indicating the rejection of the model. The RMSEA, CFI, NFI, and GFI values were found to be 0.11, 0.86, 0.86, and 0.85, respectively. These indices were slightly lower than the acceptable thresholds. The indices on the lines indicate the standardized estimates and t values, respectively. As demonstrated by the Figure, two items had a t value lower than 2 and did not fit the model.

It was also revealed that these items did not demonstrate good factor loading (below 0.30).

These two items (13–24) were discarded. Accordingly, this resulted in a refined version of the scale comprising 33 items and four factors. The resultant model was tested again to ensure that the above modification resulted in the model improvement. The model is presented in Fig. 3. As demonstrated by the fit values ($\chi^2 = 624.53$, $\chi^2/df = 2.5$, GFI = 0.91, CFI = 0.90, NFI = 0.90, and RMSEA = . 06), the model was acceptable and all items had a factor loading above 0.30.

The total Cronbach's alpha estimate of the scale was found to be 0.90. The Cronbach's alpha estimates for each factor ranged from 0.82 to 0.91. (Attitudinal = 0.85, Organizational = 0.82, Classroom management = 0.91, L2-related factors = 0.91).

The correlations among the four factors were then computed. As indicated in Table 4, all four sub-factors highly correlated with each other and with the total STAS: Attitudinal & STAS ($r = 0.92$, $p < 0.05$), Organizational & STAS ($r = 0.88$, $p < 0.05$), L2-related factors & STAS ($r = 0.97$, $p < 0.05$), and Classroom management & STAS ($r = 0.94$, $p < 0.05$).

Criterion Validity of STAS

To further validate the scale, the relationship between teacher Apprehension and teacher burnout was examined. As stated in the literature review, it is believed that teachers with higher level of anxiety and stress are more prone to burnout (Maslach 1996). Indeed, it is widely recognized among educationalists that one of the determinants of burnout is stress-induced phenomena and attributes. For this reason, in order to determine the criterion-related
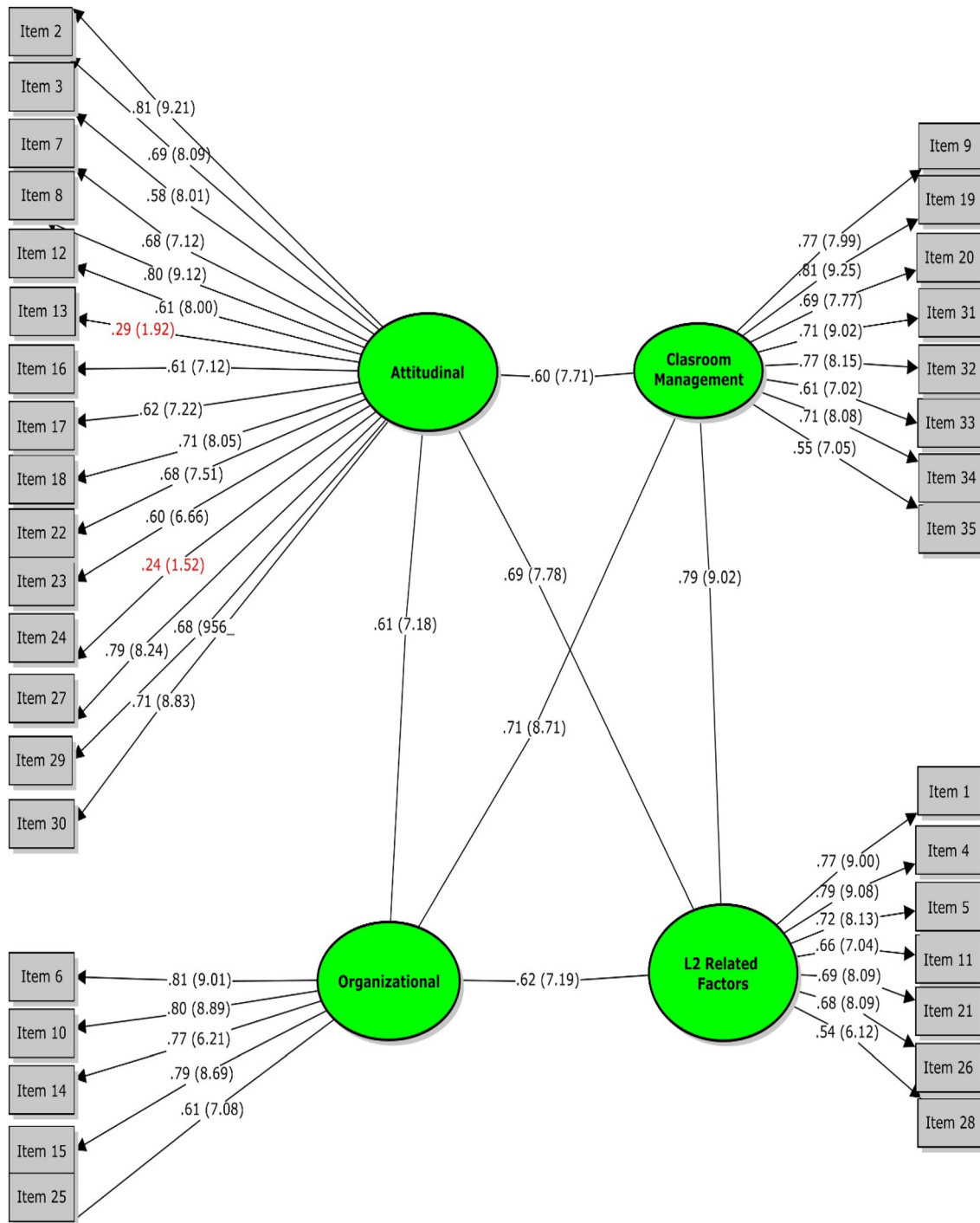
$\chi 2 = 703.22$, *df*$= 208$, RMSEA$=. 11$, GFI$= .85$, CFI$= .86$, NFI$= .86$

Fig. 2 The schematic representation of the four factors of STAS and the corresponding items

validity of the newly-developed scale (STAS), its association with a highly related construct, i.e., teacher burnout was explored.

Normal Distribution of Data

To check the normality of data distribution, the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test was employed. This test is used to
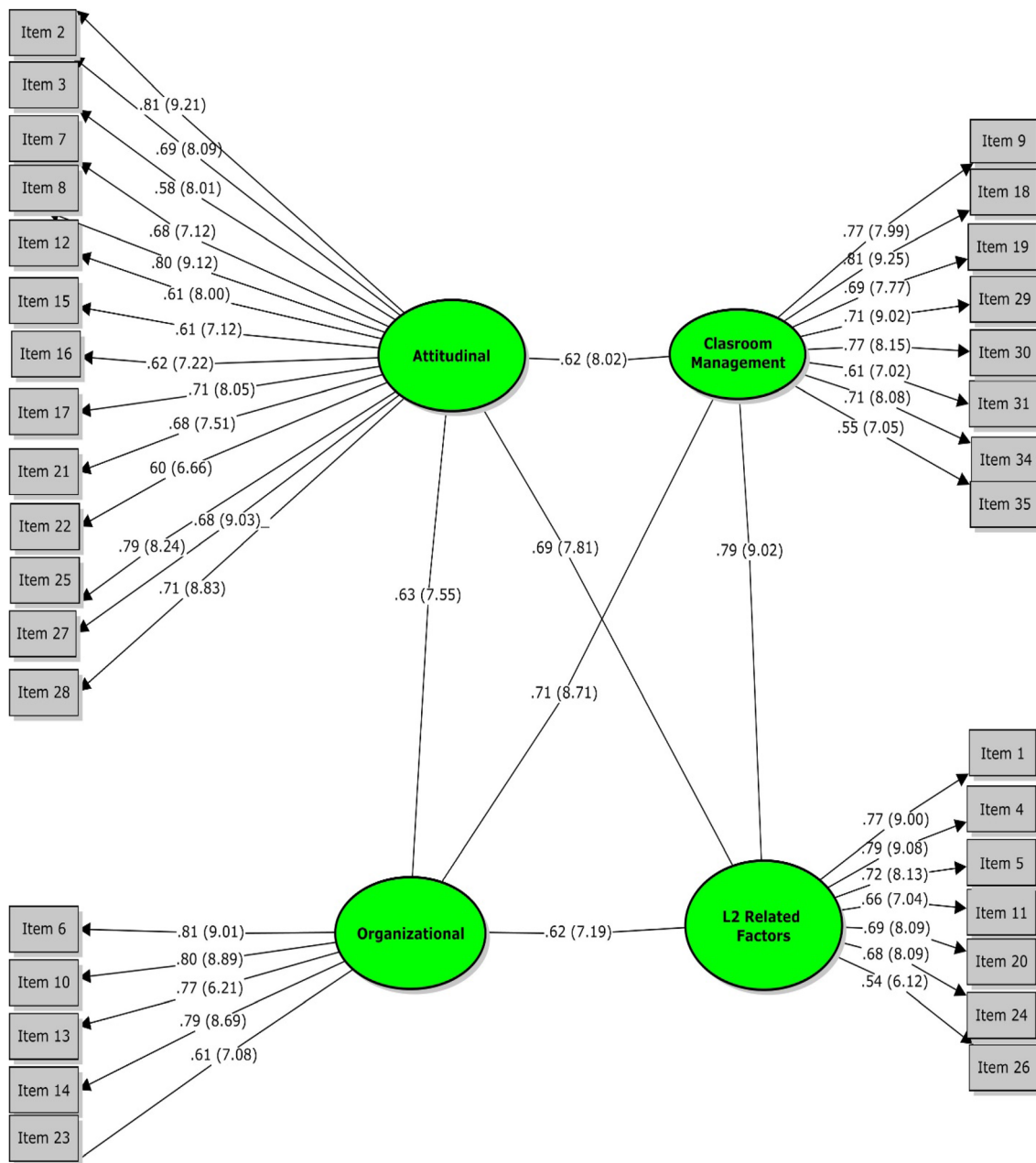
$\chi 2= 624.53$, *df*= 249, RMSEA=. 06, GFI= .91, CFI= .90, NFI= .90

Fig. 3 The schematic representation of the four factors of the revised STAS and the corresponding items

check whether the distribution deviates from a comparable normal distribution. If the *p* value is non-significant ($p > 0.05$), we can say that the distribution of a sample is not significantly different from a normal distribution, therefore it is normal. If the *p* value is significant ($p < 0.05$) it implies that the distribution is not normal.

Table 5 presents the results of the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test. As can be seen, the obtained sig value for teacher burnout and teacher apprehension is higher than 0.05.

Therefore, it can safely be concluded that the data is normally distributed across all two variables.

Descriptive Statistics

STAS and Its Four Components Table 6 presents descriptive statistics of EFL teachers' STAS and its four subscales. As the table shows, the mean of attitudinal is ($M = 40.51$, $SD = 11.08$), for Organizational is

Table 4 The correlation coefficients among factors of STAS

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Attitudinal	1.00				
2. Organizational	.82**	1.00			
3. L2-related factors	.87**	.76**	1.00		
4. Classroom management	.88**	.77**	.87**	1.00	
5. STAS	.92**	.88**	.97**	.94**	1.00

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 5 Kolmogorov–Smirnov test for burnout and apprehension

	Kolmogorov–Smirnov		
	Statistic	df	Sig
Teacher apprehension	.10**	174	.20
Teacher burnout	.09**	174	.20

**Correlation is significant at the level of 0.05

Table 6 Descriptive statistics of EFL teachers' STAS and its four subscales

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. deviation
Organizational	198	7.00	23.00	14.74	8.81
L2-related factors	198	10.00	32.00	19.04	8.44
Classroom management	198	13.00	38.00	24.57	9.01
Attitudinal	198	17.00	62.00	40.51	11.08
STAS	198	50.00	160.00	90.38	29.05
Valid N (listwise)	198				

Table 7 Descriptive statistics of EFL teachers' burnout and its three subscales

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. deviation
Emotional exhaustion	198	9.00	55.00	28.04	9.64
Personal accomplishment	198	5.00	48.00	24.75	8.34
Depersonalization	198	4.00	29.00	11.90	5.43
Teacher burnout	198	23.00	105.00	64.74	17.10
Valid N (listwise)	198				

($M = 14.74$, $SD = 8.81$), for L2-related factors is ($M = 19.04$, $SD = 8.44$), for classroom management is ($M = 24.57$, $SD = 9.01$), and for STAS is ($M = 90.38$, $SD = 29.05$).

Burnout and Its Three Components Table 7 presents descriptive statistics of EFL teachers' burnout and its three subscales. As the table shows, the mean of emotional exhaustion is ($M = 28.04$, $SD = 9.64$), for personal accomplishment is ($M = 24.75$, $SD = 8.38$), for depersonalization is ($M = 11.90$, $SD = 5.43$), and for total burnout is ($M = 64.74$, $SD = 17.10$).

The Proposed Model

To probe if the hypothesized model containing teacher burnout and teacher apprehension fits the data, the LISREL8.50 statistical package was used to run SEM. The above fit indices were investigated to evaluate the model fit.

As demonstrated by Fig. 4, the chi-square value (208.81), the Chi-square/*df* ratio (2.21), the RMSEA (0.069), the NFI (0.90), GFI (0.91) all reached the acceptable fit thresholds. It implies that the model had a good fit with the empirical data.
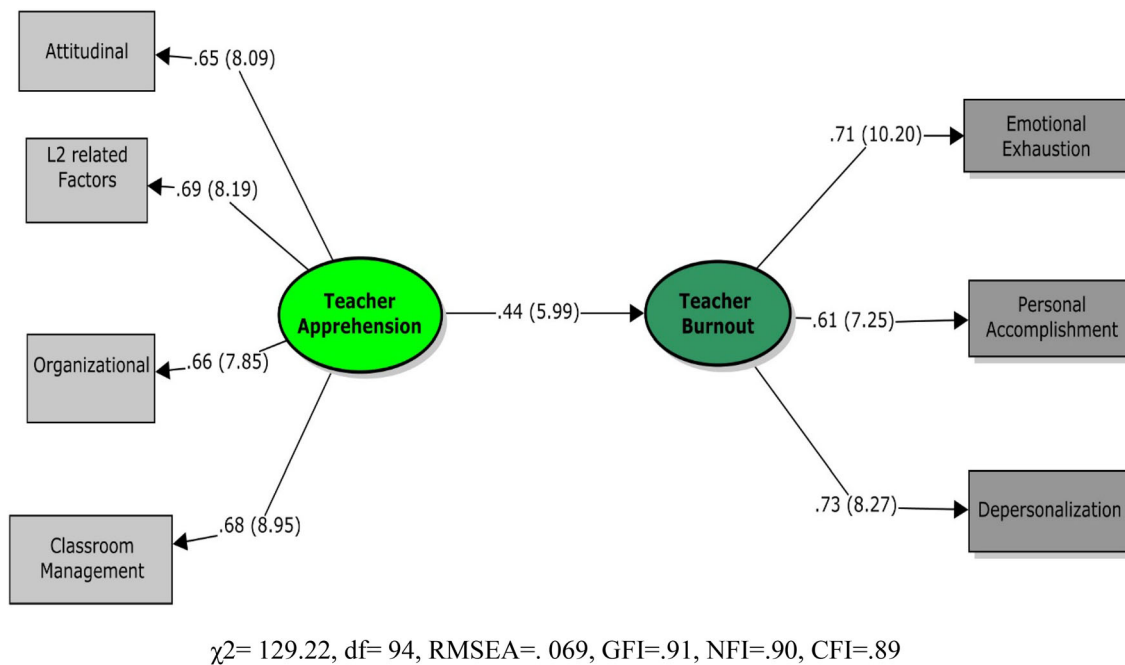
$\chi 2 = 129.22$, df$= 94$, RMSEA$=. 069$, GFI$=.91$, NFI$=.90$, CFI$=.89$

Fig. 4 The schematic representation of the variables under study

To check the strengths of the causal relationships among the variables, the *t* values and standardized estimates were examined. As indicated in Fig. 4, two estimates were displayed on the paths. The first one is the standardized coefficient (*β*) which explains the predictive power of the independent variable and presents an easily grasped picture of effect size. The closer the magnitude to 1.0, the higher the correlation and the greater the predictive power of the variable is.

The results demonstrated that EFL teachers' apprehension positively and significantly influenced teacher burnout: teacher apprehension and teacher burnout ($\beta = 0.45$, $t = 6.07$). The correlation coefficient between EFL teachers' apprehension and burnout is presented in Table 8.

As can be seen, the two variables have a high positive correlation ($r = 0.61$, $p < 0.05$). This clearly demonstrates the criterion-related validity of STAS as it is highly influential in burnout.

Discussion

This study aimed to design a scale for measuring the sources of EFL teachers' apprehension using the data generated from a triangulated qualitative research (Goldast and Ghanizadeh forthcoming) A 35-item scale on a 5-point Likert scale (STAS) was designed. Having analyzed the data, it turned out that TAS was a reliable and valid tool to measure EFL teachers' apprehension.

Table 8 The correlation coefficient between EFL teachers' apprehension and burnout

	Teacher Burnout
1. Teacher apprehension	0.61**

**Correlation is significant at the level of 0.05

As stated earlier, STAS was developed according to a recent study conducted by Goldast and Ghaniazadeh (forthcoming) which used a triangulation method, including interviews, diary, observations, and open-ended questions. In the afore-mentioned study, the following factors and sub-factors were identified as the antecedents of EFL teachers' apprehension:

Attitudinal factors: Teachers' lack of self-esteem, Students' perceptions, Students' demotivation; Organizational factors: Supervisor observation, Peer observation, Institutional discipline, Instructional tools and facilities; L2-related factors: Linguistic factors, Cultural differences, Perfectionism; Classroom management: Time restriction, Syllabus coverage, Error treatment, Students' disengagement, Students' proficiency.

Consequently, a scale with 35 items and four factors was developed as summarized in the following sentences:

Attitudinal factors: 2, 3, 7, 8, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 27, 29, 30; Organizational factors: 6, 10, 14, 15, 25; L2-related factors: 1, 4, 5, 11, 21, 26, 28; Classroom management: 9, 19, 20, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35.

Having administered STAS to a group of EFL teachers, the researchers found that two items did not have good factor loadings and should be removed from the scale. This resulted in a refined version of the scale demonstrating good fit.

To scrutinize criterion validity evidence, the STAS along with the teacher burnout inventory was administered to participants. It was found that EFL teachers' apprehension positively and significantly impacted on teacher burnout. Basically, the degree of apprehension a teacher experiences is fully dependent on teachers' self-esteem and the identity they construct for themselves. Accordingly, the more apprehensive a teacher is, the more burnout he experiences.

Burnout is defined as a psychological syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can happen among individuals who work with other people in some capacity (Maslach and Jackson 1996). "Emotional exhaustion refers to feelings of being emotionally overextended and depleted of one's emotional resources. Depersonalization is a negative, callous, or excessively detached response to other people, who one works with, i.e. patients, students" (Maslach 1993, pp. 20–21).

Studies demonstrated that measures of teacher burnout predict both subjective and objective health as well as teachers' motivation, job satisfaction, and anxiety. For instance, Hakanen et al. (2006) showed that both emotional exhaustion and depersonalization correlated negatively with self-rated health including professional relief as well as work ability among teachers. Schaufeli and Salanova (2007) regarded emotional exhaustion and depersonalization as the leading elements of burnout. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2007) found that low expectation of classroom management increases occupational stress, which may upsurge emotional exhaustion as well as depersonalization (the two factors of burnout). Particularly strong relations were found between time pressure and emotional exhaustion, between relations to parents and depersonalization, and between supervisory support and burnout. They concluded that the school context variables were differently related to teachers' cognitive and emotional responses to stress. It was also revealed that effort to develop teachers' working condition should be tailored to defined goals and values to reduce burnout. In accordance with previous research, they found a particularly strong association between time pressure and the emotional exhaustion dimension of burnout and a substantial negative indirect relation between time pressure and job satisfaction. This is particularly worrying because recent research shows that teachers experience an increasing time pressure resulting in less time for rest and recovery (Hargreaves 2003; Lindqvist and Nordänger 2006). It is, therefore, important that both local and central school leaders make an effort to decrease time pressure on teachers.

Conclusions

One of the reasons for designing this scale was to help EFL teachers to come to the belief that they are not the only teachers who have experienced these feelings; as a result, it causes them to seek solace in this sympathetic feeling and it may lead to raising their confidence and affect positively in their working life. For EFL teachers so as to feel relaxed while teaching and do their jobs with a relish, they had better have less on their mind so as to feel less apprehensive. Consequently, devising a scale like STAS can pave the way for studying EFL teacher apprehension from different perspectives via a standard scale. EFL teachers want to continually find the boundaries of their current potential, so they can better understand their capabilities to find new ways of breaking through. Failure offers them the greatest opportunity to improve themselves. But what is important here is their capability to recognize and assess their anxiety, its determinants, as well as its scope and dimensions. This in turn necessitates a standard scale for gauging teachers' apprehension. The scale designed and validated in the present study would assist EFL teachers in this regard. First of all, it informs teachers of their worries and sources of stress. This information enables teachers to modify themselves from different aspects, cognitively, affectively and behaviorally which are expected to facilitate the enhancement of their motivation as well as their students' motivational disposition. It can conceivably be argued that a standardized scale measuring EFL teachers' apprehension would shed light on the issue and stimulate future research on teachers' apprehension and their influence on effective teaching. Therefore, this study could be of overriding importance and a scale designed so as to measure the level of apprehension of EFL teachers would help them enhance their well-being to have more effective teaching.

The present study is, nevertheless, limited in a number of ways. First, due to feasibility considerations, the participants were selected based on convenience sampling. Second, the participants of the present study included EFL teachers in language institutes and school in the context of Mashhad, Iran. Hence, this study should be replicated with samples in different countries, and use procedures that ensure a higher degree of randomization and ultimately more generalizability. Finally, further research in the future could be conducted to find if EFL teachers' apprehension differ with their teaching experience, their educational level, gender.

Appendix

See Table 9.

Table 9 Teacher apprehension scale. II. Instruction: Please indicate your answers to each item by choosing the appropriate rate on the 5-point scale below. Your answers will be kept confidential

Items	1	2	3	4	5
1. I am anxious when I have to deal with unfamiliar idioms or expressions in English					
2. I am not confident in speaking English					
3. Students' disinterest in class activities makes me worried					
4. I am afraid that my students ask me about unknown contents in English classes					
5. I feel uneasy when my students are bored with my class					
6. I feel apprehensive when I am not well-prepared					
7. I worry when I happen to deal with unknown contents related to culture in English classes					
8. I am afraid that I do not have up-to-date knowledge about English testing and methodology					
9. I feel apprehensive when the students ask irrelevant questions					
10. I am tense when I feel I cannot effectively cover the course syllabus in due time					
11. I am afraid that my students regard me as an incompetent English teacher					
12. I feel stressed when the students are expectant					
13. I am afraid that my colleagues who are very fluent English speakers regard me as an incompetent English teacher					
14. I worry when I am under pressure before attending the class					
15. I feel stressed when students misbehave in the class					
16. I feel anxious when I cannot build up a good rapport with the students					
17. I worry when I happen to deal with sophisticated or unfamiliar vocabulary in English classes					
18. It makes me anxious when I feel students do not understand teaching materials					
19. When I see my students have difficulty in doing the tasks, I feel anxious					
20. I worry about being compared with competent English teachers					
21. I feel uneasy when students are anxious in my class					
22. I feel apprehensive when I am teased by the students and lose my face					
23. I feel anxious when there are students in my class who are highly proficient in English					
24. I feel anxious when my students are not motivated					
25. When my students do not actively participate in class activities, I feel apprehensive					
26. I feel anxious when words escape me					
27. I am afraid of making mistakes when I use English					
28. I am not confident in listening to English					
29. I feel apprehensive when I make spelling errors					
30. I am nervous when I teach English through English					
31. I feel as if I lost my face when I recognize my students or colleagues find something wrong in my spoken language					
32. I feel uneasy when I feel the supervisor might be dissatisfied with my performance					
33. I feel anxious when I am not praised by the students					

1 = Strongly agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly disagree

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