English Brand Names in Indonesian Culinary Businesses: Orthographic Errors and Creative Adaptations

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates orthographic errors found in English brand names used by culinary businesses in Pekanbaru, Indonesia, based on Carl James's (1998) Error Analysis framework. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, thirty brand names were collected through observation and documentation in major commercial areas of Pekanbaru. The findings reveal that all deviations occur at the substance level, involving surface mechanical aspects of writing. Misspelling is the most dominant type (16 cases), followed by dyslexic errors (5 cases), punctuation errors (4 cases), confusable errors (3 cases), typographic errors (2 cases), and hybrid errors (2 cases). These deviations are primarily caused by interlingual interference from Indonesian orthography and intralingual misencoding within English spelling rules. The results also indicate that some deviations, while linguistically inaccurate, may function as branding strategies to enhance visual appeal or memorability. This study contributes to applied linguistics by extending Error Analysis to entrepreneurial contexts and provides practical recommendations for improving linguistic accuracy in brand naming among MSME culinary sectors in Pekanbaru.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The global spread of English as a lingua franca has significantly influenced branding and marketing in non-English-speaking countries, including Indonesia, where it symbolizes modernity and international appeal (Crystal, 2016). In the culinary sector, English brand names are frequently used to attract consumers by evoking sophistication and global trends (Piller, 2001). Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), a business category representing the largest portion of Indonesia's entrepreneurial landscape, also adopt English naming practices to build a more professional and globally oriented image. However, orthographic inaccuracies in these names can undermine brand credibility, as they reflect linguistic limitations or unintended deviations from standard English (Keller, 2013). Preliminary observations conducted in Pekanbaru, a city with a rapidly growing MSMEs culinary sector, revealed frequent English errors in brand names displayed on banners and signboards. This phenomenon indicates that although English is used to project modernity, its application often lacks adherence to standard orthographic norms, prompting the need for systematic investigation.

Existing studies on linguistic errors in commercial branding have revealed consistent patterns across different contexts. Fikri (2022), in his analysis of outdoor advertisements in Surabaya, found that dyslexic errors and confusable errors were dominant, indicating that phonetic resemblance and letter similarity frequently trigger misspellings in commercial texts. Similarly, Indrayanti et al. (2023), who examined linguistic errors in translated product labels, reported numerous spelling inaccuracies, inappropriate lexical choices, grammatical mistakes, and punctuation problems, illustrating that written commercial materials are highly prone to linguistic deviations. Adding another dimension, Hendrasto and Utama (2019) demonstrated that orthographic congruence plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perception, as standard spellings tend to enhance consumer trust, whereas incongruent or altered spellings diminish perceived brand credibility. Meanwhile, Wong (2013) and Costello et al. (2023) highlight that certain nonstandard spellings may not always be accidental; instead, they can function as deliberate branding strategies intended to create a modern, playful, or distinctive brand identity, although excessive deviations may risk reducing perceived professionalism.

Despite these insights, research on orthographic errors in culinary brand names in Indonesian local settings remains scarce, leaving a gap in understanding how Error Analysis can be applied to real-world entrepreneurial practices. This study aims to fill this gap by identifying and classifying orthographic errors in English culinary brand names using Carl James's (1998) Error Analysis framework, which categorizes errors into substance, text, and discourse levels. Accordingly, the research question guiding this study is: What types of orthographic errors appear in English brand names used by culinary businesses in Pekanbaru? The significance of this study lies in expanding the application of Error Analysis beyond academic language production, offering

practical insights for entrepreneurs, educators, and branding practitioners seeking to improve linguistic accuracy and enhance branding effectiveness.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand Names

A brand name is defined as the verbal component of a brand consisting of letters, words, or numbers used to identify and differentiate a product or service from others in the market (Kotler & Keller, 2016). As the most visible linguistic representation of a brand, the brand name plays a crucial role in shaping brand identity and influencing consumer perception. In marketing, an effective brand name should be easy to pronounce, memorable, and able to evoke positive associations that strengthen brand positioning and consumer loyalty (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Therefore, the linguistic quality of a brand name becomes an essential aspect of branding strategy. Aaker (1996) further emphasizes that an effective brand name should be memorable, create positive associations, and strengthen brand identity, thereby supporting the development of consumer loyalty. Thus, the brand name becomes an essential component in marketing strategy and brand image formation.

In the context of English as a foreign language in Indonesia, the selection of brand names often overlooks linguistic and cultural aspects, which may lead to semantic ambiguity or spelling errors. Therefore, analyzing the accuracy of English brand name usage in culinary businesses is crucial to determine whether it aligns with established language conventions. This aligns with findings by Kohli and LaBahn (2005), who argue that the appropriateness of brand naming influences consumer evaluation. Moreover, the study by Moehkardi et al. (2024) demonstrates that the use of English brand names can affect consumer perception, particularly when linguistic inaccuracies occur. Thus, a comprehensive understanding of linguistic and cultural dimensions in brand naming is necessary to ensure that the message conveyed aligns with marketing objectives and is appropriately interpreted by the target consumers. Error analysis is a systematic procedure for identifying, describing, and evaluating deviations in language performance. According to James (1998), error analysis aims to determine the occurrence, characteristics, and causes of unsuccessful language production in both spoken and written forms. By analyzing errors, researchers can gain insights into learners' linguistic difficulties and the development of their target language system.

Error Analysis

Errors occur whenever language learners fail to acquire a particular rule or consistently apply it inaccurately. Norrish (1987) describes an error as a deviation resulting from an incorrect judgment, inaccurate assumption, or misinterpretation of linguistic rules. Thus, an error can be understood as any form of linguistic output that does not conform to the norms of the target language. Error analysis serves as a systematic procedure for identifying, describing, and explaining errors that appear in

learners' spoken or written production. As stated by James (1998), error analysis encompasses the process of determining the occurrence, characteristics, sources, and potential effects of unsuccessful language performance.

Levels of Error

James (1998) proposes that learner errors operate at three hierarchical levels: substance, text, and discourse. Substance errors arise when learners struggle with the physical or mechanical aspects of language, such as spelling, handwriting, punctuation, and phonological representation. These errors include misspellings, dyslexic forms, confusable words, typographical slips, and other mechanical inaccuracies, often triggered by mispronunciation or misapplication of orthographic conventions. At the next level, text errors occur when learners fail to appropriately use the lexico-grammatical system of the target language. These errors involve incorrect word choice, syntactic inaccuracies, and morphological deviations that hinder the formation of accurate and cohesive sentences. As noted by Widdowson (1995), textuality can manifest at various scales from individual words and sentences to combinations of sentences reflecting how learners construct meaning through grammar and vocabulary. Finally, discourse errors emerge when learners encounter difficulties in organizing sentences into a coherent, contextually appropriate text. According to Das (1978), discourse involves both cohesion, which concerns the structural linking of ideas, and coherence, which pertains to the meaningful interpretation of those ideas within a communicative context. Widdowson (1995) further distinguishes discourse as the process of constructing meaning, while text represents its tangible product.

METHOD
Research Design

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design to examine English orthographic errors as they naturally occur in public brand names. This design was chosen because the objective was to describe, interpret, and explain linguistic deviations rather than measure variables or test hypotheses. As Creswell (2018) states, descriptive qualitative research is suitable for exploring real phenomena within their natural context, while James (1998) emphasizes that Error Analysis requires the examination of actual language production to identify and classify deviations accurately.

The study was conducted in Pekanbaru from September to October 2025. Data were collected using purposive sampling, a technique that enables the selection of information-rich cases relevant to the research focus (Patton, 2015). The data for this study consisted of thirty English brand names collected from banners and signboards of culinary businesses in Pekanbaru. Each brand name functioned as a linguistic unit for identifying deviations from standard English orthography. Culinary business areas such as Jalan Subrantas, Jalan Cut Nyak Dhien, Jalan Manyar Sakti, Jalan Suka

Karya, Jalan Cipta Karya, Jalan Kaharuddin Nasution, Jalan Sisingamangaraja, Jalan Swakarya, and Jalan WR. Supratman was chosen because they represent major culinary hubs with frequent English branding practices. This ensured that the data reflected authentic orthographic patterns used by local entrepreneurs.

Data Collection

Data collection relied on direct observation and photographic documentation as primary instruments. The researcher visited sites, transcribed brand names from visual displays, and photographed them for accuracy. No surveys or interviews were used, as the focus was on existing linguistic forms. Thirty brand names were selected purposively to ensure variation, covering various culinary types. Ethical considerations included obtaining implicit consent by not interfering with businesses and anonymizing locations in reporting.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis was conducted using content analysis, a qualitative method to systematically identify and categorize patterns in textual data (Krippendorff, 2018). The collected brand names were transcribed and analyzed within Carl James's (1998) Error Analysis framework. Each brand name was compared to standard English orthography to identify deviations. Errors were classified by type (e.g., misspelling, punctuation), level (substance), and source (interlingual or intralingual). Coding was iterative, with cross-verification for reliability. Findings were summarized in tables, with interpretations grounded in the data.

FINDINGS

Analysis of the thirty brand names revealed that all orthographic deviations occurred at the substance level, with misspelling as the dominant type (16 cases), followed by dyslexic errors (5 cases), punctuation errors (4 cases), confusable errors (2 cases), and typographic errors (1 case). Additionally, hybrid forms, including misspelling combined with punctuation and punctuation combined with typographic errors, were each found in one instance.

Table 1

Full Dataset of Orthographic Errors in English Culinary Brand Names

No	Brand Name & Location	Identified Error	Correct Form	Type of Error	Error Level	Explanation
1	Kue Roling – Jalan Cut Nyak Dhien	Roling	Rolling	Misspelling	Substance	Omission of double consonant <ll>, reflecting intralingual misencoding.

2	Favorit Smothies Fruits – Jalan Manyar Sakti	Smothies	Smoothies	Misspelling	Substance	Omission of vowel <o>, intralingual misencoding due to incomplete vowel digraph knowledge.
3	Street Brownis – Jalan Soebrantas	Brownis	Brownies	Misspelling	Substance	Omission of <e>, interlingual interference from Indonesian plural patterns.
4	Pisang Goreng Wijen Krispy – Jalan Suka Karya	Krispy	Crispy	Confusible Error	Substance	Substitution of <C> with <K>, graphemic confusion (James, 1998).
5	Smoothie'ss Fres Fruit – Jalan Cipta Karya	Smoothie'ss, Fres	Smoothies, Fresh	Punctuation & Typographic Error	Substance	Duplicated <s> and apostrophe misuse, mechanical punctuation deviation.
6	Soka Coffe Shop – Jalan Soebrantas	Coffe	Coffee	Misspelling	Substance	Omission of <e>, intralingual misencoding.
7	Icha Cake's – Jalan Kaharuddin Nasution	Cake's	Cakes	Punctuation Error	Substance	Incorrect apostrophe for plural, morphological confusion.
8	Twin Photato's – Jalan Cut Nyak Dhien	Photato's	Potatoes	Misspelling & Punctuation Error	Substance	Vowel insertion and apostrophe misuse, hybrid error.
9	Moonkey Street Coffee – Jalan Cut Nyak Dhien	Moonkey	Monkey	Misspelling	Substance	Extra <o>, intralingual overgeneralization.
10	Potato & Chickken Fries – Jalan Cut Nyak Dhien	Chickken	Chicken	Misspelling	Substance	Consonant duplication, intralingual misencoding.
11	Dimsum Partyy – Jalan Cut Nyak Dhien	Partyy	Party	Typographic Error	Substance	Redundant <y>, stylistic emphasis.
12	Kulit Ayam Krispy – Jalan Cut Nyak Dhien	Krispy	Crispy	Confusible Error	Substance	Graphemic interchange, intralingual.

13	Focus Coffe Matcha – Jalan Soebrantas	Coffe	Coffee	Misspelling	Substance	Omission of <e>, intralingual.
14	Roti Gulung D'Roll – Jalan Soebrantas	D'	The	Dyslexic Error	Substance	Phonetic substitution for article.
15	Rollin' Beef Ikhwan – Jalan Cut Nyak Dhien	Rollin'	Rolling	Punctuation Error	Substance	Apostrophe in clipping, informal deviation.
16	TS Smothies – Jalan Kaharuddin Nasution	Smothies	Smoothies	Misspelling	Substance	Omission of <o>, intralingual.
17	Boy's Coffee – Jalan Cut Nyak Dhien	Boy's	Boys	Punctuation Error	Substance	Apostrophe for plural, misuse.
18	Rock n Roll – Jalan Cut Nyak Dhien	n	and	Dyslexic Error	Substance	Phonetic simplification.
19	Coffe & Sticky Milk – Jalan Sisingamangaraja	Coffe	Coffee	Misspelling	Substance	Omission of <e>, intralingual.
20	Pingky Kebab – Jalan Sisingamangaraja	Pingky	Pinky	Misspelling	Substance	Addition of <g>, interlingual interference.
21	D'Queen – Jalan Suka Karya	D'	The	Dyslexic Error	Substance	Phonetic encoding.
22	Titik Coffe – Jalan Sisingamangaraja	Coffe	Coffee	Misspelling	Substance	Omission of <e>, intralingual.
23	Sachetan Mocktail – Jalan Cut Nyak Dhien	Sachetan	Sachet	Misspelling	Substance	Addition of suffix, interlingual.
24	D'Jaya Tea – Jalan Swakarya	D'	The	Dyslexic Error	Substance	Phonetic substitution.
25	Brastagi Bakery & Cake's – Jalan Cipta Karya	Cake's	Cakes	Punctuation Error	Substance	Apostrophe misuse.
26	D'Oven – Jalan Soebrantas	D'	The	Dyslexic Error	Substance	Phonetic encoding.
27	Prasinos Coffe – Jalan Cut Nyak Dhien	Coffe	Coffee	Misspelling	Substance	Omission of <e>, intralingual.

28	Chiken Katsu – Jalan Cut Nyak Dhien	Chiken	Chicken	Misspelling	Substance	Omission of <c>, intralingual.
29	DA Coffe – Jalan Cut Nyak Dhien	Coffe	Coffee	Misspelling	Substance	Omission of <e>, intralingual.
30	Snakin.PKU – Jalan Wr.Snakin Supratman	Snakin	Snacking	Misspelling	Substance	Omission of <g>, intralingual.

The following examples present the full dataset, including brand names, errors, correct forms, types, levels, and explanations.

Figure 1. Kue Roling

An example of a spelling error can be found in the brand name "Kue Roling," located on Jalan Cut Nyak Dhien. The identified error is the form "Roling," while the correct form should be "Rolling." This error falls into the category of misspelling and is classified as a substance error. The omission of the double consonant <ll> indicates an incomplete understanding of English spelling conventions. According to James (1998), this type of error is categorized as a substance error at the graphological level, specifically a misspelling caused by intralingual misencoding. This error demonstrates that the writer failed to apply the English graphemic rule in representing the phonological structure of the word.

Figure 2: Example of Confusable Error

An example of a confusable error can be found in the brand name "Pisang Goreng Wijen Krispy," located on Jalan Suka Karya. The identified error is the spelling "Krispy," whereas the correct spelling is "Crispy." This substitution represents a confusable error because the graphemes <C> and <K> both correspond to the same /k/ phoneme. As James (1998) states, confusable errors occur when similar-sounding letters are interchanged due to graphemic confusion. This error is classified as a substance-level confusable error caused by intralingual misencoding rather than interference from the first language.

Figure 3: Example of Punctuation Error

An example of a punctuation error can be found in the brand name "Icha Cake's," located on Jalan Kaharuddin Nasution. The identified error is the use of the form "Cake's," while the correct form should be "Cake." The apostrophe is used incorrectly because it indicates possession rather than plurality. According to James (1998), this type of mistake is categorized as a punctuation error occurring at the substance level. The misuse of the apostrophe demonstrates a lack of understanding of morphological rules regarding plural noun forms in English.

Figure 4: Example of Typographic Error

An example of a typographic error can be found in the brand name "Dimsum Partyy," located on Jalan Cut Nyak Dhien. The identified error is the form "Partyy," while the correct form should be "Party." The unnecessary duplication of the letter <y> is nonstandard and does not affect the pronunciation, which makes it a

typographic error. According to James (1998), this type of redundancy represents a mechanical deviation motivated by stylistic emphasis rather than linguistic factors. Therefore, this error is categorized as a substance-level typographic error.

Figure 5: Example of Dyslexic Error

An example of a dyslexic error can be found in the brand name "Roti Gulung D'Roll," located on Jalan Soebrantas. The identified error is the use of "D'," whereas the correct form should be "The." This substitution represents a dyslexic misselection error at the substance level. The replacement occurs due to phonetic approximation, in which the writer encoded the English article *the* as "D'" based on its pronunciation in rapid speech. According to James (1998), such misselections occur when similar sounds are represented by incorrect graphemes, indicating that the writer relied on auditory cues rather than accurate orthographic rules.

Figure 6: Example of **Hybrid Error**

A hybrid error involving punctuation and typography can be found in the brand name "Smoothie's Fres Fruit," located on Jalan Cipta Karya. The identified errors are the forms "Smoothie'ss" and "Fres," whereas the correct forms should be "Smoothies" and "Fresh." The word *Smoothie'ss* contains both an incorrect apostrophe and an unnecessary duplication of the letter <s>, indicating confusion between plural and possessive forms in English grammar. Meanwhile, the form *Fres* represents a typographic omission of the letter <h>. According to James (1998), this case involves a combination of punctuation error and typographic error at the substance level. The misuse of the apostrophe reflects a mechanical punctuation deviation, while the duplicated and omitted letters indicate nonstandard typographic alterations.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of thirty English culinary brand names in Pekanbaru shows that the majority of deviations occur at the substance level, following the classification of James (1998). These deviations involve surface features of written language such as spelling, punctuation, grapheme selection, and typographic variation, indicating that most linguistic challenges faced by brand creators are related to the accurate encoding of English orthography rather than grammatical or discourse-level competence. Misspelling appeared as the most dominant deviation, manifested through omissions, substitutions, and unnecessary duplications of letters, as seen in forms such as *Coffe, Chiken, Smothies, Brownis, and Pingky*. These patterns reflect both intralingual misencoding and interlingual influence from Indonesian orthography. Intralingual misencoding arises from incomplete internalization of English spelling conventions, leading to simplified or phonetically motivated forms, while interlingual transfer occurs when Indonesian phoneme–grapheme norms shape the written representation of English words, consistent with Odlin's (1989) theory of language transfer.

Other deviation types, such as dyslexic-like phonetic spellings, confusable substitutions, punctuation misuse, hybrid errors, and typographic alterations, further illustrate varying levels of orthographic misencoding. Spellings such as *D'Roll*, *D'Oven*, and *Rock n Roll* represent phonological approximations influenced by either spoken rhythm or stylistic preferences. Punctuation errors such as *Cake's* or *Twin Photato's* indicate confusion between plural and possessive markers, while typographic duplications such as *Partyy* appear to serve aesthetic functions. These findings align with James's (1998) classification of substance-level errors, demonstrating that most deviations affect visual representation rather than syntactic arrangement or semantic meaning.

A closer interpretation of the findings reveals that these deviations are shaped by

a combination of linguistic and functional factors. Interlingual influences are evident in substitutions such as <k> for <c> in *Krispy* or the omission of consonant doubling in *Chiken*, where Indonesian spelling conventions directly affect English representation. Intralingual influences appear in approximations such as *Coffe* or *Smothies*, which reveal partial understanding of English orthographic rules and a tendency to rely on sound-based reasoning, as described by Ellis (2008). However, the data also indicate that not all deviations stem from linguistic limitations. Some unconventional spellings, such as *Moonkey*, *D'Queen*, or the recurrent use of the *D'* prefix, may function as intentional stylistic or branding strategies. Branding research, including studies by Wong (2013) and Rocabado et al. (2023), shows that playful or nonstandard spellings can enhance brand memorability, convey modernity, or create a distinct visual identity. This suggests that certain deviations in Pekanbaru's brand names serve dual roles: while they may be classified as errors within linguistic frameworks, they can simultaneously reflect creative decisions aimed at increasing market appeal.

When compared with previous research, particularly Fikri (2022), who identified similar substance-level deviations in Surabaya advertisements, the findings demonstrate both similarities and differences. The two studies share comparable error types, including misspellings, confusable substitutions, and typographic variations. However, misspelling appears more dominant in Pekanbaru, suggesting regional differences in English exposure, orthographic familiarity, and local naming practices. This distinction indicates that while the nature of the errors is similar, the frequency and distribution reflect varying linguistic environments and sociocultural influences.

The findings of this study carry both pedagogical and theoretical implications. Pedagogically, the prevalence of misspellings and other substance-level deviations highlights the need for stronger emphasis on English orthography within Indonesian EFL education. Practical instruction focusing on spelling accuracy, grapheme–phoneme correspondence, and real-world writing tasks such as designing brand names would benefit learners, especially those in business, vocational, or entrepreneurship fields. Since orthographic accuracy contributes to brand credibility, improving English spelling competence may indirectly support local business professionalism. Theoretically, the dominance of substance-level errors reinforces James's (1998) assertion that surface-level deviations are most frequent in non-academic L2 writing. The influence of Indonesian orthography on English spelling also supports Odlin's (1989) theory of cross-linguistic transfer. Moreover, the coexistence of genuine errors and intentional stylized forms expands the traditional scope of Error Analysis by demonstrating that deviations in commercial contexts function not only as linguistic mis encoding but also as multimodal strategies shaped by visual design, creativity, and local cultural preferences, consistent with the semiotic perspective of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006).

Overall, the findings indicate that while many orthographic deviations in

Pekanbaru's English brand names stem from linguistic limitations, others reflect deliberate stylistic adaptation. English, therefore, is not simply misused but actively reshaped to meet local aesthetic, cultural, and market-driven purposes. This hybridization underscores the dynamic interaction between global linguistic norms and local creativity, illustrating how English is appropriated, domesticated, and visually reimagined within the commercial landscape of Pekanbaru.

CONCLUSION

The identification of thirty English culinary brand names in Pekanbaru demonstrates that orthographic deviations predominantly occur at the substance level, encompassing misspellings, punctuation inaccuracies, confusable substitutions, dyslexic-like encodings, and typographic irregularities. These deviations reflect mechanical difficulties in encoding written English rather than deeper grammatical or discourse-related issues. Misspelling emerged as the most frequent deviation, indicating that the primary challenge for brand creators lies in the accurate representation of English graphemes, a pattern shaped by both interlingual transfer from Indonesian orthography and intralingual mis encoding within English spelling conventions. Nevertheless, several forms, such as the recurring prefix *D'*, simplified phonetic spellings, or visually motivated typographic choices suggest that certain deviations function not only as errors but also as intentional branding strategies aimed at creating distinctiveness, modernity, or memorability. Thus, the orthographic deviations identified in this study represent a dual phenomenon: they reveal mechanical inaccuracies stemming from limited orthographic mastery while simultaneously reflecting creative adaptation within local branding practices.

Despite offering meaningful insights into how English is localized and reinterpreted within entrepreneurial contexts, this study is not without limitations. The qualitative descriptive design restricts the generalizability of the findings, as the data represent only a specific geographic and commercial segment. The study also examines deviations solely from a linguistic perspective and does not investigate how consumers perceive or respond to these orthographic forms. Additionally, the analysis is limited to physical brand signage; digital branding practices, which may reveal different patterns of orthographic adaptation, were not included.

Future research should incorporate consumer-based methods such as surveys or experimental designs to examine how orthographic deviations influence brand credibility, memorability, and purchase intention. A comparative study involving multiple cities or regions would also help identify whether similar deviations occur across different linguistic environments in Indonesia. Further exploration of digital brand naming on social media and online platforms could provide a more comprehensive understanding of orthographic creativity in contemporary marketing ecosystems.

From a practical standpoint, the findings underscore the importance of linguistic accuracy in enhancing professional brand identity while also recognizing

that controlled creativity can contribute to market differentiation. Local business owners and brand designers may benefit from consulting language specialists or trained copywriters to ensure that creative spelling choices remain purposeful and do not compromise clarity or credibility. Educational institutions and language centers can also integrate English-for-branding modules into their curricula to support learners and entrepreneurs in developing both accurate and strategic orthographic practices. Collectively, these recommendations aim to support the creation of English brand names that balance linguistic precision with creative appeal in the competitive culinary market of Pekanbaru.

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